

The Birth of the Savior

Luke 2: 1-20

I. The Prophecy (1-5) – V.1 – And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. V.4 – And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) It may appear that Mary and Joseph were simply victims of a difficult circumstance. We find that Mary was **great with child**, V.5. We can't begin to imagine the difficulty they faced. Keep in mind that there were no means of modern transportation in that day. The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem was over 70 miles and the journey included difficult mountainous terrain.

- One might consider this passage and think what an unfortunate set of circumstances, but this was not misfortune. This was all within the plan of God. Caesar had made the decree that all must go to the city of their lineage to be taxed, but a sovereign God used a mortal man to accomplish His will. The prophecy of old revealed that Jesus must be born in Bethlehem of Judaea. **Micah 5:2 – But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.** Jesus came to this earth and fulfilled every prophecy regarding His birth.

- There is comfort in that thought for us as well. Our lives are not set in motion and allowed to simply run their course. We serve a God who is in control of every aspect of our lives. We may fail to see His sovereign hand, but it is always there nonetheless.

II. The Presentation (6-7) – And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. [7] And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. These verses reveal the details surrounding our Lord's birth. Notice:

A. The Timing (6) – While Mary and Joseph were in Bethlehem, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. This came as no surprise to God; it was all going according to His plan. **Gal.4:4 – But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.** The moment that creation had yearned for had finally arrived. The world had anticipated the coming of the Messiah since the first prophecy concerning Him in the Garden of Eden. The fullness of God's timing had been fulfilled and the Christ child was born.

- I thought of the wonder and excitement of birth. It is a miracle of God when a child is born into this world. What began so small that a microscope would not be able to pinpoint its detail is brought forth as a complete, tiny human being. The time is marked and recorded at that moment.

- We don't have an exact time for our Lord's birth, but we are assured through God's Word that He came just as God had promised. It was that moment that forever changed humanity. The Christ had come to provide salvation for the world. The King of glory had made His entrance into this world robed in flesh as a man.

B. The Clothing – Mary brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes.

We have heard these words over and over again, but how often do we stop to consider their significance. Clearly they reveal the poverty in which Jesus was born.

- But there is a greater significance that we need to see in the garment that Jesus was clothed in at birth. Mary wrapped Him in strips of cloth that were commonly used at death. At His birth, Christ was wrapped in grave clothes! Just moments after His birth, the cross was already in view. We cannot celebrate Christmas without considering Calvary.

C. The Manger – Jesus was placed in a manger, literally a feeding trough, after His birth. What a picture we see in this as well. Our Lord was placed in a manger where animals fed and received nourishment.

- This reveals to us yet another promise that Jesus would fulfill. He came as the Bread of Life to those who stand in need of spiritual nourishment. He came to feed those who are perishing in hunger from their sins. Jn.6:35 – And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. Jn.6:51 – I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

D. The Reception – All of this transpired because there was no room for them in the inn. As Joseph made his way to Bethlehem he found no one who would have compassion for His wife and soon to be delivered Child. There was no palace or servants to wait upon them. They weren't even afforded the luxuries of a cheap motel. Jesus was born in a cattle stall as the world slept oblivious to the birth of their Savior.

- This was just the beginning of His rejection here upon this earth. He was a Man of miracles and compassion; One who spoke with authority and power, and yet He was rejected of men.

Things have not changed much in our day. Many will celebrate Christmas, the birth of Christ, and yet they will ignore and reject Jesus. He who gave His life on the cross for all humanity is still despised and rejected. Very few have room in their hearts for the Lord.

I. The Prophecy (1-5)

II. The Presentation (6-7)

III. The Proclamation (8-14) – These verses reveals the proclamation of the heavenly host to the humble shepherds in the field. Let's look in on that glorious moment.

A. It was Personal (11) – For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. The angel declared that Christ was born unto them. He had come to meet their needs. Shepherds in that day were considered the lowest of the social class. Most were scorned and looked down upon. These received the greatest news ever told. The Savior had come and He had come for them.

- I rejoice that we have the privilege of knowing Jesus in a personal way. He came for me and He came for you. He came for all mankind! Lu.19:10 – For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

B. It was Precise (11) – The angel revealed just where to find the Lord. He was born in the city of David. They were also told that He would be found wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. There was little doubt the Lord had come and the shepherds were directed to Him.

- That hope still remains, even in this sin cursed generation. The Son of God still has power to save and He stands ready to redeem all who will come to Him. He is not a fairy tale or legend. He lived and died to set men free. I rejoice that I was pointed to the Lord and accepted Him! We have the hope of humanity in this precious Book and we are obligated to share Him with the world. Point the perishing to Jesus!

C. It was Profound (11) – Once they made it to Bethlehem they would discover a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. This was no ordinary birth and this was no ordinary baby. This was God in the flesh, the Savior of the world. The shepherds were told that they would encounter the Messiah.

- Oh how our world needs to see Jesus in a profound way. He was more than just a prophet, teacher, and miracle worker. He was more than a man who showed great compassion. He is not just a lord; He is the Lord. He is not one of many ways; He is the way! He lived 2,000 years ago and He is still changing lives today.

D. It was Powerful (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. The host of heaven knew that something spectacular had happened. The King of glory had come down to earth. With glorious praise, the heavenly choir rejoiced in the birth of our Lord. It stirred the heavenly host into song.

- Surely His birth ought to stir us as well. Never has a man defined the course of humanity as Christ did. He came to this earth so that we might live. We have the glorious privilege of knowing Him. As we ponder His birth, life, and death, it ought to bring us to our feet in praise and adoration of the King!

I. The Prophecy (1-5)

II. The Presentation (6-7)

III. The Proclamation (8-14)

IV. The Procession (15-20) – These remaining verses reveal the procession that took place following Jesus' birth. Notice:

A. The Wisdom of Shepherds (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. These men were likely uneducated, but they knew enough to understand that something wonderful and miraculous had taken place. They wasted no time in going to worship the Christ child. They certainly didn't want to miss out on this experience.

- I don't know much, but I know that something wonderful has happened in my life. I can't explain it all, but I surely do rejoice in all that I have received in Christ my Lord.

B. The Witness of the Shepherds (17) – And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. These were men who were largely rejected by society, but they had to share the good news they had received. They told everyone they encountered about the Christ that was born.

- I pray that we too will be stirred in our souls in such a way that we can't be quiet about all the Lord has done for us. Let us shout it from the rooftops that Jesus saves!

C. The Wonder of them All (18-20) – And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. [19] But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. [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. There could be no doubt they had experienced something wonderful and marvelous. Even though their minds could not comprehend it all, they rejoiced and meditated upon these things.

- I pray that you all enjoy the best Christmas ever, but I hope that we each regain the wonder of it all. May we not get so caught up in the busyness and commercialism of Christmas to reflect on the wonder of His birth. Let us pause for praise and worship Him as we reflect upon the coming of our King. It is too much to comprehend, but we can praise Him anyway.

I love to read the Christmas story. It is very familiar to us, but it never grows old. I trust you know Christ as your Savior. He is truly the greatest Gift ever given.