

December 5th, 2021

“God’s Lamb: Born to Die”

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."

God’s greatest expression of love toward humanity is the giving of His own Son, to serve as the only acceptable sacrifice for our sins.

About 2700 years ago, two of God’s prophets wrote about the future birth of a male child to a virgin, in Bethlehem, in Judea.

Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel."

Micah 5:2, "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity."

About 700 years after those prophecies were made, a young woman, said to be a virgin, gave birth to a male child in Bethlehem, in Judea. He was given the Hebrew name Yeshua [Jehovah saves], rendered Jesus in Greek [God’s salvation], He was called Immanuel [God with us].

This child would be the source of salvation for all humanity, the fullness of God in human flesh. God told the world ahead of time, so that we would repent and believe in God’s Son for salvation.

It is said that, long before the birth of Jesus, some Rabbis wrote, "The Messiah is to have no earthy father. The birth of the Messiah will be like that of no other man."

We are told (**Genesis 1:27**), "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

Genesis 2:7, "The Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

Genesis 2:18, "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him,'" (**21-24**), "So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then God took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh."

Genesis 4:1-2, "Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have gotten a manchild with the help of the Lord.' Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel,"

Genesis 5:3, "When Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years, he became the father of a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth."

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All humans since Adam and Eve have been born of a man and a woman, that is, all but One!

Read **Matthew 1:18-21**... Notice, Mary was pregnant “before [she and Joseph] came together” (before they had a sexual relationship), i.e., Mary was a virgin, and yet she was pregnant with Jesus; her conception by the Holy Spirit is a mystery.

Joseph, being a good man and a devout worshipper of God, did not want to publicly expose Mary’s condition, so he considered to quietly divorce her, and send her away.

While Joseph was struggling with that situation, an angel came to him in a dream and declared Mary’s pregnancy to be from God; that Mary would have a son, and Joseph (although he was not the biological father) would have the responsibility for naming the baby as God had said.

Jesus means “Jehovah saves” or “God’s salvation,” God’s Son came from heaven to save us; and Joseph was divinely chosen to raise Him as a his own son.

It is interesting that Joseph is never directly called the father of Jesus, and Jesus is never directly called the son of Joseph.

Matthew 1:16 says, “Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Luke 3:23 says, “When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years of age, being, as was supposed (so it was thought), the son of Joseph, the son of Eli [Joseph’s father-in-law, Mary’s father].

Read **Matthew 1:22-23**... The virgin birth was predicted centuries before Jesus’ birth. “All this” refers to the prophecies given by Isaiah and Micah: the mother of God’s Son would be a virgin; the Father would be God Himself; the child would be God in human flesh.

Why is this birth so amazingly important?

Genesis 2:17, “The Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.’”

Read **Genesis 3:6-19**... Both Adam and Eve ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, immediately bringing sin’s consequences upon them and all of mankind. Notice (**verse 7**), “Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.”

That is so interesting, because back in **Genesis 2:25** it says, “the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.” It was okay to be naked before they disobeyed God, but it was not okay afterward. Why is that? Because they were innocent before they sinned.

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We are told that Adam and Eve tried to hide from God, and when confronted about their sin, Adam blames Eve, Eve blames the serpent [*Satan incarnate*], God curses all of them (**verses 14-15**), starting with the serpent saying He will put enmity [hostility] between the offspring of the serpent [*those who follow Satan by rejecting God’s Son*] and the offspring [*children of God, by faith in Christ*] of a male descendant of the woman [*Jesus, born to Mary, called Immanuel*] who will crush the serpent’s head [*destroy his power and authority*].

God makes it clear throughout the OT, that the Savior of the world, the Christ, would be born to a woman, an ancestor of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, from the tribe of Judah, in the ancestral line of King David (**Matthew 1:6**, legally through Solomon to Joseph; **Luke 3:31**, biologically through Nathan to Mary).

Isaiah 53 is often called the Gospel of the OT, **verses 5-8** tell us that God’s punishment for sin came upon God’s Servant, God’s Son, led like a lamb to the slaughter, being put to death in our place.

At the birth of Jesus Mary deeply considered all that had happened: the angel’s announcement, Joseph’s response to her pregnancy, Elizabeth’s greeting, the shepherds at the manger, declaring the Savior’s birth.

Luke 2:19, “Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.”

Mary birthed God’s Son, knowing that through His death salvation would come to her and the whole world; that thought pierced her heart, like a sword.

In **John 1:29**, seeing Jesus coming toward him, John said, “Look the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.”

Philippians 2:8 tells us, Jesus humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

Hebrews 9:15 tells us He “died as a ransom to set [us] free” from the penalty we deserve for our sin; (**verse 22**), “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness,” and for that reason (**verse 26**), “Christ has appeared once for all to do away with sin by the sacrifice of Himself,” (**verse 28**), “Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people.” (i.e., most people will reject Him).

Hebrews 10:10 says, we have been made holy “through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all,” (**verse 17**, quoting from **Jeremiah 31:34**), “And their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more” (cf. **Romans 3:10-12, 23-24; 6:23; 5:8; 8:1; 10:9-10, 13**).

Romans 4:25, “He [Jesus] who was delivered over [to death, crucified] because of our [sins], was raised [to life, resurrected] [for] our justification [salvation].”

2Corinthians 5:21, “He [God] made Him [Christ] who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

Jesus (God’s One and Only Son) was born in order to die for our sins, but He could not be kept in the grave because He is God.

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In **Revelation 1:8**, Jesus says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega,"... .."who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." **18**, "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever!."

There is not a more important message for you and I to share with those we love and care about then this:

1John 5:11-13, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."

When Jesus was baptized by John at the Jordan River, God the Father announced (**Matthew 3:17**), "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased." When Jesus took Peter, James, and John up on a Mountain, where Moses and Elijah appeared to them, God the Father declared from above (**Matthew 17:5**), "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"

At the beginning of His ministry (cf. **Mark 1:14-17**), "after John [*the baptizer*] had been taken into custody [*by Herod*], Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.' As He was going along by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon [*Peter*] and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. Jesus said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men."

(The imperative command here is to **repent** of your sins, **believe** in Jesus Christ as Savior, **follow** Him by obeying the Scriptures as you live for Him.)

John 8:12, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

John 10:27-28, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish."

John 11:25, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die."

Jesus Christ is the Savior to Whom every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. Do you have God's peace about your salvation? If not, you can clear that up right now: repent of you sins, believe in Jesus to save you, and you will have eternal life.

Today is the first Sunday of the month, the day we celebrate the Lord's Supper, remembering the Sacrificial Death and Sovereign Resurrection of our Lord. This being December, most of us have (Christmas) the celebration of the Lord's birth, on our mind; but we must remember that He was born in order to die for our sins, that we might receive forgiveness and eternal life.

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Christmas celebrates God's greatest gift to us: the birth of Jesus Christ, God's Son, God's Lamb, our Savior. The greatest gift we can give to anyone is the Good News of God's Son as foretold in God's Word: that He would be born to a virgin, in Bethlehem of Judea, He would die for our sins and become the Savior of all who believe in Him, and He is coming back to take us to be with Him, forever.

He was born to die, but He didn't stay dead!

Jesus Christ: Crucified, Resurrected, and Coming Again.

Pastor Mike

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