

**“The Angel’s Joyful Birth Announcement”**  
(Luke 2:1-20 – Christmas – December 2025)

Luke 2:1-20 – <sup>1</sup>And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. <sup>2</sup>(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup>And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. <sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) <sup>5</sup>to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. <sup>6</sup>And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. <sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup>And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup>And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. <sup>10</sup>And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. <sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. <sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, <sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. <sup>15</sup>And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. <sup>16</sup>And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. <sup>17</sup>And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. <sup>18</sup>And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup>But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Dear beloved of God, who sent His Son to be born as our Savior:

When we receive some great gift or blessing, or we hear wonderful news that brings joy, it is hard to keep it to ourselves. We want to tell the good news to others and share the joy. Some of the greatest joy we share is in birth announcements. When a husband and wife find out they are expecting a child, and when the baby is born, they cannot keep this gift from God to themselves. In their joy, they want to share the good news with family, friends, and others.

At Jesus’ birth, the angelic hosts of heaven could not keep silent. They broke forth in joyful praise to God, sharing the good news that is for all people. In our text we hear **“The Angel’s Joyful Birth Announcement”**: *“I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”* This joyful announcement tells the good news of **1) The birth that was long foretold, 2) The birth that is now accomplished, and 3) The birth that is proclaimed for all people.**

## 1) The birth that had been foretold

Normally, from the time parents conceive a child, they have nine months to prepare for the birth. But God had been preparing His people for the birth of this Baby from the beginning of history.

When Adam and Eve fell to Satan's temptation, the darkness of sin and the curse of death fell over the human race. What a horrible prospect our fallen condition brought, cutting us off from spiritual and eternal life with the holy God. Sin was bringing us down to the eternal death and darkness of hell. But right away, God gave the world's first birth announcement. One day, a Savior would be born as the Seed of woman. This almighty Son would be born to crush the head of Satan and redeem us sinners back to God in eternal life.

Through the centuries, God kept announcing this birth to His people. The Savior would be born as the Seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations would be blessed (Genesis 22:18). He would be born as the Son of David; yet He would be the Son of God, as the Messiah-King who would establish an everlasting Kingdom for His people (2 Samuel 7:13-14). The Savior would be miraculously conceived in the womb of a virgin and born as Immanuel: "God with Us" (Isaiah 7:14). He would be born at Bethlehem, the city of David (Micah 5:2). By such prophetic birth announcements, God continued to prepare His people through the ages, and they continued to look in hope to the Savior who was to be born for them.

Then in the fulness of time, God sent an angel to announce this miraculous birth to Mary. God had chosen her to be the mother of the long-awaited Savior of the world! Mary was betrothed in marriage to Joseph; but before they came together, she conceived by God. As the angel explained: "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God*" (Luke 1:35). At first, the birth announcement troubled Joseph, because he thought Mary had been unfaithful. But God sent His angel to assure him: "*Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins*" (Matthew 1:20-21).

## 2) The birth that is now accomplished

Now nine months later, in our text, we find Joseph and Mary on their way to Bethlehem. A king's decree brought them there for his purpose; but by God's greater plan and promise, the Savior of the world would be born there in the City of David. "*And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*"

Imagine the awe and wonder of the angels, as they watched this miracle of the ages take place. Though they had been sent from heaven to announce this birth, they longed to look into this mystery of God taking to Himself human flesh and dwelling among us (1 Peter 1:12). Now they beheld the Creator of all, whom the heavens cannot contain, born as a tiny Infant. The King of heaven was not delivered in a royal palace, but in a lowly stable; for there was no room anywhere else. He was not dressed in fine garments, but wrapped in plain swaddling cloths. He was not laid in a fancy crib, but in a dusty manger where animals fed.

Now God sent His heavenly messenger to announce that the long-awaited birth of the Savior was accomplished: *“And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.”*

In the darkness of night, the glory of the Lord shone around the shepherds. At first, they were filled, not with the joy of the angels, but with the fear of sinners in the presence of God’s glory. This is what sin does. The moment Adam and Eve fell into temptation, doing what the Lord had forbidden, they were filled with fear. They tried to hide from the glory of the Lord in the darkness of their guilt and shame, knowing His warning that sin brings death. Ever since, sinners cannot live in the bare presence of God’s glory in their fallen condition. As God told Moses: *“You cannot see My face; for no man shall see Me and live”* (Exodus 33:20).

Like the shepherds that night long ago, we live in a world wrapped in the darkness of sin. Often, we feel the deep darkness of our own fallen condition. We know God’s Commandments, but we fail to obey them as we ought. Despite our best intentions to live holy lives to God, we still fall into temptation and sin in thought, word, and deed. At times, when we feel the deep darkness and heavy burden of our guilt and shame, it may be unbearable to think of standing before the Lord in all His glory.

But it was not to strike fear in hearts of sinners that God sent His angel in heavenly glory. It was to bring good news of the Savior who was born to save sinners. *“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”*

Fear not, fellow guilt-stricken sinners; for behold, God has sent His Son to be our Savior! Jesus was born humbly and lowly, yet with almighty power to save us from sin, Satan, and eternal death. Jesus was born of a woman, born under the Law, so He could fulfill the Law in His holy life of obedience that God counts to us! Jesus was born in our flesh so He could go to cross and shed His precious blood for our sins, so that God forgives us and no longer counts our sins against us. Jesus was born in poverty, as the Son of Man who had no place to lay His

head, so He could win for us heavenly riches and a place in His Father's mansions. Jesus was born to live, die, and rise again, to win for us everlasting life in His Kingdom of Glory.

At Christmas, God gave us the greatest gift of His own Son as our Savior. Now the Father and the Son have given us the gift of the Holy Spirit. He has enlightened us by His Gospel and opened our eyes in faith to see the Christ Child as our Savior. *"For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"* (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Once as sinners, we could not see the glory of God and live. But now, as we look in faith to the tender face of our newborn Savior, we see the glory of God and we truly live. In Jesus, God replaces our fears and sorrows with His peace and joy. We live in the peace of Jesus' blood-bought forgiveness and reconciliation. We live in the joy of God's goodwill toward us. Since God has made us His children in Christ, and heirs of eternal life, can there be any doubt that He loves and cares for us? He who gave us the most precious gift of His Son will certainly watch over and provide for us, until He brings us into His heavenly glory.

### **3) The birth that is proclaimed for all people**

That first Christmas as the angels watched with awe and wonder, they could not keep silent. They broke forth in praise to God who so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son to be born as our Savior: *"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."* Now, we can join the angels' joyful birth announcement. We can proclaim the good news of the Savior who was born for all people.

This is what the shepherds did. With faith in the Word and promise of God, they came to Bethlehem to find the Savior lying in a manger, as they had been told. *"And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds."*

As we take God's promises to heart, we too gather around our Savior in joyful worship. We see Jesus as He comes to us wrapped in the humble clothes of His Word and Sacraments, yet in saving power to give us His gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. Then having received all the blessings that come with our Savior's birth, we can return like the shepherds: *"glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."* We can join the angels and saints through the ages in proclaiming the good tidings of great joy that is for all people: *"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."*

*Glory to God in the highest!* Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be. Amen.