

Sunday December 23rd 2007
'A Son is Given'

1). Lu 2:6 *So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. 7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. 8 ¶ Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. 10 Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. 11 "For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 "And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"*

2). What we are looking at in our scripture here is the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ and the announcement of His birth made to the shepherds in the fields.

a). So let us begin by establishing a few foundations surrounding His birth and then we will move on.

b). Christ the Lord is born in the City of David, Bethlehem, just as the scriptures said He would be - Mic 5:2 *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."*

c). Now the last part of this verse will remind us of the promise made with regard to the seed of the woman in Genesis

i/ Ge 3:15 *And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."*

ii/ And let's remember what is being said and to whom it is being said.

iii/ This is God the Father speaking to the serpent, Satan, the present ruler of this world after Man has sinned as a result of Satan's deception – and He, God the Father, is promising not only a Redeemer for fallen Man, but also as a result of the coming of the Redeemer and His redemptive work, the overthrow of Satan's kingdom by a new order of rulers.

iv/ Christ is the Seed of the woman and is the One to be Ruler in Israel – He is the One whose goings forth are from everlasting – the One in whom and by whom, God’s plans and purposes for the ages in fulfillment of the Genesis 3:15 promise will be accomplished –

Col 1:16 *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.*

Heb 2:10 ¶ *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

v/ Without wishing to overstate the obvious – it has been God’s plan and purpose from the ages of eternity past, even before the creation of the original heavens and earth recorded in Genesis 1:1, that God the Son along with members of the created human race would rule together for a specific period of time over this one province in God’s universal Kingdom.

vi/ And it is of course the birth of God the Son, the Seed of the woman, whose going forth is from old, that is being announced to the shepherds.

3). His birth is a marker on the timeline for the accomplishment of God’s purpose from eternity past, the significance of which is hard to describe.

a). Ga 4:4 *But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.*

b). Christ’s birth was not at an arbitrary time, or in an arbitrary place, nor entrusted to a randomly selected couple.

c). We see from our Galatians scripture that it was when ‘the fullness of time had come’ – precisely at the point God had set.

d). We have already seen from Micah that the location would be Bethlehem, the House of Bread, to which the living bread from heaven would come.

e). Bethlehem is also the city of David – and the angel of the Lord had made an announcement to Mary concerning David’s kingdom - Lu 1:32 *"He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."*

f). And the angel’s words here in Luke are in alignment with and fulfillment of that which God had already said.

g). 2Sa 7:12 *"When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 "He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 "I will be his Father, and he shall be My son.*

h). Isa 11:10 ¶ *"And in that day there shall be a Root of Jesse, Who shall stand as a banner to the people; For the Gentiles shall seek Him, And His resting place shall be glorious."*

i). Jer 23:5 *"Behold, the days are coming," says the LORD, "That I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; A King shall reign and prosper, And execute judgment and righteousness in the earth.*

j). And of course through Mary and Joseph, both of whom are descendants of David, we would see Christ's human right to David's throne.

k). Through His adopted earthly father, Joseph, comes Christ's legal right to the throne through Solomon, as Joseph is from Solomon's line, and through Mary Christ is in the bloodline of David through David's son Nathan.

l). Therefore at the time of His birth His kingship is already established, proclaimed by the angel – and then attested to by the Wise Men, - Mt 2:2 *saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."*

m). And later confirmed by the Lord - Mr 15:2 *Then Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" He answered and said to him, "It is as you say."*

4). Now here is the interesting thing for us – everything surrounding Christ's birth was exactly according to scripture and the event itself declares both regality and rulership.

a). But you will have noticed I'm sure, that Christ's assertion that He is King of the Jews in our Mark scripture comes shortly before His crucifixion.

b). That which began in Bethlehem amidst angelic exaltation did not end at this time with the King on His throne, but with the King on a cross.

5). What appears here to be antithetical is really very easy for us to reconcile.

a). For Christ to be the Savior of Israel and to redeem that nation from bondage the Passover Lamb would have to be slain and the blood appropriated in fulfillment of the type set in Exodus 12 - Joh 1:36 *And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!"*

b). The Seed of the woman would have to have His heel bruised in accord with Genesis 3:15 if the serpent's head is to be crushed.

c). And all of this is perfectly consistent with that which had already been prophesied in scripture - Isa 53:2 *For He shall grow up before Him as a tender*

plant, And as a root out of dry ground. He has no form or comeliness; And when we see Him, There is no beauty that we should desire Him. 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 ¶ Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. 6 All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. 7 He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, And as a sheep before its shearers is silent, So He opened not His mouth. 8 He was taken from prison and from judgment, And who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; For the transgressions of My people He was stricken.

d). And the Lord Himself points this out to His two disciples on the road to Emmaus on the day of His resurrection - Lu 24:25 *Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! 26 "Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" 27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

e). You see the type had already been set in all the scriptures – set, in the account of the patriarch Joseph who was rejected by his brothers and thrown into prison, symbolizing death, who would then deliver them from tribulation and bless them at their second meeting.

f). And set with Moses, who was rejected by his brothers, who then went to a far country before returning a second time as their deliverer.

6). We might even see this in the detail of the angel's announcement on the night of the Lord's birth - Lu 2:12 *"And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger."*

a). A sign, as we know, in scripture points to something that is yet to come.

b). So the question would be, 'How does the babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger, point to something yet to come?'

c). Perhaps we could begin to answer this by looking at the phrase, 'wrapped in swaddling cloths' – which is a translation of a single Greek word –

i/ sparganoō = to wrap with strips

Which comes from the base of a word

ii/ sparasso = to rend or to tear

d). Could we in this see the tearing of His body and His burial? –

Joh 19:40 *Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.*

e). And then there is the manger, which is literally a feeding trough – could we see in this the offering of the Bread of Heaven - Joh 6:51 *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world." 52 The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this Man give us His flesh to eat?" 53 Then Jesus said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. 54 "Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. 55 "For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.*

a). And in the eating of His flesh do we hear the echoes of eating the flesh of the Passover Lambs on the night of the Exodus?

b). Could this be the significance of Him being placed in a feeding trough?

c). The gifts brought by the Wise Men would seem to confirm this –
Mt 2:11 *And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

i/ The gold would signify His deity.

ii/ Frankincense is a spice that was placed on the shew bread, which is a type of Christ as we have just seen in John 6 - both in the tabernacle and the temple – which would then be eaten by the priests as it was most Holy.

iii/ And together with myrrh would be used as an incense, as an offering to the Lord and also together, frankincense and myrrh were spices used for embalming the dead – these would be the spices used in John 19:40.

7). And none of this would really be surprising for us as this has been part of the outworking of God's plans from eternity past. These are stepping stones on the pathway to regality and rulership in the age to come.

a). Heb 2:9 *But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.*

b). Please note here that God the son is in no sense inferior to angels at any time, but when He came in the form of a man, He chose, with respect to the rulership of the earth, to place Himself in a subordinate position to Satan and his angels for the specific purpose of suffering death.

c). Re 13:8b.....*the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

d). Only in this way would it be possible for Him to bring many sons to glory.

8). Although a multitude of the heavenly host declare – ‘peace on earth’ at the Lord’s birth, Jesus Himself declares - Mt 10:34 *"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. 35 "For I have come to 'set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law'; 36 "and 'a man's enemies will be those of his own household.'*

a). And in this declaration the Lord is quoting from Micah Chapter 7, which contextually has to do with the righteousness that God will eventually bring to His people Israel in the day the nation is restored.

b). All this will inevitably take us to the Lord’s response to His disciples question in Matthew 24 - Mt 24:3 *Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?"*

c). Mt 24:4 ¶ *And Jesus answered and said to them: "Take heed that no one deceives you. 5 "For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many. 6 "And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 "For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places. 8 "All these are the beginning of sorrows. 9 "Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name's sake. 10 "**And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another.***

d). Verse 10 here gives us commentary on Matthew 10:34-36, and vice versa

e). And here we are looking at events of the time of Jacob’s trouble, the Great tribulation – specifically here as they relate to the nation of Israel.

f). The many who will be offended, and betray one another and hate one another are Jews.

9). Christ’s birth, when the Word became flesh, set in motion, so to speak, a chain of events recorded in the written word, manifested through Christ, that would ultimately lead to a time described in – Mt 24:21 *"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

10). But as we know this is not the end of the story – although this most awful time of tribulation will be a reality with around half of the population of the earth being

killed and two thirds of the nation of Israel perishing and the material creation brought to almost total devastation as God's judgment is exacted – the outworking of judgment is, and always has been, redemption.

a). We will remember in Revelation that it is the Lion of the Tribe of Judah who is found worthy to open the scroll, signifying judgment, who is also described as a Lamb as though it had been slain, signifying redemption.

11). The announcements made by the angels surrounding the Lord's birth concerning the King and His Kingdom are an absolute reality, but would not be accomplished at His first advent.

a). From the foundational pattern set in Genesis onwards God would only work in a timeframe of 7 days – six thousand years of work, followed by a seventh thousand years of rest.

b). And the Lord came to the earth, born of a virgin in the full assurance of His plans and purposes being completed within the exact pattern that had been set.

c). In fact in Hebrews we find the writer, by design of the Holy Spirit, quoting from Psalm 2 and 2 Samuel - Heb 1:5 *For to which of the angels did He ever say: "You are My Son, Today I have begotten You"? And again: "I will be to Him a Father, And He shall be to Me a Son"?*

d). The word 'begotten' refers to the natural process of birth, and Christ is the only begotten Son of God as He is the only Son to go through this process – angels who are sons of God are created beings – Israel is a son of God by adoption – and those form the church who will become firstborn sons of God will also be sons by adoption.

e). And our quotation from psalm 2 – 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten you' – would be better understood as 'You are My Son, for this day I have begotten You'.

f). And the day He has been begotten for, which is the entire focus of the Book of Hebrews, is the 7th Day, the day of rest, The Millennial Kingdom.

12). God the Son, the Christ, went through the natural process of being born of a woman, taking on a human body of flesh and blood and subordinating Himself to the god of this world for the sole purpose of the accomplishment of the events brining about the 7th Day, the fulfillment of His plans and purposes for the ages.

a). He came as 2 Samuel 7 made flesh to bring the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens to Israel – which He knew must be rejected.

b). He came in the fulfillment of Exodus 12 as the Passover Lamb whose blood must be shed for the redemption of Israel.

c). He came as the Seed of Abraham to be the sinless sacrifice so that those who believe on Him might have eternal life.

d). He came to die in the flesh that He would be raised in the Spirit that through His resurrection those who are eternally saved would have a living hope, an inheritance, a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, the offer of a position of rulership with Him in His Kingdom to come.

e). He came so that He could go and send the Holy Spirit to us as our Helper.

f). He came as a man, that as a man He would prove Himself worthy to take the kingdom from Satan – to reinstate man to the position for which he had been created – to have dominion.

g). He came to make possible another day when another miraculous birth would take place - Mt 24:8 *"All these are the beginning of sorrows.[lit. 'travail' – that suffered by a woman in child birth]*

h). Re 12:1 ¶ *Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.*

i/ The setting for our scripture is the mid-point during the Tribulation

ii/ The woman is the nation of Israel

iii/ The fiery red dragon is Satan who in verse 4 is cast out of heaven

iv/ The male child who is born in verse 5 is the 144 thousand Jewish evangelists.

v/ Just as Christ is born of a virgin, so this male child is born to a woman, Israel, who to this point has been barren

i). Just as Christ, following His birth, escapes into Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod to return to Israel after an unspecified time and then preaches the word of the Kingdom – so will the 144 thousand Jewish evangelists, the first fruits of what will be a reborn, repentant nation, be caught up to heaven, from which Satan has now been cast out and in which he no longer has jurisdiction, to return after an unspecified period of time to proclaim the message of the Kingdom to the Gentile nations during the last three and one half years of the Tribulation - Mt 24:14 *"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.*

i/ Then will come the end of the Tribulation, the end of Gentile world power, the end of Man's day, the end of the age.

ii/ The inheritance, the material creation, will have been redeemed, Israel will have been redeemed and will be placed at the head of the nations to rule them with a rod of iron and in accord with the promise made to Abraham, all the nations of the earth will be blessed through her.

iii/ The Lord's day will be manifested in the earth.

iv/ His Kingdom will be established and He will sit on the throne of His father David – the manifestation of the written word in the person of Christ.

j). Isa 66:7 *"Before she was in labor, she gave birth; Before her pain came, She delivered a male child. 8 Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, She gave birth to her children. 9 Shall I bring to the time of birth, and not cause delivery?" says the LORD. "Shall I who cause delivery shut up the womb?" says your God. 10 "Rejoice with Jerusalem, And be glad with her, all you who love her; Rejoice for joy with her, all you who mourn for her; 11 That you may feed and be satisfied With the consolation of her bosom, That you may drink deeply and be delighted With the abundance of her glory." 12 For thus says the LORD: "Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, And the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream. Then you shall feed; On her sides shall you be carried, And be dandled on her knees. 13 As one whom his mother comforts, So I will comfort you; And you shall be comforted in Jerusalem."*

13). Is it any wonder that a multitude of the heavenly hosts was praising God that night when God the Son was born of a virgin? It was yet another intervention of God in the affairs of Man that declared beyond the shadow of a doubt the absolute certainty of the fulfillment of God's plans and purposes for the ages.

14). Isa 9:6 *For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.*