

# The Birth of the Savior

## Gilbert Silva - 12/24/23

Luke 2:6-20 (NLT) And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. <sup>7</sup> She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

<sup>8</sup> That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, <sup>10</sup> but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. <sup>11</sup> The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! <sup>12</sup> And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." <sup>15</sup> When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

<sup>16</sup> They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. <sup>18</sup> All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, <sup>19</sup> but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

What an amazing portrait of the angel and angelic hosts announcing the birth of Christ to shepherds looking after their sheep.

The portrait of shepherds reminds us of Jesus' association with the line of David.

When the angel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin Mary and announced that she was pregnant with the Christ Child, he signaled that her Son would fulfil this great promise, saying:

"He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. <sup>33</sup> And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" (Luke 1:32-33)

King David was the shepherd boy and musician who became one of Israel's greatest kings.

Jesus, the baby wrapped in swaddling cloth was the King of kings who would become The Good Shepherd that would lay down his life for the sheep.

On the first Christmas night, the shepherds in the field are summoned to meet the good shepherd of their souls.

The wonderful news of the Savior and Messiah's birth was not announced to the wealthy or political authorities, nor was it announced to religious leaders or theologians of the time. This amazing news was delivered to a ragtag group of shepherds.

Being a shepherd in first-century Palestine was not regarded as a prestigious occupation. This demonstrates that Jesus' message was for everyone, even those who were considered insignificant or marginalized.

Although the shepherds do not ask questions, the sequence of their reactions is interesting. They went from being alarmed by the angel, to being amazed by the message, to adoring the Christ child and finally announcing the good news.

### **Alarmed by the angel**

Luke 2:8-9 (NLT) That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified...

The shepherds were overcome with fear when an angel appeared to them. As a result, they were instructed, "Do not be afraid."

There is something unsettling about coming into contact with spiritual beings who hold the essence of God's holiness.

In the presence of an entity which is holy and pure, our humanity and depravity are clearly visible.

The shepherds' reaction is no different from ours when the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to the truth of our sins as the gospel is preached to us.

When we consider how desperately we need a Savior, the gospel message becomes clear.

These shepherds weren't chosen to receive this message because they were sinless, but because they needed a Savior.

They went from being alarmed by the angel, to being amazed by the message

### **Amazed by the message**

Luke 2:10:11 (NLT) "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. <sup>11</sup> The Savior yes, the Messiah, the Lord has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!

The shepherds must also have been surprised to hear that the birth of The Savior, The Messiah, The Lord wasn't just for Jews. It was for everyone.

The shepherds' alarm is quickly replaced by awed silence in the beautiful heavenly chorus.

Luke 2:13-14 (NLT) Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others the armies of heaven praising God and saying, <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

The heavenly hosts sealed the message by praising God. They knew that the baby born in a stable, wrapped in swaddling cloth and lying in a manger, wasn't just another person, but God himself. God had come to save people from their sins.

The gospel message has the same effect on us. First, we are alarmed by the truth of our sinfulness, then we're amazed by the message of our Savior.

1 John 4:9-10 (CEV) God showed his love for us when he sent his only Son into the world to give us life. <sup>10</sup> Real love isn't our love for God, but his love for us. God sent his Son to be the sacrifice by which our sins are forgiven.

We don't know how long the scene of angelic adoration lasted, but it had a life-changing influence on the shepherds. The shepherds, who were standing and staring at each other in amazement, were not going to waste any time. They would immediately set out to find the child.

The shepherds went from being alarmed by the angel, to being amazed by the message, to adoring the Christ child.

### **Adoring the Christ child**

Luke 2:15-16 (NLT) When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." <sup>16</sup> They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger.

There was Christ, the Savior and Lord, lying in a manger between Mary and Joseph. Their hearts must have been filled with love and awe for the baby who was wrapped in swaddling cloth just as the angel had told them.

They had no idea how his life would unfold, the suffering he and his parents would have to endure, or the tragic death he would face, but they knew He was the Messiah, the savior, the Lord who had come to bring great joy to all people and to save them from their sins. As a result, they stood speechless and adoring.

The gospel message has the same effect on us. First, we are alarmed by the truth of our sinfulness, then amazed by the message of our Savior, and when we encounter Him, we adore at His feet.

Unlike these shepherds we adore looking back at the finished work of Christ our Savior and Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:21 (NLT) For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.

1 Peter 3:19 (CEV) Christ died once for our sins. An innocent person died for those who are guilty. Christ did this to bring you to God, when his body was put to death and his spirit was made alive.

The shepherds went from being alarmed by the angel, to being amazed by the message, to adoring the Christ child and finally announcing the good news.

### **Announcing the good news**

Luke 2:17-20 (NLT) After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. <sup>18</sup>All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, <sup>19</sup>but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. <sup>20</sup>The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

The gospel message has the same effect on us. First, we are alarmed by the truth of our sinfulness, then amazed by the message of our Savior, and when we encounter Him, we adore at His feet and become announcers of the good news.