

Jesus “The” Christ (Slide 1)

“The Messiah is Born!!”

Reading: Luke 2:1-14

(Slide 2) How exciting it must have been for Mary and Joseph, a couple of great faith, to now have their baby, “*The*” *Child*!

We that have been so blessed to have our own children and grandchildren can relate to that type of joy.

Yet, we rejoice differently for this Child because He will be special. Unique in that there is no one like Him or will be anyone like Him, nor could do what He will and has done.

This is “*The*” *Child* in which the great prophets predicted would come and who did come exactly in the manner they had prophesied.

How wonderfully blessed Mary was to give birth to this *Man Child* who would become and has become the *Savior* of the world!

How great for humanity! Remember the words of the Angel as recorded in Luke; (Slide 3) “***I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people***”

In this month of December, we have looked at the Prophecies about Jesus in Isaiah 53 and read of their fulfillment in the New Testament.

In addition to prophecy written some 700 years before He was born, we have prophecy about Him just prior to His birth.

What the angel states to the shepherds regarding the good news about what the Child will shortly do is one example. Even the birth and life of His forerunner was predicted.

“*John the Baptist*” became a major partner in the ministry of *Jesus “The” Christ* as he made the path straight for the coming Messiah. Zecharias, being filled with the Holy Spirit, spoke about his son *John* in this way:

Luke 1:68-69, 76-79 (Slide 4)

68 “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us

In the house of David His servant—

(Slide 5) 76 *“And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS;*

77 To give to His people the knowledge of salvation

By the forgiveness of their sins,

(Slide 6) 78 *Because of the tender mercy of our God,*

With which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,

79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way of peace.”

John himself predicted the impact Jesus would have on mankind when he sees him approach the water of which he was baptizing;

John 1:24-30 (Slide 7)

24 Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. 25 They asked him, and said to him, “Why then are you baptizing, if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?”

26 John answered them saying, “I baptize in water, but among you stands One whom you do not know. (Slide 8) 27 It is He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie.” 28 These things took place in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

29 The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, (Slide 9) “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! 30 This is He on behalf of whom I said, ‘After me comes a Man who has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’

Luke records that the information he is writing was provided to him by eyewitnesses. However, he didn't just write down what he was told, he did a thorough investigation to make sure what he wrote was “true.”

The birth of the forerunner that is; John the Baptist was foretold first in the book of Luke. Zacharius, who was a priest during the reign of king Herod and Elizabeth, his wife who the bible makes clear were both righteous in the sight of God, had no children.

The writer Luke says that it was because Elizabeth was barren and they were both “*advanced in years.*” In other words, she couldn't have children and they were too old. For her to become pregnant would require no less than an act of God!

Zacharius was about doing his priestly service in the temple of God and suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared in front of him standing to the right of the altar of incense. I think it's important to notice that the angel was “standing.” Which indicates that he appeared as a man. He was startled and gripped with fear when he saw the angel. Perhaps in part because no one else should be within the Temple. I believe he recognized right away that though the angel looked like a man, he wasn't an ordinary man. But before he could wonder any longer the angel spoke to him:

Luke 12b-17 (Slide 10)

“Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine (Slide 11) or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy

Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. 17 It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, (Slide 12) TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Zacharius was perplexed at this statement because his wife was barren and they were both beyond child bearing years and though he prayed for it, he didn't believe it. He was then made unable to speak until after the child was born.

It seems those who were there during John's birth were intent on naming the child Zacharius after his father which was customary, but Elizabeth said no! His name will be John. But they said *"no one in your family has that name"* and they questioned his father about the name and he motioned for a tablet and he wrote *"His name is John"* and at once he could speak.

John began his ministry as a forerunner for Christ before he even opened his mouth. This incident caused astonishment because they knew something miraculous happened.

Jesus' Birth Foretold

The angel Gabriel came to Mary and the following is the interchange between the two:

Luke 1:26-38 (Slide 13)

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! (slide 14) The Lord is with you." 29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. 30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a (Slide 15) son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." 34 Mary said to the angel, (Slide 16) "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" 35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. 36 And behold, even your (Slide 17) relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God." 38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

If anyone had ever doubted who Christ would become and the impact He would have, then they either have never heard what happened when Mary visited Elizabeth or they simply do not believe by faith.

Luke 1:39-45 (Slide 18)

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When

Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; (remember, John was filled with the Holy Spirit in the womb) and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. (Slide 19) 42 And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? 44 For behold, when the sound of (Slide 20) your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

In the next section, Zacharius speaks with the guidance of The Holy Spirit about the ***"horn of salvation"*** that has come.

Prophesying about John he says; (Slide 21) ***"And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; (Luke 1:76)***

Mary, the mother of Jesus spoke these words of prophecy before the Christ Child was born;

(Slide 22) ***Luke 1:46-55***

46 And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.

(Slide 23) ***49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name. 50 "AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM. 51 "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.***

(Slide 24) ***52 "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. 53 "HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; And sent away the rich empty-handed.***

(Slide 25) ***54 "He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, 55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his descendants forever."***

Mary spoke all this because she knew that Jesus would be great and that He would change the world and indeed He has!

Although she may have not completely understood who her child would become and what He would have to do, she never doubted nor wavered nor tried to convince Him otherwise to protect Him from certain death. She watched and observed and was amazed!

We are amazed even to this day as to what Jesus has done for us!!

Invitation

On *Christmas* many celebrate, remember, reflect and rejoice, for the *"Christ Child"* was born, He lived, He died, arose from the grave to life, ascended to Heaven and has brought the opportunity for every man and woman the hope for eternity through His blood sacrifice.

The question is posed to you today. Have you been washed in the blood of the Lamb? If not, don't delay. Submit yourself to Him, through Baptism and become a child of God!!

If you have once been washed as white as snow but the world has once again soiled your garments, it's not too late. Your walk can be restored. Can we pray for you and with you this day and help you reclaim your path of faith?
Please let us know how we can help you this day.

Reading:

Luke 2:1-14

1 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.

8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

*14 "Glory to God in the highest,
And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."*

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