

His Birth

This is a wonderful time of year, one in which we reflect on the birth of our Lord, the Savior of the world, Jesus Christ. Sadly, for many in our day, it's simply a season that is consumed with gifts, gatherings, and busyness. Most never stop to consider the eternal significance of what took place on that fateful day that our blessed Lord entered the world through the womb of a virgin. There are few among us who haven't heard the account of His birth, but many regard it as just a story that has been handed down through the ages. Many find it hard to believe that God would, in fact, come in the form of a man to die upon a cross for the sins of the world.

I'm glad that it is much more than a story to me. I believe that it's all true. I rejoice for the day that the angels proclaimed that a child had been born in Bethlehem of Judea. Had there been no birth in Bethlehem, there could have been no death outside Jerusalem. Had Jesus not come as a humble babe, we would have no means of redemption. What I have to share with you are simple truths that we have all read and heard before, but I am convinced that we need to be reminded again and again of the wonder and majesty of our Savior's birth.

I want to take a few moments to examine the details of this divine encounter as we consider His birth. First of all, His birth was no accident. We're all familiar with newspaper announcements concerning the birth of a child, the newborn, the parents' names, date, place, and so forth. In Luke, we find the birth announcement of our Lord. These verses teach that His birth was no accident. His birth was planned. We have precise information in the Word of God.

First, we see that His birth was at an appointed time. Luke 1:26 says, *And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth.*

God had determined that the appointed time for the birth of His only begotten Son had arrived. This was no ordinary occasion and it was no ordinary birth. Theologians estimate that the world had existed some six thousand years prior to the birth of our Lord. There had been literally millions of male children born since the dawn of creation but none like Jesus.

As the calendar of God reached the moment that was appointed before the foundation of the world, news came from God's messenger Gabriel that a Son would be born. It's hard for me to grasp that the One who has no beginning and no end would come to the Earth. In eternity past, God set the date for His arrival and that time had come.

Galatians 4:4-5: *⁴But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, ⁵To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*

The time had come, but it had been anticipated since Adam walked in the garden. In Genesis 3:15, we have the prophecy of the coming of our Lord, the first mention. It says there, *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman....* Now, the Lord God is talking here to Satan, to the devil, to the serpent, what have you there, after Adam and Eve had sinned, and God said, *I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

Jesus, of course, would be the seed of the woman. Satan would bruise His heel, but that is not a deadly wound. That would be Christ going to the cross. And of course, we know that Christ rose from the dead, but the Bible says that He, Jesus Christ, is going to crush... He's going to bruise the head of Satan. Satan's days are numbered. His days are coming to an end.

Well, the Redeemer would come as the seed of a woman. Isaiah prophesied of His birth some seven hundred years before His coming. Isaiah 7:14: *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

Thousands of years of hope were about to be fulfilled in the birth of Christ. His birth was at an appointed time, and His birth also was in an appointed place. The angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee named Nazareth, according to Luke 1:26. God had not only appointed the time, but He had also appointed the place for the arrival of the Savior. Nothing was left to chance or mere circumstance. God had carefully orchestrated every detail of Jesus' birth.

You might argue that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and you're right; He was. The Bible prophesied that Bethlehem would be His birthplace. 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.*

So, what is so significant about Nazareth? Well, the Bible also reveals the prophecy of Jesus being a Nazarene. Matthew 2:23 says, *And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was*

spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Now, all this may seem of little significance, but the trip to Nazareth to Bethlehem was no small undertaking in those days. Nazareth was located some seventy miles north of Bethlehem. Who but God could have orchestrated a birth that would fulfill both prophecies concerning the means of travel and such a vast distance between the two cities? We serve a sovereign God who has complete control.

His birth also involved an appointed people. Luke 1:27: *To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.*

We see here that Jesus was to be born as a man, but the selection of his mother and earthly father were also ordained of God. On the surface, they were ordinary people of humble means, but they met the criteria that God demanded for His Son. Mary was espoused to Joseph who was of the house of David. He was a direct descendent of David and Joseph was of the tribe and lineage of Judah. God had ordained that Jesus was to come through the line of David, the lineage of Judah.

In Genesis 49:10, it says: *The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.*

Isaiah 11:1: *And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots.*

Jeremiah 23:5: *Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*

Joseph's lineage, the husband of Jesus' mother, is recorded in Matthew Chapter 1 and goes back to Abraham through Solomon, David's son. You read about this in Matthew 1:6-7. But you say that Joseph was just an adoptive father. Well, this is true, but he, too, needed to be of the lineage of David for Jesus to be accepted of the Jews.

Mary's lineage is recorded in Luke 3:23-38 and goes back to Adam through Nathan, David's son. Jesus came through the line of David through both Mary and through His adoptive father, Joseph.

His birth was no accident, and His birth was also perfectly planned. Now, we have considered the particulars, the announcement, if you will. Now, let's consider the perfection that surrounded His birth. When we think of this, Christ's birth was no ordinary birth, and of course, these were certainly not ordinary circumstances. I see here that His birth involved purity.

In Luke 1:27-28 and 34, we find that the angel Gabriel appeared unto a virgin. This is declared twice in verse 27 alone. She was highly favored of God. He had looked upon the life and character of Mary and she found favor in His sight. At the announcement of Gabriel, Mary questioned how this thing could possibly be since she had not known a man, in Luke 1:34.

There could be no doubt that Jesus was born of a virgin. The Bible is clear in regard to the purity of Mary. This confirms to us that she was sexually and morally pure before the Lord. You know, modern liberals argue that the word "virgin" is translated from an original word that simply means maiden or young woman. Well, the context of the passage and others is very clear to me and carries the idea of one who has never known a man sexually. If Jesus were to come as God in the flesh, He would

have to come through the womb of a virgin. This was the only way that Jesus could be born in flesh without possessing the sinful nature that all men are born with.

His birth involved purity; His birth involved power. Luke 1:35: *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.* Luke 1:37: *For with God nothing shall be impossible.*

We see His birth involved power. His birth also involved a promise. In Luke 1:27, it says: *To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.*

Luke 1:38: *And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.*

Mary was found to be a virgin of purity prior to this miraculous conception, but she must also remain pure until the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. She humbled herself to the will of God, risking shame and even death. Mary resolved to accept the will of God even if it meant her own demise.

We also see that Christ's birth supplied. What did it supply? We now come to what all of this means to us. Gabriel revealed what this child will do for all men. Notice, the Savior. Luke 1:31: *And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.* His name reveals who He is. He would be called Jesus. Jehovah is salvation in other words. Jesus was no common, ordinary child. He was sent of God to redeem fallen man. He came that He might provide the means of our salvation.

And I see also the Son. Luke 1:32: *He shall be great, and shall be called the son of the Highest....* He is the Son of God. He's God. Because of what Jesus did, we too have the opportunity to be born into the family of God.

Do you know Him as your Savior? Have you experienced that supernatural birth? There's still time for you to say, "Lord, come into my heart. I receive You as my Savior."

Luke 19:10: *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

Will you come to Him?

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