

## “The Savior is Born, He is Christ the Lord”

Luke 2:1-14

Read **Luke 2:1-5**... Although Caesar was an unbelieving Gentile, God used him to fulfill the prophecy that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

We find that Old Testament prophecy recorded in the New Testament, when Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes to ask them where the Messiah would be born, and they responded (**Matthew 2:4-6**) by quoting **Micah 5:2**, “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.”

Notice in **Luke:2:7** it says, “in those days,” referring to what was written in **Luke 1:5**, “In the days of Herod, king of Judea.” Herod reigned as king in Judea from 40 B.C.—4 B.C., and he died when Jesus was just a toddler, after Joseph had been told by an angel, to go to Egypt because Herod was trying to kill Jesus (**Matthew 2:13**), “Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him.”

The decree for a census to be taken of all those in the Roman Empire, was most likely for the purpose of the taxation of all those under the rule of Caesar [lit. *emperor*] Augustus [lit. *revered, esteemed*]. His actual name was Gaius Octavius and he was born in 63 B.C. Note: His mother was Julius Caesar’s sister, making him heir to the throne after Julius Caesar was assassinated.

Luke also tells us that this census was during the reign of Quirinius as the governor of Syria, and that everyone must go to their own home town to register. Joseph and Mary went up from Nazareth [1140 ft. above sea level], to Bethlehem [near Jerusalem, which is 2500 ft above sea level].

Luke calls Bethlehem “the city of David,” because that is where David had ruled as king (**2Samuel 5:7, 9**), “David captured the stronghold of Zion, that is the city of David.” “So David lived in the stronghold and called it the city of David. And David built all around from the Millo [meaning *boundary, terraced wall*] inward.”

As we have talked about before, both Joseph and Mary were from the ancestral line of David: Joseph (Jesus’ legal father) through David’s son Solomon (**Matthew 1:6, 16**), and Mary (Jesus’ biological mother) through David’s son Nathan (**Luke 3: 23, 31**). This gives Jesus both the legal right and the blood ancestry to rule on the throne of David.

Sovereignly God moved Joseph and Mary to be in Bethlehem at the time of Jesus birth, so as to fulfill the prophecy concerning the birthplace of the Messiah.

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Read **Luke 2:6-7**... We are not told how long Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem before Jesus was born; all we know is what Luke tells us here, that it came time for Jesus to be birthed and so He was born and Mary wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger. There is no mention of a mid-wife, or angels present, or a voice from heaven; only that Mary and her husband Joseph were alone, near a place where animals were fed, when it was time for Jesus' birth.

Jesus, like any other baby born in Israel, was wrapped in cloths to keep his arms and legs straight and to provide warmth. He was not wrapped in royal cloth worthy of His divine nature, neither was He placed in a royal bassinet with gold and silver accents; but instead, He was placed in a manger [an animal feeding trough].

We don't know exactly where Jesus was born; just that it was “not in the inn, because there was no room.” The Greek word *kataluma*, here translated “inn,” is a general term meaning lodging place, or shelter; it could have been a campground, a way station, or a public shelter where caravans or travelers stayed.

The word *kataluma* is also used in **Luke 22:11**, where it is translated as, “guest room,” where Jesus and the Twelve celebrated Passover; and in **Luke 10**, Jesus tells a parable about a good Samaritan helping a Jewish man who had been beaten and robbed (**verse 34**), “by bringing him to an *inn* and [taking] care of him.” A different Greek word is used by Luke in that parable, the word *pandocheion* (pronounced pan-dokk-i'-on), and it is translated “inn.”

Let me try to resolve this: both of these words can be used to describe some sort of shelter or lodging, but *kataluma* is mostly used to describe a public or free sleeping space; whereas, *pandocheion* is usually rendered when speaking of a paid lodging.

**Luke 2:7** says this is Mary's firstborn son, meaning, she had other children, as we talked about last week (**Matthew 13:54-56**), “[Jesus] came to His hometown and *began* teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, “Where *did* this man *get* this wisdom and *these* miraculous powers? Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us?”

The point Luke is making is, when God's Son came into this world, in the flesh of a baby boy named Jesus, He was born in a rough place without any of the comforts of home, perhaps in a shelter, a campground, or even a cave...

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Jesus said (**Luke 9:58**), “The foxes have holes and the birds of the air *have* nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head,” (**Philippians 2:5-7**), “Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men,” (**Mark 10:45**), “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

Read **Luke 2:8-14**... It is very appropriate that the good news of the Savior’s birth be announced to shepherds who were caring for the sheep to be used as sacrifices for the sins of the people.

Shepherds were at the bottom of the social/religious ladder, as there were often uneducated, unable to keep the Sabbath regulations, and therefore ceremonially unclean, and considered to be unwholesome and dishonest, to the degree that were not allowed to testify in court (along with tax collectors). And yet two of the most prominent men in Israel’s history were shepherds: Moses and David.

In the Old Testament God is referred to as the Shepherd of Israel, and Jesus says (**John 10:11**), “I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep,” and Peter, the first pastor in the Church of God (**1Peter 5:4**) calls Jesus the “Chief Shepherd.”

**Luke 2:8-11** tells us that the shepherds were in the vicinity of Bethlehem, out in the fields. It was the normal practice to let sheep graze during the day and then to move them to a protected area in the evening, a sheepfold, where they would be safe from predators and or thieves. It was here that the angel of the Lord appeared before them, and the brightness of the *glory of God* shined all around them. It must have been frightening for those shepherds.

Note: God’s glory had been manifested to Israel in the wilderness when the tabernacle was dedicated, and then again when the temple was dedicated. But because of Israel’s sin and rebellion against God, God’s glory left the temple and departed Israel until this very night in the fields surrounding Bethlehem.

An angel manifesting God’s glory was announcing the good news of the Savior, who would redeem from humanity those who would believe in and obey this child now born in Bethlehem. The angels tells the shepherds not to be afraid, for they are proclaiming the very best news, “which will be for all the people, for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

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God singled out these lowly shepherds to be the first witnesses of the salvation that had come to earth, for God the Father sent His One and Only Son to be the Savior of the world, as John wrote (**1John 4:14**), “We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.”

The frightened shepherds (**Luke 2:12**) are given a sign to look for in the city of David, in Bethlehem (they are to find a newborn baby wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger), proving this is indeed is the **Savior, Christ the Lord**. There would not have been many other babies born in a village of that size that night, let alone one who had been placed in an animal feeding trough. That should narrow down their search for Jesus.

Jesus’s name means “the Lord is salvation,” or “the Lord saves,” meaning He is the Savior. Remember how Joseph was told by the angel (**Matthew 1:21**), “you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Jesus came to resolve, to remedy, to do away with by His own willful sacrificial death, mankind’s major problem, sin; and by His own sovereign resurrection He demonstrated eternal life for all who believe in and follow Him.

The title “Christ,” is an exalted title meaning “anointed one,” or “holy one,” He is the Messiah [Hebrew], the Christ [Greek], the KING of Kings and LORD of Lords. In **Revelation 1:7-8**, the return of Christ is in view, “Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him. So it is to be. Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega,’ says the Lord God, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’”

To say that the Christ Child is Lord, is to say He is God. When used as a reference to Jesus Christ [Greek *kurios* = *Lord*], conveys all that is implied by the tetragrammaton *YHWH* [pronounced *Yahweh*] the Hebrew name of God transliterated in four letters which the Septuagint [the Greek version of the Old Testament] translates as *kurios*. This is the name of God (**Exodus 3:14-15**), “God said to Moses, ‘I AM WHO I AM’; and ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, I AM has sent me to you. ‘God, furthermore, said to Moses, ‘Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, The Lord, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you. ‘This is My name forever, and this is My memorial-name to all generations.” (The most common fundamental confession of Christianity is, “Jesus is Lord” (**1Corinthians 12:3**), “no one can say, [truthfully] ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.”)

December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – (full sermon notes)

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Look again at **Luke 2:13-14**... While the angel is speaking to the shepherds, a multitude of angels appear, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” A large number of angelic hosts are giving praise to God in heaven, for the peace God is granting to those on earth upon whom God’s favor rests. The peace of God is only realized through faith in God’s Son, who is Christ the Lord, Savior of all who believe in Him.!

**Colossians 1:19-20**, “For it was the *Father’s* good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, *I say*, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

**Romans 5:1**, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Hebrews 13:20-22**, “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

*Pastor Mike*

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