

"THE CHRISTMAS STORY"

Isa. 9:6-7

Introduction: Christmas – a story of:

A) Places B) Prophecies C) People D) Presents E) A Person

1. Christmas is more than: a) commercialism b) celebration
2. Christmas is a time to remember our Lord's birth and the reason for it.
3. The Psalmist said, "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.", Psa. 34:3.

I. CHRISTMAS IS THE STORY OF A PERSON

- "Unto us a child is born" – that is His Humanity
 - "Unto us a Son is given" – that's His Deity
 - "And the government shall be upon His shoulder" – that's His royalty
 - "And His name shall be called..."
- A. **"WONDERFUL"** – speaks of His performance
- **Takes Care of the Dullness Of Life**
 - "Wonderful" – a miracle; full of wonder
 - He is wonderful in His:
 1. Conception – unbelievable – Mt. 1:18-20
 2. Character – unblemished – Heb. 4:15, "...was in all points tempted like as we are, yet..."
 3. Conduct – unquestionable – Acts 10:38, "...who went about doing good."
 4. Conversation – incomparable – Jn. 7:46, "Never man spake like this man."
 5. Crucifixion – undeserved – Lk. 23:41, "...but this man hath done nothing amiss."
 6. Conquest – unmatched – I Cor. 15:3-4
- B. **"COUNSELLOR"** – speaks of His protection.
- **Takes Care of the Decisions Of Life**
 - "Counsellor" - one who deliberates or resolves
 1. As our advisor, He directs us, Prov. 3:5-6
 2. As our advocate, He defends us, I Jn. 2:1
 3. As our arbitrator (mediator), He decides for us, I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 9:14-15

- C. **"MIGHTY GOD"** – speaks of His power
- **Takes Care of the Demands Of Life**
 - "Mighty" – powerful; by implication...a warrior; champion, Josh. 5:14
 - "I am" – Exo. 3:14 (Heb. 11:6, "He is")
 1. Mighty as Creator, Jn. 1:3
 2. Mighty as controller, Col. 1:17
 3. Mighty as champion, I Sam. 17:47
 - "Champion" – one who has defeated all opponents; fights for another
- D. **"EVERLASTING FATHER"** – speaks of His permanence
- **Takes Care of the Dimensions Of Life**
 - "Everlasting" see Rev. 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega...Which is (the exalted One), and which was (the eternal One), and which is to come (the expected One)..."
 1. He was in the beginning with God, Jn. 1:1
 2. He was begotten of God, Jn. 1:14
 3. He was born of a virgin, Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:23
 - a. It was a miraculous birth
 - b. It was a magnificent birth
 - c. It was a matchless birth
 - d. It was a mandatory birth
 - e. It was a memorable birth
 4. He was busy about the Father's business, Lk. 2:49
 5. He was burdened for sinners, Mt. 9:36 – because of sin, Isa. 53:12
 6. He was betrayed by His "own familiar friend", Psa.41:9; Mt. 10:4
 7. He was "bruised for our iniquity", Isa. 53:5
 8. He was buried "with the wicked, and with the rich", Isa. 53:9
 9. He was brought up
 - a. Out of the grave
 - b. To the right hand of God the Father
- E. **"PRINCE OF PEACE"** – speaks of His provision
- **Takes Care of the Disturbances Of Life**
- F. **"JESUS"** – speaks of His purpose, Mt. 1:21 (redemption)
- It is His human name – He is the saving One, Mt. 1:21; Lk. 19:10
 - It is His manger name, Mt. 1:25
 - It is His majestic name, Jn. 19:19
 - It is His ministry name, Jn. 1:45

- It is His message name, II Cor. 4:5
 - The name **Jesus** reveals His person
1. He is a personal Saviour, Psa. 55:16, "As for me, I will call upon God, and He shall save me."
 2. He is a present Saviour, Jer. 15:20; II Cor. 6:2, "...Now is the day of salvation."
 3. He is a powerful Saviour, Heb. 7:25, "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him,..."
 4. He is a patient Saviour, Rev. 3:20, "Behold I stand at..."
 5. He is a pitying Saviour, Psa. 103:13, "Like as a father pitieth His children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him." "Pitieth" = to love; have compassion on; have mercy.
- The name of Jesus reveals His people (Mt. 1:21) – those of national decent; those who believe and repent (Rom. 1:6).

G. "**CHRIST**" – speaks of His positions, Lk. 2:11, 25-32

- "Christ" – anointed
 - Three groups of people anointed in the O.T.
1. Prophets, I Ki. 19:16 – Jesus was a Prophet, Deut. 18:15; Lk. 24:19
 2. Priests, Exo. 28:41 – Jesus was a Priest, Heb. 2:17
 3. Kings, I Sam. 15:1 – Jesus is a King, Jn. 18:37; I Tim. 6:15; Rev. 19:16
- Christ is His Hebrew name – He is the Sufficient One

H. "**LORD**" speaks of His priority, Lk. 2:11

- "Lord" is His heavenly name – He is the Supreme One
1. In many people, He is present
 2. In some people, He is prominent
 3. But in few people, He is preeminent, Col. 1:18

I. "**KING**" speaks of His preeminence – not just a King, but THE King, I Tim. 6:12-13; Mt. 2:1-2; Jn. 19:19

1. He is the appointed King, Micah 5:2.
2. He is the anointed King, Heb. 1:8-9
3. He is the assaulted King, Jn. 19:1-3
4. He is the ascended King, Acts 5:30-32
5. He is the acclaimed King, Rev. 19:11-16

J. "**IMMANUEL**" – speaks of His presence, Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:22-23; Jn. 1:1-14

II. CHRISTMAS IS A STORY ABOUT PLACES

A. Scenes in the city

1. **Nazareth** – the city of preservation – Lk. 1:26; Mt. 2:23
 - a. The place where Mary & Joseph resided, Lk. 2:39
 - b. The place where Jesus was raised, Lk. 4:16, 2:39-40; Mt. 21:11; Mk. 1:24 – Jesus of Nazareth, Mt. 26:71, 1:9, 10:47, 16:6.
 - He was received well there as a Child, Lk. 2:52, 4:16
 - He was rejected there during His ministry, Lk. 4:28-31; Mt. 13:54-58
2. **Jerusalem** – the city of peace (Mt. 2) – Foundation of peace – Hebrews
 - a. It's past
 - Called Salem, Gen. 14:18
 - Called Jebus, Judges 19:10; I Chr. 11
 - Called Jerusalem (first in Josh. 10; finally in I Chr. 11)
 - 1) It is the City of the Great King
 - 2) It was the center of government and religion. Mt. Zion – place where Ark was brought. Also known as Mt. Moriah, a place of :
 - Complete obedience, Gen. 22
 - Commitment, Ruth 3
 - Confession, I Chr. 21:15-16
 - Construction, II Chr. 3:1 – the temple site
 - Crucifixion
 - 3) It was the capital of the southern kingdom
 - 4) It was a casualty of Roman oppression
 - Her king – not a Jew but an Edomite appointed by Caesar
 - Her religion – regulated by the Sanhedrin
 - b. Its present – praying for peace; waiting for the Prince of Peace
 - c. It is prophetic hope
 - Psa. 48:1-2 – The city of the Great King
 - The center of government and religion for the whole world.
3. **Bethlehem**, Mt. 2:1, 4-6, 8; Lk. 2:1-4
 - a. The Place
 - 1) First mention – Gen. 35:16-19
 - "Ephrath" – fruitful
 - "Bethlehem" – house of bread
 - Birthplace of "Benoni" – the son of my sorrow. "Benjamin" – the son of my right hand
 - Burial place of "Rachael" – a ewe
 - 2) Further mention
 - a) Book of Ruth – begins with a famine, ends with a feast
 - Ch. 1 Ruth enters redeemer's fold

- Ch. 2 Ruth enters redeemer's field – Ruth meets Boaz
 - Ch. 3 Ruth enters at redeemer's family – Ruth marries Boaz.
Obed>Jesse>David>Jesus Christ
- b) Book of I Sam. 16:1-4, 13 – David anointed in Bethlehem
 - c) Book of I Kings 2:7 – kindness shown to Chimham
 - Ate at the King's table
 - Apparently given land in Bethlehem, Jer. 41:17 "...the habitation of Chimham, which is by
- Bethlehem...** "Habitation" = a temporary residence; to turn aside from the road for a lodging.
- 3) Familiar mention
- ### B. A scene in the country, Lk. 2:8-20
1. The men, v. 8
 - a. their occupation – shepherds
 - b. their obligation – keeping watch over their flock
 2. The messenger, vs. 9 – The angel of the Lord (probably Gabriel)
 3. The message, vs. 10
 - a. good tidings
 - b. great joy
 - c. global application
 4. The Messiah, vs. 11
 5. The multitude, vs. 13
- ### C. A scene in the courtyard, Lk. 2:7
1. The motel – "Inn" (Davis dictionary of the Bible) – not a cave like tradition teaches
 - a. Its pattern – a large quadrangular court with a well in the center and around the sides rooms for travelers, chambers for goods, and stalls for cattle
 - b. Its purpose – a public place of shelter for man and beast
 - c. Its provision – no furniture, no food, no fodder
 2. The manger – Lk. 2:7, 12, 16 – not a cradle or a crib but a feeding trough. The manger reveals:
 - a. The humanity of the Saviour
 - b. The poverty of the Son
 - c. The depravity of society – "no room"
 - 1) lack of compassion for the weary traveler and for those waiting delivery
 - 2) Lack of comprehension
 - Prophesied by Micah 5:2, Isa. 7:14
 - Promised by Jehovah
 - Yet, no great crowd

- Yet, no grand welcome
- d) The accessibility of the sinner
 - not a palace – only royalty could come
 - not a mansion – only rich could come
 - not a temple – only religious could come
 - but in a courtyard – where anyone could come
- e) The responsibility of the saint
 - Wise men came – left a different way
 - Shepherds came – made known the saying
 - Angels came – praising God and proclaiming His glory

III. CHRISTMAS IS THE STORY OF PEOPLE (Notables)

A. It Is The Story Of A Man – Joseph

1. He was the progeny of a King

- a. Genealogy of Jesus through Joseph, Mt. 1:1-17, esp. vs. 11, 16 (compare Mt. 1 with Gen. 5:1)
- b. Gentiles in the genealogy – 4 women
 - 1) Tamar – entered genealogy because of fault (Gen. 38)
 - 2) Rahab – entered genealogy because of faith (Josh. 2)
 - 3) Ruth – entered genealogy because of favor (Ruth 2:10)
 - 4) Bathsheba – entered genealogy because of family (2 Sam. 11) God does not cast away His children when they sin, but chastens them in order to bring them back into fellowship.

2. He was the protector of the Christ

- a) He was chosen by God to raise His only Begotten Son
 - 1) He took Him to Egypt, Mt. 2:13-16
 - 2) He taught Him a trade, Mt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3. It was not unusual for a Rabbi to have a trade—Paul was a tent maker. Jesus built a bridge – now He is building His church

3. He is a pattern for Christians

- a. He had a salvation experience, vs. 19
 - 1) “Just” by implication innocent; holy; righteous
 - 2) There is none righteous, Rom. 3:10
 - 3) We are justified by faith, Rom. 3:28, 5:1; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 4:1-5
- b. He had a sound faith
 - 1) He believed God’s Word, Isa. 7:14
 - 2) He believed His espoused wife, Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:18-19
 - a) “Espoused wife” – engagement that is as legally binding as marriage.
 - b) He could have had Mary burnt, Gen. 38:24
 - c) He could have had Mary stoned, Deut. 22:23-24
 - d) He decided to put her away privily (divorcement) Mt. 5:31; 19:7
 - 3) He believed in one way to Heaven, Mt. 1:21. Salvation is in a person, not a plan or a program or even a plot.
- c. He had a spiritual discernment
 - 1) He discerned the will of God for himself and for his family.
 - 2) Note four commands he obeyed immediately
 - a) Marry Mary, vs. 20, 24
 - b) Escape to Egypt, Mt. 2:13-14
 - c) Proceed to Palestine, Mt. 2:19-24
 - d) Go to Galilee, Mt. 2:22-23

B. It Is The Story Of A Maid – Mary, Lk. 1:26-56

1. She was pardoned, 1:47
2. She was privileged, vs. 28, 30, 42
 - a. Because of her faith, vs. 38, 45
 - b. Because of His favour. “Favoured” = to make accepted; indue with special honor. “Favour” = acceptable; graciousness; divine influence upon the heart and its reflection in the life; gift; grace
3. She was pure, 1:34
4. She was perplexed (confused), 1:34
5. She was promised, 1:3
 - a. By Messianic prophecy
 - b. By a messenger’s pronouncement, 1:31-33, 35
6. She was pliant, 1:38
 - a. Surrendered
 - b. Submissive
7. She was pondering – “Mary knew”, Lk. 2:19. If Mary was highly favoured, the Lord was with her, and she was blessed among women...
 - a. There are some things that go without saying
 - We know she must have been saved.
 - We know she must have made a sacrifice
 - We know she must have been surrendered and submissive
 - We know she must have been familiar with Scripture
 - b. When she looked into the face of the newborn Baby...
 - She knew His birth had been miraculous, Isa. 7:14; Lk. 1:35
 - She knew His body would be marred, Isa. 52:14
 - 1) Hands and feet pierced, Psa. 22:16; Zech. 12:10
 - 2) Back smitten, Isa. 50:6, 53:4
 - 3) Face spat upon
 - 4) Beard plucked, Isa. 50:6
 - 5) Wounded for our transgressions, Isa. 53:5
 - 6) Bruised for our iniquities, Isa. 53:5
 - 7) Scourged – “With His stripes...”, Isa. 53:5
 - She knew His blood would be shed

She did not know...

- 1) I Pet. 1:18-19
- 2) Rev. 1:5
- 3) Rev. 5:9
- 4) Rev. 7:14
- 5) Mt. 26:28

But she did know...

- 1) Exo. 12:13

2) Exo. 30:10

3) Lev. 17:11

• She knew His burial would only be temporary, Mt. 28:1-6

1) Isa. 53:9

2) Psa. 16:10

3) Isa. 25:8

4) Hosea 13:14

5) Job 19:25

C. It Is The Story Of A Monarch – Herod, Mt. 2:1. Four Herods:

1. Herod the Great – rebuilt the temple

2. Herod the Tetrarch – beheaded John the Baptist (He was in power at Christ's crucifixion)

3. Herod the King – Herod Agrippa I

a. Beheaded James

b. Imprisoned Peter

c. Eaten of worms

4. Herod Agrippa II – Listened to Paul plead his case. Note: none of the Herods were Jewish. They were Idumeans or Edomites – the descendants of Esau.

a. Jacob – twin son of Isaac – pictures the spiritual 11

b. Esau – twin son of Isaac – pictures the flesh

c. Gal. 5:17, "for the flesh lusteth against the spirit...and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." As Ishmael was a "son of the flesh", so Esau was a "fleshly son".

d. The descendants of Ishmael (Arabs) have always conflicted with the Jews.

e. The descendants of Esau (Edomites; Idumeans) have always conflicted with the Jews.

D. It Is The Story Of A Messenger, Mt. 1:18-23; Lk. 1:5-20, 26-38; 2:8-14. Gabriel means Man of God, Dan. 9:21. Luke 1:19,

1. He was standing – commitment

a. In the presence of God

b. For the purpose of God, Dan. 1

2. He was sent – commission, Mt. 28:18-20

3. He was speaking – communication; conversation – message, Mt. 16:15; Rom. 10:17

• Fruit of our lips

4. He was showing – conduct – manner of living, Mt. 5:16

• Fruit of our life

• Note: His message to the shepherds was Lk. 2:8-

a. Personal, "Unto you" – who

b. Pointed

1) "is born" – what

2) "this day" – when

3) "in the City of David" – where

4) "a Saviour which is Christ the Lord" – why

c. Punctual, "this day" – Gal. 4:4

d. Perpetual, "to all people", vs. 10 – every class, every age

E. It is the story of some Magi

1. Their caste

a. "Wise Men" – Greek Magos – a magian or oriental scientist; by implication a magician; wise man 12

b. These Magi were a priestly cast, worshipping the elements:

1) Fire, air, earth, water – problem with what to do with the dead

2) Fire temples, generally on house tops where they kept the fire burning day and night, thus easy for them to notice "His star"

3) Referred to as "kings" probably because when Persia defeated the Medes – this religious caste was numerous enough to attempt to seize the crown, though they failed.

2. Their claim

a. To be mediators between God and man

b. To be prophets, interpreting dreams and omens

3. Their course

a. What they sought

1) A man, "where is he"

2) A monarch, "King"

3) A messiah, "Of the Jews"

b. What they saw, "His star", Num. 24:17

1) Revelation – His star. "They substituted reason for revelation – went to Jerusalem, 2:1. They exchanged prophecy for presumption – went to the house where the "young child was"

2) Adoration – the star, Rev. 2:28, 22:16. "Worship" – to kiss, like a dog licking his master's hand; to prostrate oneself in homage; to reverence; to adore

4. Their contributions

a. "Treasures" – wealth; deposit

b. "Gifts" – present; sacrifice; offering, Rom. 12

5. Their conclusion

a. They were observant

b. They were obedient

IV. CHRISTMAS IS THE STORY OF PROPHECIES

- A. A prophecy about His presence, Isa. 7:14; Mt. 1:22, 23
- B. A prophecy about His provision, Micah 5; Mt. 2:6
- C. A prophecy about His persecution, Jer. 31:15; Mt. 2:18
- D. A prophecy about His protection, Hos. 11:1; Mt. 2:15
- E. A prophecy about His _____, Unknown Prophet, unrecorded
prophecy – fulfilled, Mt. 2:23

V. CHRISTMAS IS THE STORY OF PRESENTS – GIFTS

- Christmas is a time set aside to commemorate Christ's birth. It was instituted by Romanism as early as AD 336
- "Christmas" = Christ's mass
- It was corrupted by paganism, deteriorated from a worship service to a feast marked by parties and gift giving.
- It was commercialized by humanism. Paul said it right in Rom. 1:25, "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped the creature more than the Creator..."
- Many are teaching their children to be more concerned about what St. Nick thinks than what the Saviour thinks.
- Two specific presents I would like to mention:

A. The Unexpected Gift

1. We are told in Mt. 2:11, that the wise men followed the star and found the Saviour in a house where they
 - a. Opened their "treasures"; a deposit; wealth
 - b. And "presented unto Him gifts"; present; sacrifice; offering
2. We might have expected gold (gift for a mighty King; royalty)
3. We might have even expected frankincense (gift for a ministering priest; deity;) religion

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4. Who would ever have expected myrrh (gift for a martyred prophet; humanity) rejection
 - a. Its price – very costly – speaks of sacrifice
 - b. Its purpose – used to prepare a body for burial
 - 1) It was an antiseptic and a stimulant
 - 2) It was a perfume, Psa. 45:8; Pro. 7:17
 - 3) It was an ingredient of anointing oil used for priests, Exo. 30:23
 - 4) It was to deaden pain, Mk. 15:23

B. The Unspeakable Gift

1. "Unspeakable" = not expounded in full; indescribable
 - a. Most peculiar gift ever given
 - b. Most practical gift ever given
 - c. Most precious gift ever given
2. Someone has put it this way:
 - a. An unspeakable love that thought it
 - 1) Jn. 3:16 – God gave His Son, Isa. 9:6
 - 2) Gal. 1:4 – The Son gave Himself, 2:20
 - b. An unspeakable life that brought it, Jn. 1:1-4

- c. An unspeakable death that wrought it, Rom. 5:6
 - d. An unspeakable joy when taught it, I Jn. 1:1-4
 - 1) God the Father gives us heaven, Rom. 6:23b; Acts 1:4; Jn. 14:2
 - 2) God the Son gives us hope, Eph. 1:18; Col. 1:27; Tit. 2:1; I Jn. 3:1-3
 - 3) God the Spirit gives us help
- He intercedes
He instructs
He fills us; anoints us; seals us; comforts us

CONCLUSION: In light of what He has given to us:

1. What will you give to Him?
 - a. Your heart in salvation?
 - b. Your self in service and sacrifice, Rom. 12:1-2?
 - Talents in serving others
 - Time in serving Him

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