

A Historical Study On The Book Of Luke
Teaching #19: The Historical Details Of The Birth Of The Messiah/Christ - Part 2
Luke 2:6-20

In our previous study, we began examining the historical details of the birth of the Messiah/Christ.

- **DETAIL #1: The TIMING Of The Messiah's/Christ's Birth**
- **DETAIL #2: The CENSUS at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.**
- **DETAIL #3: The JOURNEY to Bethlehem at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.**

We are on **DETAIL #4**.

DETAIL #4: The BIRTH of the Messiah/Christ.

Luke 2:6

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth...

While they were there – Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem.

The time came for the baby to be born...

What does ***the time came for the baby to be born*** refer to?

FIRST: The time for Mary to give birth to the Messiah/Christ.

Biologically, it was time for Mary to give birth.

SECOND: The time Gabriel foretold to Daniel.

Prophetically, it was time for the Messiah to be born.

The angel Gabriel gave Daniel a **DETAILED** prophecy concerning the future years of Israel and the **DATE** the Messiah was to come.

Daniel 9:21-27

*Gabriel...instructed me and spoke with me, saying: "...Seventy weeks [490 years] are decreed for your people and your holy city to stop their transgression, to put an end to sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy Place. Know and understand this: **From the issuance of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem [Jerusalem had been destroyed by Babylon and a decree would be issued to rebuild], until the Messiah, the Prince, there will be seven weeks [49 years] and sixty-two weeks [434 years].** It will be rebuilt with streets and a trench, but in times of distress. Then after the sixty-two weeks [49 + 434 = 483 years] the Messiah will be cut off [die] and will have nothing. Then the people who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end will come like a*

*flood, and until the end there will be war; desolations have been decreed. And he will confirm a covenant with many for **one week [7 years]**, but in the middle of the week he will put an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of the temple will come the abomination that causes desolation, until the decreed destruction is poured out upon him."*

Let's breakdown these weeks.

Each week = 7 years.

There are 70 weeks (70 weeks x 7 years) = 490 years.

As indicated in Daniel 9:21-27, the 70 weeks, or 490 years, are divided into **THREE PERIODS OF TIME**.

Period #1: 7 weeks (7 weeks x 7 years) = 49 years

Period #2: 62 weeks (62 weeks x 7 years) = 434 years

Period #3: 1 week = 7 years

49 years + 434 years + 7 years = 490 years

Let's look at Daniel 9:25.

Daniel 9:25

Know and understand this: From the issuance of the decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem [457 BC when Ezra returned to Jerusalem to rebuild Jerusalem], until the Messiah, the Prince, there will be seven weeks [49 years] and sixty-two weeks [434 years].

The decree was issued in **457 BC** (some say the decree was in **444 BC** and calculate the time differently, but they still arrive at the same date) which takes us to 27 AD.

457 BC + 483 (periods 1 and 2) years = **27 AD**.

The Messiah presented himself to the nation of Israel and began his ministry around 27 AD.

This was probably when he was baptized to reveal himself to Israel.

John 1:29-34 (see also Matthew 3:13)

*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! This is the one I meant when I said, 'A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was **that he might be revealed to Israel**." Then John gave this testimony: "I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.' I have seen and I testify that this is God's Chosen One."*

Luke wrote in **Luke 3:23** that Jesus was about **thirty years old** when he began his ministry.

Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry.

Subtracting 30 years of age from 27 AD equals 3 BC.

This would have the birth of Jesus: around 3 BC.

Most scholars believe the birth of Jesus occurred between 4 BC and 2 BC.

So based upon the prophecy in Daniel, the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth had arrived as stated in **Luke 2:6.**

Recommended Videos On Daniel's Prophecies:

[The Date of Jesus' Birth by Nelson Walters](#)

[The Prophecies of Daniel Explained by Nelson Walters](#)

Recommended Book: [70 Times 7 by Nelson Walters](#)

Article on 457 BC being the date of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem: [Scriptural Support For 457BC](#)

Article on 444 BC being the date of the decree to rebuild Jerusalem: [When God Wound The Clock](#)

Disclaimer: Nelson Walters provides in depth Bible study. However, I am not suggesting anyone embrace his teachings. I am providing them for your own personal study and conclusions. I would recommend studying what others have taught as well. Understanding Bible prophecy is difficult. Nelson is one of many who have a passion to understand prophecy. He does have some interesting observations that are worthy of further study.

We are examining what does ***the time came for the baby to be born*** refer to?

FIRST: The time for Mary to give birth to the Messiah/Christ.

Biologically, it was time for Mary to give birth.

SECOND: The time Gabriel foretold to Daniel.

Prophetically, it was time for the Messiah to be born.

The angel Gabriel gave Daniel a very detailed prophecy concerning the future years of Israel and the date the Messiah was to come.

THIRD: The time God set aside to send his Son.

Spiritually, it was time for Jesus to be born to redeem (free, release) people from the law.

Galatians 4:4-6

But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive our adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

The law of Moses was established by God in Exodus 24:8 when animals were sacrificed. The law was in effect until Jesus died on the cross, establishing the new testament of grace.

Starting in Exodus and continuing through Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, is:

- Exodus 1-18: The **LIBERATION** from Egyptian captivity for the Jewish people.
- Exodus 19-Deuteronomy: The **EXPLANATION** of the law to the Jewish people (God would eventually redeem them, or free-release them, from this law)
- Exodus 19-Deuteronomy: The **FORMATION** of the nation Israel.

There was **ONE LAW** with **MANY PARTS**.

-PART ONE: The Ten Commandments Laws

The Ten Commandments consisted of a set of **SPIRITUAL LAWS**, a **PARENTING LAW**, and a set of **MORAL LAWS**.

-SPIRITUAL LAWS – Commandments #1-4 were the spiritual laws governing people's relationship with God.

-PARENTAL LAW – Commandment #5, requiring children to obey their parents

-MORAL/RELATIONAL LAWS – Commandments #6-10 - the moral/relations laws governing people's relationship with each other.

-PART TWO: The Offering Laws (Leviticus and Deuteronomy)

The offerings consisted of animal sacrifices, grain offerings, peace offerings sin offerings, and guilt offerings.

-PART THREE: The Social and Dietary Laws (Leviticus and Deuteronomy)

The **social laws** were additional laws that governed people's relationship with one another in Israel and that governed the people's relationship with those outside of Israel.

The **dietary laws** regulated what the people of Israel could and could not eat.

-PART FOUR: The Sabbaths and Festivals (Leviticus 23)

The **Sabbaths** were a set of laws setting aside a period of time for **REST** for the people, servants, animals, and land.

The **Festivals** were a set of laws setting aside certain days for remembrance, observance, and celebration.

Even though the law was meant to provide for the well-being of the Jewish people, it was heavy and burdensome (see Acts 15:10). They people rebelled to the law, thus revealing their sinfulness. The revelation of their sinfulness revealed their need for the gift of righteousness freely provided by grace in Jesus (Acts 15:11; Romans 3-8).

In Romans, Paul taught that not only the Jews were under the law but the Gentiles were as well. The Gentiles were **only** under the Ten Commandments because these commandments were written on the hearts of Gentiles (Romans 2:14-15). This meant that the Gentiles had the knowledge of good and evil written on their hearts and were responsible for living morally as a result. Both the Jews (who had the law written on stone) and the Gentiles (who had the law written on their hearts) transgressed the Ten Commandments, marking themselves sinners and bringing judgment upon themselves.

The law revealed the sinfulness of all people, Jews and Gentiles, and condemned all people. God demonstrated his love for us all when, through Jesus, he died for us (Romans 5:8). Through faith in Jesus, we are declared innocent of all sins and are declared righteous (justified). As a result, we are at peace with God (no longer under judgment and condemnation but fully forgiven and innocent of all sins; as a result, we are declared righteous by God). We now relate to God through his grace provided for us in Jesus and no longer according to the law.

Remember, we are studying...

Luke 2:6

*While they were there, **the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth...***

Galatians 4:4-6

But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive our adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

The time came for Jesus came to **REDEEM** people from the law and to **RECONCILE** people to God.

- **Redeem** is God *setting* the people of Israel free from the law of Moses (Galatians 4:4-5).

Note: Even though the Ten Commandments came to an end with along with its punishments, the morality of the law continues, but not in the form of commandments. Paul in his letters to the churches teaches on morality **but not in the form of the Ten Commandments**. He teaches on morality as a way of life. For example, see Ephesians 4-5 and Colossians 3.

- **Reconcile** is God *sending* Jesus into our hearts enabling us to know him as our loving Father.

Note: Paul explained reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 as all of our sins being counted against Jesus when he died, leaving none to be counted against us. Reconciliation is when God, through Jesus, removed the barrier of sin separating humanity from himself, thus, clearing the way for anyone to be in relationship with him. When we place our faith in Jesus, we are reconciled to God (brought into relationship with God). God then sends the Spirit of Jesus into our hearts enabling us to know God as our loving Father (Galatians 4:6).

When the time came for this redemption and reconciliation to happen, God sent Jesus, born of Mary.

Galatians 4:4-6

But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive our adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, you are also an heir through God.

This takes us back to Luke 2:6-7

Luke 2:6-7

*While they were there, **the time came for the baby to be born**, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

We have looked at the:

- **BIOLOGICAL** time for Mary to give birth.
- **PROPHETICAL** time for the Messiah to be born
- **SPIRITUAL** time for God to redeem people from the law and reconcile people to himself.

Let's continue our study of Luke 2:6-7 – ***she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.***

Son

Mary gave birth to Jesus, her firstborn. A son.

It is important to note that Mary had a **son**. This fulfills the prophecy of **Genesis 3:15** and **Isaiah 9:6-7** that a male child, a son, would be born into the human race through the nation of Israel who would be the world's King and Savior (see Luke #18).

Because Jesus was Mary's **firstborn**, we can deduce that Jesus had siblings. These siblings are listed in Mark.

Mark 6:1-3

"Isn't this the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? Aren't His sisters here with us as well?"

See also: Matthew 13:55-56; see also Matthew 12:46; Luke 8:19; Mark 3:31; John 7:1-10; Acts 1:14; Galatians 1:19.

NOTE: Jesus was the half-brother to his brothers and sisters because Joseph was not the biological son of Joseph. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary supernaturally become pregnant with the Messiah (Luke 1:35).

Let's return to **Luke 2:6-7**.

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

After giving birth, Mary:

- **WRAPPED** Jesus in cloths
- and
- **PLACED** him in a manger...

...because there was no guest room available for them.

Later in the study, we will return to the **cloths** and the **manger**.

For now, let's look at the **guest room**.

Guest Room

Luke 2:6-7

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was **no guest room [Greek word is kataluma] available for them.***

Many Bible versions translate *kataluma* as inn. However, the Greek word for **inn** is *pandocheion*. Pandocheion is the word Jesus used when the Good Samaritan took the person who had been beaten to the inn (Luke 10:34). This is the only use of this Greek word.

Kataluma is used three times (Mark 14:14; Luke 2:7; 22:11). Mark 14:14 and Luke 2:11 reference the room where Jesus and his disciples celebrated the Passover and where Jesus told his disciples that he would establish the new testament in his blood. *Kataluma* is the word for **guest room**.

There are two different opinions of where this room may have been.

OPINION #1: A guest room in an **inn**.

An inn would have been much like a modern-day rest area where travelers would rest from a journey. However, this place of rest in the days of Joseph and Mary would have guest rooms, such as in ***The Story of the Good Samaritan***.

OPINION #2: A guest room in a **home**.

It is possible that Mary and Joseph could have stayed with a relative in Bethlehem, but there was no room for them in the relative's guest room. However, it would be difficult to imagine a relative not making room for Mary as a result of her pregnancy.

However, some scholars suggest that relatives would not have been able to have Mary in their homes because the blood of a woman giving birth would make the home ceremonial unclean according to Jewish law (Leviticus 12). These scholars suggest relatives would have found another location for Mary's birth.

The most logical place for the guest room where Mary gave birth to Jesus may have been an inn in where Joseph and Mary sought lodging. However, since it took them longer to travel to Bethlehem, because of Mary's pregnancy, there was no room for them when they arrived at the inn.

Manger

The detail of the baby Jesus being placed in a **manger** would indicate Mary and Joseph stayed outside the inn where the travelers' animals were sheltered. This would be much like a "parking lot" of the inn where the people "parked" their animals. Most people traveled on animals, though there is no reference to Mary riding on a donkey. But from a historical perspective, she very well may have ridden on a donkey.

The Greek word used for manger is ***phatné***, and is used to refer to an animal stall or possibly an eating trough. Jesus used ***phatné*** in Luke 13:15 to refer to an animal **stall**. The Septuagint (Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) uses the word ***phatné*** to refer to an animal stall or possible a feeding trough; though stall seems like the most accurate translation (**2 Chronicles 32:28; Job 6:5; 39:9; Proverbs 14:14; Joel 1:17; Habakkuk 3:17.**)

It is possible Jesus was simply laid down in an animal stall on hay and not in a feeding trough from where animals ate.

Whether Jesus was laid in a feeding trough or simply on the hay in an animal stall, we can reasonably conclude that because he was laid in a manger (***phatné***), he was born where animals are kept.

Let's return to Luke and read Luke 2:8-15, taking a closer look at the **Shepherds**.

Shepherds

Luke 2:8-15 (Berean Study Bible – BSB)

*And there were **shepherds** residing in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Just then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord! And this will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a great multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:*

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests!"

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the **shepherds** said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.

What do we know about the Shepherds?

They were watching flocks of sheep in nearby fields.

- They were watching flocks to **protect** them from wild animals and thieves.
- They were watching flocks to **provide** for their needs both as sheep and during birth.
- They experienced the **presence** of the angels announcing the birth of the Christ.
- They excitedly left the flock to **pursue** the location of Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.

Note: Remember, David, the former King of Israel, was a shepherd in these same fields of Bethlehem.

Some people believe the sheep they were watching were possibly the **sheep used for the animal sacrifices at the Temple in nearby Jerusalem**. We will examine this possibility later in the study. Certainly, sheep would have possibly come from this and other fields for the sacrifices of animals as prescribed in Leviticus. So it is highly possible the Shepherds were watching the sheep that would be sacrificed at the temple.

According to the Jewish prophets, the coming Messiah/Christ would be the **Shepherd Ruler** of the world and the **Sheep Sacrificed** for the sins of us all.

Shepherd Ruler

Micah 5:2-4

*But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come forth for Me One to be **RULER over Israel**. One whose origins are of old, from the days of eternity. Therefore Israel will be abandoned until she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of His brothers will return to the children of Israel. **He will stand and SHEPHERD His flock** in the strength of the LORD, in the majestic name of the LORD His God. And they will dwell securely, for then His greatness will extend to the ends of the earth.*

Sheep Sacrificed

Isaiah 53:6-8

*We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; **he was led like a lamb to the SLAUGHTER, and as a SHEEP before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.***

John the Baptist (son of Zechariah and Elizabeth) identified Jesus as a sheep, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

John grew up learning Isaiah 53:6-8, and he would have known that Jesus, his relative, was the sheep of Isaiah 53 to be sacrificed for the sins of us all.

This is why he stated:

John 1:29

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:35-36

The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. When he saw Jesus passing by, he said, "Look, the Lamb of God!"

Jesus states that he is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep.

John 10:11

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."

The writer of Hebrews explains that Jesus was the final sacrifice for all sins.

Hebrews 7:27

He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself.

Hebrews 9:26-28

But he has appeared once for all at the culmination of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as people are destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Hebrews 10:9-10

Then he said, "Here I am, I have come to do your will." He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Hebrews 10:14 (NAS)

For by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are made holy.

Hebrews 10:18

And where these have been forgiven, sacrifice for sin is no longer necessary.

The writer of Hebrews identifies Jesus as not only being sacrificed for our sins but as the Great Shepherd of the sheep.

Hebrews 13:20

Now may the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep...

Revelation reveals Jesus as the Lamb who was sacrificed and the Shepherd who is King.

Revelation 7:17

For the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd. 'He will lead them to springs of living water,' and 'God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.'"

We are examining the shepherds who were watching the flock in the fields at night.

After the angels appeared to them, announcing the birth of Jesus, ***they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.***

Luke 2:15-16

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the Baby, who was lying in the manger.

It seems the shepherds knew exactly where to go. But how?

Did the angels tell them the exact location, or did the shepherds know the exact location based upon the description of the angels? This description was this: the shepherds would find Jesus **wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger**. Seeing Jesus lying in a manger and wrapped in swaddling clothes would be a **sign** for the shepherds, as told them by the angels.

The *sign* seems to indicate that the swaddling clothes could not be any ordinary swaddling clothes. It is possible the swaddling clothes were special cloths known by special shepherds that were used to wrap special newly birthed lambs. Possibly, these special birthed lambs using the special swaddling clothes were birthed in a special place, the **Tower of Eder**.

Let's examine this.

Some biblical scholars suggest that the Shepherds were Levitical Shepherds whose specific task was to watch the special flock of sheep that were to be sacrificed in accordance to Jewish law found in Leviticus. When it was time for a sheep to give birth, the ewe (mother sheep giving birth) was taken to the Tower of Eder (first mentioned in Genesis 35:20-21 and possibly in Micah 4:7-8), meaning tower of the flock. Some scholars suggest this is where special ewe's, identified for sacrifice and under the watch of the Levitical Shepherds, gave birth. The Tower of Eder was supposedly kept very clean since it was the birthing place for animals to be sacrificed at the Temple in Jerusalem.

Some scholars believe this is where Jesus was born.

Their view is based on a Messianic prophecy given in Micah 4:7-8.

Micah 4:7-8

*"I will make the lame my remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The Lord will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever. As for you, **watchtower of the flock** [possibly the Tower of Eder in Bethlehem – the one of Genesis 35-20-21], stronghold of Daughter Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to Daughter Jerusalem."*

Scholars suggest that Levitical Shepherds were familiar with the prophecy of Micah 4:7-8. They were also familiar with the prophecy of Micah 5:2, that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem. Combining these prophecies, it is possible the Shepherds were expecting the Messiah/Christ to be born in the Tower of Eder. As a result, the Shepherds knew exactly where to find the new born Christ when the angel told them about Jesus.

The Lamb of God was born where the lambs were born. If the lambs were unblemished, they would be identified as a lamb to be sacrificed. Jesus was the unblemished (without sin) Lamb of God who was sacrificed for the sins of the world (1 Peter 1:18-19).

There are some scholars who believe that Jesus' being born in the Tower of Eder is highly likely. Also, there are others who do **not** hold to this view. Below are resources from both.

Those who do:

<https://donnagawell.com/2020/12/17/away-in-a-manger-at-migdal-eder/>

https://www.creationevidence.org/biblical/tower_of_the_flock.php

[Nelson Walters – Was Jesus Born In The Tower of Elder?](#)

Those who don't:

<https://christian-intellect.blogspot.com/2014/12/a-christmas-myth-pushing-evidence.html>

<https://www.1517.org/articles/debunking-popular-christmastime-myths-temple-shepherds-migdal-eder-and-swaddling-lambs>

I personally do not have an opinion one way or the other. However, I think there is much symbolism in angels appearing to Shepherds who were watching a flock of sheep. Whether these sheep were specially identified sheep designated to be sacrificed in Jerusalem and who were born at the Tower of Eder, no one knows for sure. But we do know is that Jesus is symbolized in Isaiah 53 a sheep, the Lamb of God, who was sacrificed for our sins.

Let's continue our study on the birth of the Christ.

Luke 2:6-15 (Berean Study Bible – BSB)

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her **firstborn**, a son.*

Firstborn

Is there more significance to the term firstborn other than Jesus was the first of Mary's children?

Both before and during the days of the old testament law, the firstborn animal was often set aside at **certain times** and for **special reasons**. They were also set aside **to be sacrificed**. The firstborn animals were identified as animals that were not to be used as the other animals. The firstborn animals were unique, different, and used for a selected purpose of God. In addition, the firstborn sons were set aside for God's special use.

See Genesis 4:4; Exodus 13:1–2; 22:29-30; 34:19; Leviticus 27:26; Numbers 3:11–13; 18:14-18; Deuteronomy 15:19–23)

In the same way, **Jesus, as the firstborn**, was different than his siblings. He was set aside by God to fulfill God's will and to eventually be sacrificed to establish the new testament of grace where our sins are eternally forgiven (Hebrews 9:12; 10:9-10; 10:18).

In Revelation 1:5, Jesus is described as ***the firstborn from the dead***, meaning to first to die and rise from the dead, never to die again. Because of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, we (believers in Jesus), too, will rise from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:15-23).

Let's continue our study of the birth of the Messiah/Christ.

Luke 2:6-14 (Berean Study Bible – BSB)

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. And there were shepherds residing in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Just then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord! And this will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there appeared with the angel a great multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests!"

To Men On Whom His Favor Rests

Is the correct translation: ***On whom his favor rests, with whom He is pleased, or good will to men?***

On whom his favor rests and with ***whom he is pleased*** is used by some versions of the Bible, but I do not think these are correct translations of this verse

I think the Bible Versions below most accurately translate the verse as ***good-will to men***.

Literal Standard Version

"Glory in the highest to God, and on earth peace, among men—good will!"

Majority Standard Bible

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men!"

New Heart English Bible

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward humankind."

Webster's Bible Translation

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.

World English Bible

"Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace, good will toward men."

Young's Literal Translation

'Glory in the highest to God, and upon earth peace, among men -- good will.'

Contrast these translations with other translation.

In the translations above, God is revealing his heart of love to all humanity through the birth of Jesus, not just to those to whom he is pleased, as some Bible versions indicate. The fact is, at this time, all were sinners (Romans 5:8) and in need of his unmerited love and kindness to us in Jesus (1 John 4:9-10). We were in need of John 3:16.

John 3:16

For **God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son**, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

In other translations, God's **good-will** is **only** toward those with whom he is pleased. This is an inaccurate translation. His good-will is to **all** humanity through Jesus.

Let's compare Luke 2:14 from the Berean Study Bible with the New King James Version

Luke 2:14 (BSB)

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests!"

Luke 2:14 (NKJV)

"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Again, the correct translation is: *"Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, **goodwill toward men!**"*

God's ultimate good will is to all of humanity (faith in Jesus is required for salvation, all are not saved, but God's love, his good-will is to all people) and is to **bring peace on** earth through Jesus when he reigns as King.

PEACE ON EARTH

As King, Jesus will rule the world from Israel, establishing peace on earth, as the prophets said he will (Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6 and 33:14-16; Zechariah 9:9-10; Micah 5:2), as the angels said he will (Acts 1:9-11), as Paul said he will (Titus 2:11-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10), and as the book of Revelation says he will (Revelation 1:7-8; 11:15; 15:1-4).

However, before bringing peace on earth as King, he brought peace with God as Savior when he offered himself as a sacrifice for our sins. Through faith in Jesus, we are justified and have peace with God (Romans 5:1-2). The prophet Isaiah foretold of this in Isaiah 53:5

*...he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the **punishment that brought us peace was on him**, and by his wounds we are healed.*

Currently, there is not peace on earth. However, Jesus will return to rule as King and will establish peace on earth.

When Jesus ascended into heaven, the angels (two men dressed in white) told the disciples that Jesus would return (Acts 1:9-11). When this happens, Jesus will restore Israel to its greatness, and he will rule on earth for 1000 years, eventually establishing the new earth, where there is no more death, mourning, tears, or pain.

This is the ultimate peace on earth (Revelation 21-22). All sin and sinners will be consumed in the lake of fire. These are those whose names are written in the BOOKS (plural) and are judged according to their deeds. Those whose names are written in the BOOK (singular), will live on the new earth. Those whose names are written in the BOOK are those who have been justified by grace and have been declared righteous by God (Revelation 20). Their names are written in the Lambs Book of Life because they have trusted in Jesus for salvation.

Let's conclude our study on the birth of the Messiah/Christ.

Luke 2:8-11

*And there were shepherds residing in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks by night. Just then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid! For behold, I bring you **good news of great joy** that will be for all the people: Today in the city of David [Bethlehem in Judea] a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord!*

Good News Of Great Joy

Why was it good news of great joy?

It was good news of great joy because the Messiah/Christ – the Savior-King had been born, just as the prophets foretold.

The King to sit on David's throne had been born.

The Savior/King to bring peace to the world had been born.

The Light of the World had been born.

The Righteous Savior-King had been born

The Righteous Branch of David had been born.

The Eternal King of Micah 5:2 had been born.

The sheep who would take the iniquity of us all had been born.

The Jewish people had been awaiting the Messiah for over a thousand years. Finally, the day of his birth came!

The long awaited King...the long awaited Savior had been born.

That was good news of great joy!

It still is good news today that produces great joy!

An example of this good news and great joy may be of a child who had been awaiting the arrival of Christmas, then finally, Christmas day comes!

Christmas is good news of great joy for a child!

The first six letters of **Christ**mas spell Christ, meaning Savior/King.

There is solid evidence December 25 was probably not the day of Christ's birth; though it is the day when Christmas is celebrated around the world. And that is fine. No one knows the day of his birth for sure.

What matters most is the meaning of his birth.

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of the Christ, Jesus, as foretold by the Jewish Prophets.

All over the world Christmas is celebrated, but sadly most people do not understand who the Christ of Christmas is nor his mission and message.

The songs of Christmas are filled with words proclaiming the birth of Jesus, the Messiah/Christ. Yet most have never trusted in Jesus for salvation. Sadly, they have no idea what Christ means. One of the goals of this study on the Book of Luke is to educate people about what Christ/Messiah means, and how God fulfilled and will fulfill the Jewish prophecies about him. Through this education, my prayer is believers will be strengthened in their faith in Jesus and unbelievers will come to faith in Jesus.

Following the birth of Jesus, the angel **appeared** to the Shepherds, **proclaimed** the birth of the Christ, and **explained** how they would identify him

The angels then **returned** to heaven and the shepherds **departed** to Bethlehem.

Luke 2:8-15-20

When the angels left them and went back 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 they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up [to keep closely to oneself - observation] all these things [what the shepherds were saying] and pondered them in her heart [interpretation]. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

The Responses of the Shepherds and Mary

Response #1: The Shepherds were **EXCITED** about what happened.

- The shepherds **proclaimed** the good news of the Christ's birth, and the people were amazed.

- The shepherds **praised** God for all they had heard, seen, and been told.

Response #2: Mary **EXAMINED** what was happening.

- **Observation**: Mary closely observed the Shepherds words about the angles and Jesus.
- **Interpretation**: Mary interpreted in her mind and thoughts (heart) what the Shepherds meant.

Mary was taking in all that she was experiencing, and she was trying to figure it out.

Imagine for a moment what Mary experienced in real time.

- The angel Gabriel appeared to her, telling her she would give birth to the Christ.
- She travels to Bethlehem, which is very crowded because of others who are there.
- She arrives in Bethlehem after the other travelers, and there is no place for her to stay.
- She settles in the area where the animals are.
- She gives birth.
- Then suddenly shepherds arrive, declaring they had seen angels telling them about the birth of Jesus.

That is a lot for her to take in and figure out.

Yet we get much insight into the personality of Mary...she observed what was happening, and she was interpreting what it meant.

What can we learn from the two contrasting responses of the Shepherds and Mary?

All of us are different and respond differently.

We all have different personalities.

Legalism seeks to force everyone into the same mold by saying:

- “You should be like the Shepherds, excitedly proclaiming the good news (evangelism) and praising God (worship).”
- “You should be like Mary, examining what you see and hear through observation and interpretation (study).”

Legalism says you should evangelize and worship like the shepherds.

Legalism says you should study like Mary (when we study the Bible, we do want to follow observation and interpretation before application: here is a article have written about this: [A Simple Three Step Study Method](#))

Don't let anyone burdened you with legalism. We are all different, just like Mary and the Shepherds. We respond differently. We relate to God differently.

Some people enjoying studying and teaching the Bible. Others enjoy evangelism. Still others enjoy praise and worship music. Then there are others who have other enjoyments.

God has designed each of us with gifts, talents, abilities, and passions.

He has given **you** with specific gifts, talents, abilities, and passions.

He designed you with a specific personality and with specific enjoyments.

Be who God created you to be not who legalists say you should be.

Legalists will take the story of Jesus' birth and inject their toxic teaching into it, thus turning it from a celebration to condemnation as they weigh people down with legalistic expectations and burdens, telling them to be like Mary or be like the Shepherds, or some other personality in the Christmas story.

When legalists try to weigh you down, follow Paul's advice to the Galatians in Galatians 5:1,

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.

Thanks for being a part of this Bible Study!

All verses are NIV unless otherwise noted.

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