

# You Are Here – Part 9

## The Good News of God's Incarnation!



The Nativity of Our Lord – 2012

Luke 2:1-20 NAS

**December 25, Christmas Day → 6:00**

**Sunday, 12/30: 1 Service at 10; Monday, 12/31: New Year's Eve at 7**

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, I direct your attention to the ***YOU Are Here*** brochure insert to see ♦the BIG PICTURE of world history, ♦what God has already done, ♦where we are today – *You Are Here*, and ♦what is yet to come!

1. **Joseph and Mary Travel to Bethlehem:** <sup>1</sup> Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus [meaning “the exalted one”], that a census [a counting, for the purpose of taxation] be taken of all the inhabited earth [thus the Roman Empire]. <sup>2</sup> This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. <sup>4</sup> 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, <sup>5</sup> in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him [they were legally bound together, though not yet married], and ‘she’ was with child [that was awkward at best].

2. **The Son of God, the Promised Savior, is Born:** <sup>6</sup> And it came about that while they were there <sup>in Bethlehem</sup>, the days were completed for her to give birth. <sup>7</sup> And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths [*for warmth and security*], and laid Him in a manger [*an animal feeding trough*], because there was no room for them in the inn [*the inns were super-busy due to the many who were traveling for the census*].

3. **An Angel Announces Good News to Shepherds:**

a. <sup>8</sup> And in the same region [*of the Judean countryside*] there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord **suddenly** stood before them, and **the glory of the Lord** shone around them; and **they were terribly frightened**. <sup>10</sup> And the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid [*let me tell you why you should be filled with peace, not fear*]; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; <sup>11</sup> for today in the city of David [*in Bethlehem*] there has been born **for you** a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this *will be* a sign for you [*this will identify which baby He is*]: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger.”

b. <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying... // Now, we will focus for a moment on **verse 14**, which is difficult to rightly understand:

i. A very literal translation: “Glory to God in highest places [*thus in heaven*] and on earth peace among men of goodwill.”

ii. An explanation: The first part – “Glory to God” – and the second part “and on earth peace” – are fairly easy to understand. Lenski made this comment: “if the incarnation [God putting on flesh to be the Savior] fills heaven with God’s glory it does so because it pours out ‘peace on earth.’” (134) But the final part is difficult: “among men of good will.” What does that mean? What men or people were the angels referring to?

1. Some say it refers to good people—they will be saved; but no one is good, all have sinned.
2. Others say it refers only to those to believe in Jesus—a limited good news!
3. But I believe it is an announcement of good news to *everyone*! **All** have sinned, so God has put on human flesh to save **all**!
  - a. Lenski translated: “...on earth peace, on men good pleasure!” In other words: I was separated from God and condemned, *but now I am at peace and overjoyed!*
  - b. A key supporting passage is verse 10: “...I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people...”

4. **The Shepherds Saw; Mary Pondered**: <sup>15</sup> 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 [they didn't doubt, but desired to actually see]."

<sup>16</sup> And they came in haste [in a hurry] and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. <sup>17</sup> And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child ["there has been born for you a Savior"]. <sup>18</sup> And all who heard it wondered [marveled, were amazed] at the things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart [such things as Gabriel's appearance and amazing words, her virgin birth, and the shepherds account of the angelic announcement]. <sup>20</sup> And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them. // The shepherds ♦ heard, ♦ believed, ♦ went, ♦ saw, and ♦ most likely shared their angelic accounts with Joseph and Mary; *then they glorified and praised the almighty God!* Even though they were lowly shepherds, God loved them and so sent their Savior! *The same is true for you, for me, and for all!*

**Conclusion:** As we ponder → God's awesome action throughout the OT era leading to the Christ, → Jesus' actual saving work, → our present position in history, and → Jesus second coming – *which will be like a thief in the night*, let us ✦ rejoice in the Christ of Christmas and ✦ share the good news of God's saving work!

And all God's people said: ***Amen!***

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***Live God's Word; then share it with family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!***

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