

# Christmas: the Baby that Would Change ~~the World~~ EVERYTHING!

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## I. Introduction

Ever wish that life wasn't so difficult? That our personal relationships weren't filled with so much conflict and drama? That going to work was actually enjoyable? Perhaps your life is great but you still wonder if it'll stay that way. What if it was actually possible to live a life, that although *it* was chaotic, *you* were still at peace in the midst of it?

## II. Why was Jesus Born.....to Lead Us Back Home, to Him Who Sets Everything Right

**What is Christmas about?** some think Christmas is about Christmas lights, presents, good cheer, spending time with loved ones, etc. The real meaning seems to be lost, but not completely. It's there in the Christmas songs we sing, lyrics like, "...Come and behold Him. Born the King of Angels! O come, let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him Christ the Lord." (*O Come, All Ye Faithful*). Or "Hark! The herald angels sing, 'Glory to the newborn King; peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!'... Christ, by highest heaven adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord. Late in time behold him come, Offspring of the Virgin's womb. Veiled in Flesh, the Godhead see, Hail the incarnate Deity ...Hail the Heaven-born Prince of Peace ...Light and life to all He brings. ...Mild He lays His Glory by, Born that man no more may die. Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them second birth." (*Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*)

**Luke 1:1-25**, Luke was a physician by trade but a most careful and accurate historian when chronicling the events of Jesus' life. There was a priest named Zacharias who had a wife named Elizabeth; both were godly and faithful to the Lord. They had no children because Elizabeth was barren. One day Zacharias was serving in the temple and the angel Gabriel appeared to him. Gabriel calmed his fears by telling him that his wife was going bear him a son, whom they were to name John. He will be the promised forerunner of the long-awaited Messiah (Isaiah 40:3) who would prepare the way of the Lord and turn many in Israel back to the Lord their God. And he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. Zacharias didn't believe it because they were both well-beyond childbearing age, so Gabriel struck him dumb until John's birth. After his temple duty was complete, he returned home and his wife soon conceived and she praised the Lord for taking away her reproach of being barren.

**Luke 1:26-38**, God then sends Gabriel to a virgin named Mary. He greets her with "Blessed are you among women," which puzzles her. He then explains why she's so favored by God: she will give birth to Messiah without the aid of a man! God, Himself, will be His Father, which is why He'll be called Son of the Highest, Son of God, and sit on the throne of His father David and rule over Israel and the world forever. She's to name Him Jesus, which means "the Lord saves." This news is so incredible that Gabriel points to Mary's relative Elizabeth to show her what God will do: even though she's too old to bear children and been barren all her life, Elizabeth's now six months pregnant! Mary so believed God that she said of herself, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord!"

**Luke 1:39-45**, Mary went to visit Elizabeth and as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb leaped for joy. She repeated Gabriel's words, "Blessed are you among women," because Mary was carrying in her womb the Lord, God's Son, Messiah and she praised Mary for believing what the Lord told her.

**Luke 1:46-56**, what Mary says next is known as the Magnificat, Mary's song. It contains what the heart of the Gospel does, how God sets everything right in our lives. First, Mary praises God for doing for her what He will do for generations to come. Even though Mary was a nobody, God blessed her and exalted her above other women by granting her the honor of giving birth to the King of kings, the One who will rule the world forever. Thus, she will forever be known as the blessed one of God. And God will show this same mercy to anyone who acknowledges Him regardless of their status. Those who refuse to acknowledge Him, who exalt themselves, will be left scattered and empty-handed. But the lowly, poor, and hungry who look to God will be filled and exalted as Mary was. And we can trust God to do this since He's about to deliver Israel by fulfilling the promise He made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob concerning Messiah.

**Luke 1:57-80**, Elizabeth finally gave birth to John; when it came time to name him, they were going to call him Zacharias. But Elizabeth said, "No, he shall be called John." They were puzzled since no one in the family had this name. They asked Zacharias who proceeded to write on a tablet, "His name is John," and they all marveled as they heard him open his mouth and speak for the first time since Gabriel appeared to him. Zacharias was then filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied about the Savior to come and John who would prepare His way: as God promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, one day this Savior, from the house of David, will deliver Israel from all her enemies. He will enable them to serve God in perfect holiness and righteousness. And John will prepare the people for His arrival by declaring to them how this Savior sent from heaven will save them from their sins, how He will "give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death," how He will guide humanity "into the way of peace."

**What did the world look like when baby Jesus arrived?** As it did when Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden: violent, oppressive, and hopeless. In the beginning God gave us a world of blessing: everything was Good—over and over, God says this. And up to that point, everything had been defined good or evil by God, including the Tree of the knowledge of Good and Evil, God said that to eat of this tree would be evil, and evil that would bring forth your death. But then we decided to define good and evil on our own, which began our downward spiral: Cain killed his brother Abel, humanity got so bad that God wiped them all out with a great flood. We got a new start with Noah and his sons but eventually humanity got so arrogant and rebellious that they decide to build a Tower that would reach God Himself, so God scattered them and started over again with a man named Abram to whom He said, "I will bless all the nations through you."

Israel, the nation that came from Abraham, was supposed to lead the other nations to God. But they rebelled, so God allowed other nations to conquer and rule them: Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, all of which was prophesied by Daniel, 2:31-35. Even though they were now ruled by other nations, Israel was still supposed to point these nations to God, but like many of us today, they either conformed to the culture and religion of the day or they insulated themselves from it.

Regardless, these actions left them and the other nations isolated from God. But despite Israel's failure, God was all the while preparing the world for Messiah's arrival, and the Kingdom that would ultimately destroy man's rebellion. But this was a new kind of Kingdom, where the goal was to serve not be served, to give up power not amass and abuse power. It was completely the opposite to the world's way of thinking.

This is the world that Jesus was born into and the world He came to save. God signaled His arrival with two miraculous births. Every time God performed a miraculous birth, He was signaling that He was about to do something incredible and sometimes that incredible thing was the arrival of a savior. When Samson was born, one of Israel's judges and deliverers, he was a miracle baby, Judges 13. Likewise Samuel, Israel's last prophet and judge who delivered Israel from the Philistines, 1 Samuel 1. These births were preludes to something even more incredible. When God decided to bring Messiah into the world, the ultimate Savior, He announced it through another barren woman, Elizabeth and then He accomplished it through a virgin!

**How does Jesus change everything....in your life?** Our problem is our heart (Mark 7:20-23), we cannot truly love God and others the way we want to. We always go astray, like Adam and Eve we always end up walking away from God's path. Therefore everything we do—our relationships, our hopes and dreams, our desires—ultimately go wrong, which leaves us frustrated and often hopeless. The problem is that we can't truly live until we get a heart transplant, i.e., we cannot truly experience an abundant life, one that blesses us and others until we get a different nature. To love like God, we have to be like God.

That's why Jesus was born, that's why the Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14), to show us how to be one with God. In Jesus God and man were united as one (Colossians 2:9). Jesus partook of our human nature so that we could partake of His. He came to give us a new heart, His divine Spirit which would give us the ability to be like Him (Galatians 4:6).

His nature will transform your nature and make everything about you brand new (2 Corinthians 5:17) and you will finally be able to love God and others as you were always meant to. That's why the Father sent God the Son, to bring us back to God, to the oneness we had with Him when the world began (John 17:20-26).

### III. Conclusion

*So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." Then He closed the book, and gave it back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."*