

Christmas Is About Our Savior

The meaning of Christmas has almost been lost in our world. Now most people, even many Christians, think that Christmas is about family. They think it is a time for families to gather together, eat wonderful food, open gifts, talk with each other, and play games. But Christmas is not really about any of those things. Those things can happen any time of the year.

Christmas is about so much more than that. Christmas is about the birth of Jesus Christ. So, on December 24 or 25 we rejoice in God's faithfulness and love. As expressed in the birth of His son called Jesus. So, I would like to have you join me as I read Luke 2:1-7. It tells us,

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. 4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, 5 in order to register along with

Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:1-7 (NASB)

This is a wonderful and encouraging passage. Not only does it describe the birth of a baby boy named Jesus in the city of Bethlehem. It reveals that God is faithful to His promises. Now I want to give you seven reasons why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ!

Messiah Was Born In The First Century. First the reason is given to us in verses 1 and 2. They are surprisingly simple verses, and yet, extremely important from a prophetic viewpoint. Why do I say that? The answer is that Micah who prophesied about 735-710 B.C. said this in chapter five, and verse 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.” Micah 5:2 (NASB)

The prophet Micah gave this prophesy almost seven hundred years before Christ was born. It is very important to remember that this prophecy was given seven hundred years before it actually occurred. The prophet said that the Messiah would be born in the city called Bethlehem Ephrathah. Micah prophesied the Messiah would be from antiquity past and from the days of eternity. That is, this One was an eternal being. Only God existed in eternity past. Only God is eternal. No man could have fulfilled that prophecy.

One evidence we know that this prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus is that Luke 2:1-2 reports that Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem. He fulfilled Micah’s prophecy.

A second evidence we know that this prophecy was fulfilled is that Matthew 2:1-5 tells us that when the magi arrived in Jerusalem, the magi asked King Herod where the king of the Jews would be born. King Herod then inquired of the chief priests and scribes where the King of the Jews would be born. Matthew 2:4a-6 records the answer of the chief priests and scribes. It says,

Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written 1by the prophet:
6 ‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH.’” Matthew 2:4a-6

This means the Jewish religious leaders understood that the prophecy in Micah 5:2 said the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. It is not just our opinion. It was the opinion of those Jewish leaders who rejected Jesus as the Christ.

A third evidence that the prophecy was fulfilled is that even modern Jewish rabbis admit that the ancient Jewish interpretation of Micah 5:2 said that the Messiah was expected to arrive during the first century A.D. The fourth evidence the prophecy was fulfilled is that the early church father Jerome reports the Jews believed the Christ would arrive in the first or second century. The fifth evidence that the prophecy was

fulfilled is that Flavius Josephus, a Jewish historian for the Romans, reported that the Jews expected the Messiah to arrive in the first century A.D.

Finally, Luke 2:1-2 gives us the sixth evidence that the prophecy was fulfilled. It tells us that Jesus was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus and while Quirinius was governor of Syria. That means this event occurred between 2-3 B.C. The seventh evidence that the prophecy was fulfilled is that Pontius Pilate, and others report that Jesus did miracles, and died on a cross. That occurred in the year AD. 33. This means that Christ was born according to the prophecy. Christ’s birth fulfilled the prophecy of Micah 5:2. Now that is reason to celebrate! Merry Christmas.

Messiah Would Become A King. The second reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ is that verse 4 says Joseph was a descendant of King David. That is, Joseph and his sons were in the kingly line of David. Verse 7 also says that Jesus was a first-born son. That means he had the right to the throne of David. That fulfilled another prophecy. In Isaiah 9:6-7a we are told,

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
There will be no end to the increase of His government
or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom . . . Isaiah
9:6-7a (NASB)

Jesus is the King who will one day rule as the king over the entire world!

Messiah Would Be Virgin Born. The third reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ is that verse 5 tells us that Jesus was virgin born. The verse says Mary was “engaged” to Joseph and that she was with child. The Greek word for “engaged” means that they were not married yet. Matthew 2:25 says that Joseph kept her a virgin until she gave birth. As a result, Jesus was virgin born. He was born without a sin nature.

That is another fulfillment of prophecy because Isaiah 7:14 teaches that the Messiah would be virgin born. Our eternal God only needed a woman for this to happen, and Mary agreed to give birth to the long-awaited Messiah. It is interesting that Isaiah contains about thirty prophecies about the Messiah, and the virgin birth is one of them.

I wonder if Joseph and Mary understood all of the prophecies that had been fulfilled that night. I believe they did. I believe they would have had searched the Scriptures to learn about this Child after the angel Gabriel had visited Mary and Joseph. I believe they were rejoicing because they had a sense they were doing God's will. But they did not know what was going to happen in the next few hours.

Angels Announced Jesus Is The Messiah. A fourth reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ is that a host of angels visited some poor shepherds, who were out in a field at night with their sheep on a cold December evening. The early church fathers tell us that Christ was born in Bethlehem. The early church father John Chrysostom, gives a lengthy defense for December 25 as the date of Christ's birth. That means the evening was most likely a cold night. Maybe there was snow on the ground. Some have said that because of cold night air, Jesus could not have been in December. But their comments reveal that they never lived in farm country. Modern photographs document that shepherds and sheep do remain outside in the December night air even in snow. Then a host of angels visited them.

I believe the angels visited the shepherds for one main reason. They were curious about Christ. 1 Peter 1:12 says that the angels were longing to understand the prophecies about Christ the Messiah. I think God the Father gave the angels the opportunity to make the announcement about the Messiah to these shepherds because the angels longed to know more Christ. The angels must have had great joy in giving the announcement. We know the shepherds were extremely happy because they hurried to find their Messiah. When they arrived at the manger, they found Jesus, their Messiah.

Angels Praised God the Father. A fifth reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ is that God the Father is finally honored, praised and adored by the angels for what He had done! Notice that Luke 2:13-14 records the angels'

praise. It says,

*And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,
"Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."*

Luke 2:13-14 (NASB)

They praised God the Father. I think they did this because God the Father planned the birth of Christ. He is the One who sent Gabriel to Mary and Joseph. He was the One who caused this to happen at the right time. Romans 5:6 says the birth and death of Christ happened at the "right time."

Shepherds Shared The Announcement. A sixth reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ is that the shepherds left the field and hurried to find Jesus. In the process they encouraged Mary, Joseph, and everyone to whom they spoke. Notice that Luke 2:15-20 says,

When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them. Luke 2:15-20 (NASB)

We are told the shepherds shared the angel's announcement to Mary and Joseph, and then to many other people. The angels were the first evangelists and the shepherds were the next evangelists who shared the good news about Jesus.

We are told that Mary pondered all that she heard. That is, she kept remembering and thinking about all the events. She

must have understood the prophecies. The birth of Jesus was the culmination of all the prophecies. She and Joseph would have known that God the Father had planned all the events because they had been visited by the angel Gabriel and the testimony of the excited shepherds. That was a Christmas better than being with any family, having a feast, giving gifts, and playing games. Why?

Angels Announced Jesus Is Our Savior. The answer gives us the seventh reason why we should rejoice in the birth of Christ. Notice that in verse 11, the angels announced,

... for today in the city of David there has been born
for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:11
(NASB)

That is the highlight of the account about the birth of Jesus Christ. It is the reason for His birth. The announcement reveals that Jesus is our God and our Savior.

Conclusion. Romans 1:2-4 summarizes the birth of Christ. It says that God the Father . . .

... promised beforehand through His prophets in the
holy Scriptures, 3 concerning His Son, who was born of
a descendant of David according to the flesh, 4 who was
declared the Son of God with power by the resurrec-
tion from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness,
Jesus Christ our Lord. . . Romans 1:2-4 (NASB)

The first Christmas was a happy occasion for God the Father, the angels, the shepherds, Mary, Joseph, and for people around the world who are Christians. The birth of Christ offers us hope for the future. It is more evidence that God offers sinners forgiveness of sins, when they truly believe in Christ. Then they will receive forgiveness of their sins, and obtain eternal life. Merry Christmas!