

The Nativity of Our Lord – 2021

Christmas Day: Saturday, December 25 at 10:00



Text: Luke 2:1-21 NIV

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: *The true Christmas story:*

**<sup>1</sup> In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree – thus a command – that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world – which included**

***the land surrounding the Mediterranean Sea*** (inside the dotted line).

**<sup>2</sup> This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. // A census was used to count the people and to collect taxes.**

**<sup>3</sup> And everyone went to his own town to register. <sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the**



**town of Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. //** The trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem was about 100 miles. It probably took Joseph and Mary – *in her nine-month of pregnancy* – about ten days to complete the difficult trip.

Joseph was a descendant of King David *through David's son Solomon*; Mary was also a descendant of King David *through David's son Nathan*.

**<sup>5</sup> He – that is Joseph – went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. // God's Word teaches this order:**

Marriage, and then children, *yet Mary was pregnant and not married!* Why? Because the angel Gabriel said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35).

**<sup>6</sup> While they were there [in Bethlehem], the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son – just as God had promised. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger – a container from which the animals ate, because there was no room for them in the inn. //** It is possible, even probable that at that time many were in

Jerusalem – *only six miles away* – to celebrate the Festival of Tabernacles, which was the third of three festivals in which all Jewish men were required to appear before the LORD in Jerusalem (Deut. 16:16). Some people – *unable to find a place to stay in Jerusalem* – were staying in Bethlehem, so, *no room in the inn!*

**<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. //** Shepherds were looked upon by most as *unimportant* people; they lived simple lives and cared for their sheep. However, *in God's sight, they were very important!* So, God sent them this special message through an angel. The Bible says: **<sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby**

**wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”** // So that very night ***Christ the Lord was born!***

Ever since Adam and Eve fell into sin, the Christ had been promised. Then, *about 2,000 years later*, the Christ was promised to be a future descendant of Abraham, then, later, of Isaac, of Jacob, of Judah, and of David. Then, finally, *when the time was just right*, God the Father sent His Son to put on human flesh in the Person of Jesus. His mission was simple, yet **HUGE**: **Be the ultimate Lamb of God and take away the sin of the world!**

Jesus is God, yet the Bible says: He “**did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness**” (Phil. 2:6-7).

**<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”** // So, who are the ones on whom God’s favor is

resting? “...those who receive the news of the child’s birth in faith. Those are the ‘men of his favor,’ those [are the people] on whom God’s favor rests” (Dr. Arthur Just, Luke Commentary, 111).

So, knowing we ♦ have sinned, ♦ are sorry, and ♦ are trusting in Jesus alone as our Savior, **LET US GREATLY REJOICE!**

**<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”** // So how would the shepherds know which newborn child was the Christ? The angel had said: **“You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”** // Since mangers are only in stables, the shepherds probably began to search stable after stable in Bethlehem, until they found a stable occupied with people, *along with a baby lying in an animal feeding container.* Jesus is so great and yet *He came into the world in such a lowly manner!*

**16** So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. **17** When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, **18** and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. **19** But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. // The shepherds went and told others about ♦the angel, ♦his message, ♦the multitude of angels, ♦finding the baby in the manger, and ♦the tremendous news that ***He is the Savior of the world!*** Mary also had much to ponder: ♦The angel who told her in advance about Jesus, ♦being pregnant and yet a virgin, ♦the angel appearing to Joseph, and ♦the visit from the shepherds.

**20** The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. // Even though we were not present with the shepherds to hear the angel message and see the Christ, ***He also came for us!*** He †lived a sinless life, †was punished for our wrongs, and †laid down His life; ***now He is our risen and reigning Savior!***

**21** On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived. // **JESUS** means: ***The Lord Saves!*** Regarding the name of Jesus, the Bible says: “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Lord Jesus, since we trust in You alone as our Savior, let us ☺be a peace – *knowing our sins are forgiven*, ☺share the good news – *of what You have accomplished for everyone*, and ☺have a most blessed celebration of Your birth!

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