

The Miracle Of Christmas

(Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-56; 2:1-38)

Intro: The miracle of Christmas is the gift of God's Son, Jesus Christ, who came into this world through a virgin conception. The Apostle John tells us in the first chapter of his gospel, that the eternal Word, Jesus Christ, became flesh and dwelt among us, in order to reveal the glory of God the Father to all who receive Him. We read in John 1, verse 11-13 "He, Jesus, came to His own (the Jewish people), and those who were His own did not receive Him. **12** But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe on His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The new birth as a Christian is supernatural and therefore has nothing to do with natural birth or human achievement. Salvation is the gracious gift of God to everyone who believes in His Son, Jesus Christ, as Savior.

This brothers and sisters is the true meaning of Christmas: God the Father's gracious provision of His Son as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29) is the Miracle of Christmas. This morning I would like for us to just review God's gracious provision of Christ our Savior as recorded in Luke 1 and 2 and Matthew 1. A provision I am calling **the Miracle of Christmas!** Look with me at the Announcements of Christ's Birth, the Advent of Christ our Savior, and the Adoration of Christ Our Savior.

I. The Announcements Of Christ's Birth (Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 1:18-25)

A. The announcement to Mary (Luke 1:26-38)

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, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." **29** But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. **30** And 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 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** And Mary said to the angel, "How can

this be, since I am a virgin?” **35** And 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 offspring shall be called the Son of God. **36** “And behold, even your 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; be it done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy (1:24), the angel Gabriel was sent from God to inform a young virgin named Mary that she had found favor with God, and had been chosen to conceive, and to bear a son, who she would name Jesus, meaning “Yahweh is Salvation.”

This child would be no ordinary child. Gabriel tells Mary in **verse 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.”

Mary’s son would be the Son of the Most High God. Jesus was unique, for He was God from all eternity and yet He joined Himself to humanity. He is the God-man possessing all the attributes of deity (Phil. 2:6) and all the attributes of humanity (apart from sin). 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.” Jesus is the Davidic Messiah, who will reign over the house of Jacob, Israel, when He returns to establish His Millennial Kingdom following the Great Tribulation (2 Sam. 7:12-16; Rev. 19–20). His kingdom will never end.

Look at Mary’s perplexed response and submissive attitude, **vs. 34-38** And Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?”

Mary was puzzled over Gabriel’s announcement. How could she possibly conceive and give birth to a Son, since she was a virgin? Although she was engaged to be married to Joseph, she had never had sexual contact with a man. Gabriel responds to Mary in **verses 35-37** “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. **36** “And behold, even your 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.”

The angel Gabriel assures Mary that the power of God’s Holy Spirit would overshadow her, and supernaturally bring about the physical conception of Jesus. For that reason the holy offspring she would conceive and give birth to shall be called the Son of God. This miraculous conception and virgin birth of Jesus Christ was necessary because of His deity and preexistence (Isa. 7:14; 9:6).

Mary responds in total submission and faith, **v. 38** And Mary said, “Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her. Mary affirmed her part in giving birth to God’s Son’s by assenting to the plan of God. She calls herself a bondservant of the Lord. She submits herself as a slave to God.

If you read on in **vv. 38-56** Mary departs immediately to visit her cousin Elizabeth, no doubt to confirm the angel’s message that Elizabeth was going to have a child. This would bolster Mary’s faith in the angel’s message that she was going to conceive and give birth to the Son of God. Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and pronounces a blessing on Mary because she believed what God had revealed to her by the angel.

Look next at the angel’s announcement to Joseph in **Matthew 1:18-25**

B. The announcement to Joseph (Matthew 1:18-25)

Following her three-month stay with Elizabeth, Mary returns home to Nazareth. It is obvious by this time that she is pregnant. Matthew records Joseph’s reaction to Mary’s pregnancy in chapter **1:18-25**

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows. When His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. **19** And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her, desired to put her away secretly. **20** But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. **21** “And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.” **22** Now all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, **23** “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD, AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL

CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”

Matthew recounts Joseph’s struggle over Mary’s pregnancy. Joseph loved Mary dearly, but he couldn’t accept her claims to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. His love for Mary was demonstrated by his actions. **19** Joseph, being a righteous and gracious man, decided to put Mary away quietly and discreetly. **20** But when Joseph considered putting Mary away, behold an angel of the Lord, probably Gabriel, appeared to him in a dream. The angel told Joseph “do not to be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the child which has been conceived in her was by the power of God the Holy Spirit. The Son Mary would bear was to be called Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.”

The angel goes on to explain in vv. **22-24** that the birth of Jesus was the fulfillment of God’s promise to the prophet Isaiah that a virgin would conceive and give birth to the Son of God. **Isaiah 7:14** “Behold a virgin will conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which translated means, ‘God is with us’.”

We read of Joseph’s reaction in verses 24-25 “And Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, 25 and kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.” Joseph must have been filled with joy.

Turn back to Luke chapter 2 and follow along as I read the account of the Advent Of Christ Our Savior, Luke 2:1-20

II. The Advent Of Christ Our Savior (Luke 2:1-20)

Luke 2:1 Now it came about in those days that 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 all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. 4 And 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 And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

The account of Jesus' birth fulfills numerous Old Testament prophecies concerning the birth of Israel's promised Messianic Savior. First, a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. This census is believed to have taken place prior to 4 B.C. The census required every male Jew to register in their ancestral home. Joseph and Mary's ancestral home was Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph both knew from the angel's revelations that their child was the Messiah. They may have also known from **Micah 5:2** that Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem. During their stay in Bethlehem, v. 7 Mary gave birth to her first-born son. The fact that Jesus is called Mary's first-born implies that Mary had other sons and daughters. According to tradition, there was no room in the Bethlehem Inn, so Jesus was born in a cave under or very near the inn.

The first to visit the new-born King were some shepherds who were tending their flocks out in Bethlehem's fields, **Luke 2:8-20**

8 And 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** And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall 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** "And 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." **15** And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that 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** And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. **17** And 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 up all these things, pondering them in her heart. **20** And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them. The only valid response to the good news of salvation in Christ is expressing praise and glory unto God! **21** And when eight days were completed before His circumcision, His name

was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. Again, Jesus means **“Yahweh our Savior!”** This my friends is **the Miracle of Christmas**, that God would send His holy Son to be the Savior of sinful men! **“Praise God for our blessed Savior, Jesus!”**

III. The Adoration Of Christ Our Savior (Luke 2:22-38)

22 And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought the baby Jesus up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord **23** (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “EVERY first-born MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD”), **24** and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, “A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES, OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS”

A. The adoration by Simeon (2:25-32)

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. **26** And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. **27** And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, **28** then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,
29 “Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart
 In peace, according to Thy word;
30 For my eyes have seen Thy salvation,
31 Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples,
32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES,
 And the glory of Thy people Israel.”

33 And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. **34** And Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed — **35** and a sword will pierce even your own soul — to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

B. The adoration by the prophetess Anna (2:36-38)

36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, **37** and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. **38** And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Conclusion

The adoration by you and me. The Christ of Christmas is the ultimate joy of life! His incarnation should lead to a joyous celebration among His people. Christ is born! The Savior is here! And He is Lord! Let us praise Him this Christmas morning and everyday throughout the New Year!

What is Christ to you?

The Christ of Christmas came to save people from sin.

The Christ of Christmas is God's salvation *for you*.

So take Christ to be your Savior this Christmas morning! Confess your sinfulness, and find your salvation in the Christ of Christmas.