

## Why Jesus Came This Way, Luke 2:1-20 – Christmas Service - Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2008

**To the Politically Correct:** Please accept with no obligation, implied or implicit, my best wishes for an environmentally conscious, socially responsible, low-stress, non-addictive, gender-neutral celebration of the winter solstice holiday, practiced within the most enjoyable traditions of the religious persuasion of your choice, or secular practices of your choice, with respect for the religious/secular persuasion and/or traditions of others, or their choice not to practice religious or secular traditions at all. I also wish you a fiscally successful, personally fulfilling and medically uncomplicated recognition of the onset of the generally accepted calendar year 2009, but not without due respect for the calendars of choice of other cultures whose contributions to society have helped make America great. Not to imply that America is necessarily greater than any other country nor the only America in the Western Hemisphere. Also, this wish is made without regard to the race, creed, color, age, physical ability, religious faith or sexual preference of the wishee.

**To the Biblically Correct:** Please join me in thanking God for our wonderful Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, whose birth we celebrate! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

- For several weeks now, my heart has been directed, by the Holy Spirit, in a very special way in anticipation of this Christmas service.
- Today's message became abundantly clear to me while we were in the shepherds fields overlooking a little town called; "Bethlehem."
- It is to this location that Luke's gospel takes us in recording the events that took place on this one silent and amazing holy night.

**Luke 2:1-20** 1 And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.2 This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.3 So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. 4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,5 to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child.6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.7 And she **brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.** 8 Now there were in the same country **shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night.**9 And behold, **an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them,** and they were greatly afraid.10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, **I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people.**11 For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.12 And this will be the sign to you: **You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.**" 13 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, goodwill toward men!**" 15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.17 Now when they had seen Him, **they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.**18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20 Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them. (NKJV)

- In pondering the birth of Jesus, one has to wonder why God would choose to have Him born in this way, at this time, and in this place.
- This is where God becomes a man, "Immanuel," (God with us), and sends us His only begotten Son, because of His infinite love for us!
- Why would the Savior come at night, as a new born baby, in a little obscure town, then, have it be announced to filthy lowly shepherds?

- You would think that the Savior of the world would be born in a cleaner place, a better town, and then be announced to society's elite.
- I'm keenly aware of the, over 300, prophecies about Jesus' first coming which are fulfilled in the virgin birth in Bethlehem, but why?
- I suggest to you, that the answer to this can bring "comfort, encouragement, peace, goodwill, and good tidings of great joy, to all!"

- Jesus was born in this way, for us here today, as if to say; "I love you, and I want to save you, so you won't perish but have eternal life!"
- I believe that it's for this reason that we have a number of specific details about Jesus' birth, and I would like to look at a few of them.

### **1. Jesus was born at night**

- Jesus was born into a very dark and desperate time spiritually. The world was "in sin and error pining," and needed a Savior.
- This should bring us hope, because Jesus will come in those dark and desperate times in our lives when we need Him the most.
- Also, the darker the dark is, the brighter the light will be. Interestingly, we're told how God's glory brightly shined on the Shepherds.

### **2. Joseph and Mary were alone**

- They're all alone and far away from home. The details indicate Mary herself wrapped Jesus in cloth, and placed him in the manger.

"The narrative runs as if Mary did these things herself, ..."

F.F. Bruce

"That Mary wrapped the child herself points to a lonely birth."

Morris

- This should bring us great comfort, because Jesus is there with us during those times when we feel like we're all alone.
- I've experienced how and am convinced that; "God helps those who cannot help themselves." God helps the helpless and the hopeless.

### 3. It's announced to shepherds

- If it wouldn't have gone first to the shepherds then the "good tidings of great joy which will be to all people," wouldn't have been true.
- In other words, if this will bring great joy to shepherds then it will bring great joy to "all people," from all walks of life, even nobody's.
- This should bring us great encouragement. It demonstrates how that God is attracted to humble people. Why? Because God is humble.

**Philippians 2:5-8** 5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death- even death on a cross! NIV

### 4. He's wrapped in cloth in the manger

- At first glance, the prophetic significance of this can be completely missed. Why no room at the Inn? Why is He placed in a manger?
- Why did He come as a child born into the world? So we could come as a child to Him as the Savior of the world.

**Mark 10:15** I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." NIV

- This is why Jesus was born. He was born to die, in order for us to die to self and be born again. His birth points to His death.
- Jesus' body was wrapped in cloth and then He lay in a stone manger at His birth!
- Jesus' body was wrapped in cloth and then He lay in a stone tomb at His death!

- Jesus came into this life through a virgin's womb, and in His death left this life in an empty tomb.
- One has said that "Jesus entered our world through a door marked "No Entrance" and left through a door marked "No Exit."
- Will you allow him entrance into the door of your life, for the life assurance of heaven when you exit this life?

- It's through His death that we can have life, everlasting. If you've never accepted His payment for your sin by His death, now's the time.
- Jesus didn't tell us to do anything in remembrance of His birth, but He did tell us to do something in remembrance of His death.

**Luke 22:14-21** - 14 When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. 15 And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. 16 For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." 17 After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. 18 For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." 19 And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." 20 In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. NIV