

The Savior is Born

Luke 2: 8-20

As I prepared this message, I was reminded of the familiar Christmas song: *It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year*. For most of us, Christmas certainly is an exciting time. I can remember the anticipation and overwhelming excitement I felt as a child, looking forward to Christmas. It was definitely the most anticipated season of the year.

Our text is one we know well, and yet it remains exciting as we read these familiar words. The shepherds were out in the countryside, keeping watch over their flocks, on what likely seemed to be an ordinary night. I am sure these men never expected what they would experience on that faithful night so long ago. This would prove to be anything but an ordinary night, because an extraordinary event had taken place in Bethlehem. As these men heard the good news of Jesus' birth, their hearts were filled with wonder and amazement. What had begun as an ordinary night quickly became the most wonderful time of the year for them as well. They would make a discovery that would forever change their lives.

Let's take a few moments to reconsider the [details](#) of this familiar text as we think on: [The Savior is Born](#).

I. The Angelic Announcement (9-14) – These familiar verses record the announcement of the angel of the Lord to the shepherds concerning the birth of Christ. Notice:

A. The Salutation (9-10) – [And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.](#) ^[10] [And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.](#) We can only imagine the wonder and amazement of this moment. In the stillness of the dark night, the angel appeared unto the shepherds, revealing the glory of the Lord. I am certain these men had never encountered such an event and were unsure what was about to transpire. Sensing their fear, the angel spoke words of comfort to them, seeking to calm their fears.

- As of yet the shepherds were unaware of the great significance of this moment. The angel had come bearing good tidings of great joy. The moment the world had longed for had finally arrived. After thousands of years of prophecy, the Messiah had come to earth.
- Having come to the shepherds was significant as well. They were the lowest within society, being on the bottom rung of the social ladder. Most wanted nothing to do with the shepherds. However, the Lord came to them through the angel to deliver the message of Jesus' birth. In fact,

this message would bring joy to all people. Jesus did not come for the wealthy and elite alone. He came to redeem and save all people, including these lowly shepherds!

B. The Savior (11) – *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

The shepherds soon learned that a gift had been delivered for them in Bethlehem, the city of David. This was no ordinary gift, no ordinary birth. Christ the Lord, Savior of the world had come to redeem all humanity from their sin.

- The angel first mentioned Jesus as being the Savior. More than anything else, mankind needed a Savior. Had He not been willing to come, to redeem from sin and provide for our salvation, we would all yet be in sin without hope. Next he refers to Jesus as Christ, His Messianic title. This refers to His rule and reign as sovereign. Last, but not least, Jesus is referred to as Lord. He is King of kings and Lord of lords. He is preeminent to all who came before Him. He has a name above every name, whereby we must be saved. He is Lord of all.

C. The Sign (12) – *And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes,*

lying in a manger. Having revealed where the Christ child was born, the angel revealed what to look for when they arrived in Bethlehem. Jesus had come as a baby, born of a virgin womb, deity clothed in flesh. He had not been born into royalty, but of a common birth. The babe would not be found in a warm palace, but within a cattle stall. When they found the child, He would be wrapped in swaddling clothes. These were literally strips of cloth wrapped tightly around His body. The same material was used to wrap the bodies of the deceased. Even in birth, the coming death of Christ for the sin of the world was in full view. He would also be found lying in a manger, literally a feeding trough in which the animals ate their grain and hay. This too reveals that Jesus had come as the Bread of life, the source of life and strength for all who believe!

D. The Song (13-14) – *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising*

God, and saying, ^[14] *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.* After revealing the good news of Jesus' birth, the angel was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host, filling the night sky in song and praise unto the Lord for the coming of Christ.

- The world lay under the curse of sin, gripped by violence and unrest. Humanity longed for peace on earth and peace with God. Christ had come to provide the peace men longed for. He is the Prince of peace, bringing comfort and assurance to all who come to Him by faith. The curse and burden of sin is lifted in righteousness through Christ the Lord. Those who know Him are filled with peace that passes all understanding. Our world continues in turmoil, and will until the Lord returns the second time, but peace is available in Him, even in the midst of great adversity!

II. The Shepherd's Discernment (15-20) – Our closing verses reveal the shepherd's discernment of this great message and their response to what they heard. Consider:

A. Their Passion (15-16) – *And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.* ^[16] *And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.* As soon as the angelic host disappeared, the shepherds immediately decided to go into Bethlehem. They knew there was not a moment to waste. The Savior was born and they were determined to find Him. They came with haste to the place where Jesus was. They came with great speed, urgency, and expectation. They were not about to ignore such good news and neglect the Lord.

- It would be wonderful if all shared the passion of the shepherds for coming to Christ. Many have heard of Him, especially at this time of year, but most never take the time to come to Him. His birth so long ago was for a purpose. He came to die for the sin of humanity. He came to provide the means of our salvation. He came to give life eternal and abundant to all who come to Him by faith. Sadly, most are more like the residents in Bethlehem than the shepherds. Most are content to simply hear the good news, but never have a desire to draw near to the Savior.

B. Their Proclamation (17-18) – *And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.* ^[18] *And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.* The shepherds were unable to remain quiet about the good news they had heard and their miraculous discovery. They shared abroad all they had seen and heard. They shared the good news of Jesus' birth with everyone they encountered. In essence, these lowly shepherds were the first missionaries to share the good news of Christ. They were so moved by this encounter, they could not keep it to themselves.

- If the shepherds were willing to share abroad the good news of Jesus' birth, surely the saved by grace ought to be willing to share the good news of the Gospel. We know the rest of the story. We know of His sinless life, His atoning death, His miraculous resurrection, and the promise of His glorious return. Let us do as the shepherds of old and share abroad the good news of Jesus Christ! He came, lived, died, and rose again. He is now ascended and seated at the Father's right hand, awaiting His return for us. We have the good news of the Gospel. I pray we won't keep it to ourselves, but share the greatest gift ever given!

C. Their Praise (20) – *And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.* This should come as no surprise. The shepherds

had encountered the Christ. He had come to earth, just as was prophesied. The means of salvation had come to visit men. When the shepherds comprehended the enormity of this encounter, they were moved to offer praise and worship unto the Lord. They had seen the Lord and had to praise God.

- It is easy to become so busy and consumed with all the activities we have planned, that we fail to worship the Lord during Christmas. While I too have been guilty, this is a great tragedy. Christmas ought to stir an attitude of thankfulness which leads us to offer praise and worship unto our Lord for the gracious gift we received.

- I have received countless gifts over the years, but the majority of them have long worn out and been thrown away. However, through the coming of Christ to earth as Savior, I received a gift that I still possess. I will carry it with me beyond the grave. This gift is eternal. That is worth praising the Lord!

Conclusion: This has been a familiar text, and I have probably shared nothing you haven't heard or thought of before. It is a story that is thousands of years old, and yet it remains fresh and new to me. Even though I know it well, I always get excited when I take the time to read and study of the birth of our Lord. Truly this is the most wonderful time of the year!

Have you received this precious, eternal gift? If so, you ought to offer praise for your salvation. If not, the gift of salvation remains available. All you have to do is come to the Lord by faith, as the shepherds did, and receive the gift of salvation.