

THE CHRIST IS BORN! | LUKE 2:6-7

- One of the most popular ideas of the birth of our Lord is that Mary gave birth the night she arrived in Bethlehem. This is most unlikely. The text tells us that **while they were there** she gave birth.
- Joseph and Mary could have been in Bethlehem for several days (or more) before the birth.
- Why does it tell us that this was **her firstborn son**? Do you know there is a possibility that it was *not* Joseph's firstborn? Joseph *could* have been previously married and widowed, and Jesus' half-brothers may have had a different mother.
- The baby Jesus was **wrapped in swaddling clothes**. The English word *swaddling* is related to the word *swath*. A *swath* was originally the measurement of the amount of grass that was cut with one stroke of the scythe. It came to mean a *strip* of land. In this case, it could be translated *strip of cloth*. These were kept in a stable for use in keeping newborn lamb's legs straight for the unblemished requirements of sacrifice.
- The **manger** was the feeding trough for the animals. The *stable* was likely a cave.
- There was **no room for them in the inn**, but there likely was no "innkeeper." The **inn** was simply, *guest quarters* or even the *upper room*.

HEAVENLY AFFIRMATION | LUKE 2:8-20

- The message of a single angel: *Good news!* (vv. 8-12)
 - The **glory of the Lord shone round about them**. This was the *shekinah* glory that had been so prominent in the life of the Hebrew nation.
 - The **good tidings** that were announced was a *good news* that would be **to all people**. This is God's gift to the world!
 - The good news was news of a Person!
 - A Savior! – One who would provide salvation from all enemies, even the greatest, which is the enemy of death.
 - The Christ! – One who was *the Anointed* to sit on the throne.
 - The Lord! – One who would have dominion over all.
 - The shepherds were told the *place* and the *sign* so that they could easily know the One whom God had given.
- The two-fold message of a host of angels: *Glory to God!* (vv. 13-14)
 - Message 1: The content: *Glory*. The recipient: God. The sphere: *in the highest*.
 - Message 2: The content: *Peace*. The recipients: *men*. The sphere: *on earth*.

- Note: the modern translations announce *peace toward men of good will* rather than *peace & good will* toward men. This is due to a one-letter difference in the word *eudokia(s)* that changes the grammar. The vast majority of underlying texts read as the KJV.

- The response of the shepherds: *witness* followed by *proclamation* (vv. 15-20).

THE CHRIST IS PRESENTED | LUKE 2:21-24

- On the eight day, the child was circumcised and named: JESUS, which is the Greek for of *Yeshua* (Joshua), meaning *Savior*.
- After the 40th day, Jesus was presented in the Temple, according to the instructions of Leviticus 12:2-6.
- Since the Passover, every firstborn child belonged to the Lord (Ex. 13:2). The child was presented to the Lord at the Temple, symbolically. The Levites would fulfill the role of service for all firstborn.
- In redemption, the Lord *bought back* what was already His!

EARTHLY AFFIRMATION | LUKE 2:25-38

- The affirmation of Simeon – vv. 25-35
 - Many believe that Simeon was the son of Hillel and the father of Gamaliel, and was the leader of the Sanhedrin.
 - Simeon's testimony: **mine eyes have seen thy salvation** (v. 30).
 - Simeon's testimony was such that **Joseph and his mother marveled at those things which were spoken of him** (v. 33), giving us indication that Simeon expressed even more than is recorded.
- The affirmation of Anna – vv. 36-38
 - Anna was of the tribe of Asher, one of the "lost" ten tribes (thus not really "lost.")
 - She spread the word to **all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem**. She had found the Redeemer!

THE RETURN TO GALILEE | LUKE 2:39-41

- The Scripture is clear that after this 40ish day event, the family returned to Nazareth. This conflicts with the common view that Jesus went to Egypt for several years.
- Jesus must have *already returned* from Egypt by the 40th day of His life.
- Jesus must have also been in Jerusalem at the first Passover of His life (v. 41), and thus Herod must have died shortly after Jesus went to Egypt. This aligns with what Josephus teaches about Herod's last days.