

CHRISTMAS DAY 2016

TEXT: MATTHEW 1:18-25

INTRODUCTION:

1. Sunday is the Lord's Day, and therefore the most important day of the week, and Christmas is the happiest day of the year, so it is a great blessing to be in God's house this Christmas Day!
2. Christmas has been under attack for a long time.
3. First, they paganized Christmas.
4. Then they commercialized Christmas.
5. And then they secularized Christmas.
6. Now they want to eliminate Christmas altogether. They want it to be absorbed into a meaningless, Christ-less, godless "holiday season" with holiday trees, and mistletoe, and jingle bells, and Santa Claus, and traveling, and shopping and spending, and eating and drinking – but with no reference to the birth of Christ.
7. A while back, I read an article about popular Christmas songs. Most of the well-known Christmas songs (I am not referring here to the traditional Christmas carols) have nothing to do with Jesus! Interestingly, many of them were written by (non-religious) Jews.
 - Santa Claus is Coming to Town
 - The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)
 - I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas
 - Let It Snow! Let it Snow! Let it Snow!
 - Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer
 - Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree
 - Holly Jolly Christmas
 - It's the Most Wonderful Time of The Year
 - Sleigh Ride
 - I'll Be Home for Christmas
 - Silver Bells
 - There's No Place Like Home for the Holidays
 - Jingle Bells
 - Jingle Bell Rock
 - Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas
 - Winter Wonderland
 - I'll Have a Blue Christmas Without You

8. I am not criticizing these Christmas songs. I enjoy most of them and perhaps many of you do too. But I'd much rather sing, "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" or "What Child is This?" than "Jingle Bells."
9. A few years ago, I preached a message emphasizing, "seven facts about the birth of Christ."
10. These are the seven facts I mentioned: our Lord's birth was a virgin birth (1:23), a prophesied birth (1:22, 23; 2:5, 6), a holy and sinless birth, a pre-existent birth, a royal birth (2:1, 2), a wondrous birth (1:20), and a doomed birth.
11. This morning, I will try to focus primarily on the fact that our Lord's birth was a virgin birth, a prophesied birth, and a doomed birth.

I. A VIRGIN BIRTH

1. Our Lord's birth was a miraculous birth because His was a virgin birth.
2. Luke 1:26 and 27 says, "the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."
3. This is plain enough, and yet there have always been scoffers who deny the virgin birth of Christ.
4. No other man was ever born without an earthly father (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:30-35).
5. Scoffers ask, "How can a man have no father? It is a biological impossibility!" Well, Adam had no father or mother!
6. If you read carefully the genealogy in Matthew 1, you see over and over the word "begat" (1:2, 3, 4, etc.). But when you come to verse 16 you will notice that Joseph did not begat Jesus (1:16).
7. Galatians 4:4 says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman..."
8. Our Lord had to be born of a woman because He had to be human in order to be our Saviour. But He also had to be born of a virgin in order to be our sinless Saviour.
9. He also had to be born of a virgin to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy (Matthew 1:22, 23).

10. It was written seven hundred years before our Lord's birth: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14; cf. Matthew 1:22-25).
11. Only a sinless Saviour, born to a virgin, could die as our perfect substitute. Here is another unusual factor about Christ's birth that sets Him apart from all men – He was born without sin. His was a holy birth.
12. Every other baby born into this world is born with a sinful nature. David wrote, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).
13. And David also wrote, "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies" (Psalm 58:3).
14. The apostle Paul wrote, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).
15. Go into the nursery and look at the sweet little babies. Some day they will be lying and disobeying their parents. And if mom and dad are not careful they may start doing things far worse than that. Why? Because they are all born with a sinful nature.
16. But 2,000 years ago, when Mary and Joseph and those shepherds looked into the face of the baby Jesus they were looking at a child who would never sin. They were looking at God manifest in the flesh (I Timothy 3:16).
17. "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Matthew 1:23).
18. This was a baby who was not born with a sinful nature.
19. Our Lord said, "Who convinceth me of sin?" (John 8:46), and of course there was none.
20. First John 3:5 says, "And ye know that He was manifested to take away our sins; and in Him is no sin."
21. Hebrews 4:15 says Christ "was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."

22. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."
23. First Peter 2:22 says, "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."
24. Peter said that Christ "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust" (I Peter 3:18).
25. So, we see our Lord's birth was a virgin birth, and a holy and sinless birth.

II. A PROPHESED BIRTH

1. Our Lord's virgin birth is just the first of many Old Testament prophecies that were fulfilled on that first Christmas day 2,000 years ago (Isaiah 7:14; cf. Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2). Later on, many other Old Testament prophecies would be fulfilled in the life of Christ.
 - * His crucifixion
 - * that men would gamble for His clothes
 - * He was buried in a rich man's tomb
 - * His resurrection from the grave
2. The first Messianic prophecy is found way back in Genesis 3:15, where we read that the LORD God said unto the serpent, "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."
3. "Her seed" is an unusual term, because the word "seed" always refers to the seed of a man, not a woman. Biologically, a woman does not produce seed.
4. In the Bible, the word "seed" always refers to the seed of a man. For example, we read in Genesis 12, "And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land."
5. "Thy seed" refers to Abraham and his son Isaac, and his son Jacob, etc. The Bible speaks of the seed of David, and the seed of Israel, etc.
6. This is the normal usage of the word.
7. The promised seed of the woman, referred to in Genesis 3:15 was miraculously implanted in the womb of Mary by the Holy Spirit.
8. You may recall that when Mary was told by the angel Gabriel that she was going to give birth to the Messiah, she replied, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" (Luke 1:34).

9. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).
10. In this way, the Lord Jesus would not inherit the sinful nature which would disqualify Him from becoming our Savior.
11. Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." All except, the sinless, spotless, virgin-born Son of God.
12. Genesis 3:15 is a biological impossibility, because it is supernatural and miraculous.
13. By the way, there are far more prophecies predicting the second coming of Christ, than the first coming.

III. A DOOMED BIRTH (cf. Luke 2:34, 35).

1. The birth of our Lord was like no other in that He was born to die. He came into this world for one specific purpose and that was to die on the cross for our sins.
2. The Bible says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (I Timothy 1:15).
3. The big emphasis of the New Testament is not the birth of Christ, nor is it the life of Christ.
4. The emphasis in the New Testament is the death of Christ. Way back when the baby Jesus was only eight-days-old, Simeon came by the Holy Spirit into the temple, and said to Mary, "Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also" (Luke 2:35).
5. Later, John the Baptist introduced Jesus by saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
6. This is what is in line with all of the Old Testament types and prophecies.
7. The Old Testament is filled with animal sacrifices, including Passover lambs, goats on the Day of Atonement, and many pictures and types of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was born to die upon the cross.
8. One thousand years before Calvary, David wrote these familiar words: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels... they pierced my hands and my feet " (Psalm 22:14, 16b).
9. And seven hundred years before the cross, the prophet Isaiah said, "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the

chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed" (Isaiah 53:5).

10. After our Lord was crucified, buried, and rose from the dead, the apostle Paul said, "For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified" (I Corinthians 2:2).
11. But this aspect of Christmas is completely ignored by the world. It does not fit in with their worldly festivities. They think a jolly fat Santa Claus is better company than a despised and crucified Saviour.
12. The prophet Isaiah said, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isaiah 53:3).
13. If a person brings this up at the office Christmas party, people get upset. They say, "Let's just have a good old time and forget all this talk about Jesus dying on the cross for sinners, and the blood of Christ, and judgment for sin, and salvation, and atonement, etc."
14. But sinners are not saved by a baby in a manger. They can only be saved by a Saviour who died on the cross.
15. It has been noted that most Christmas hymns and carols are very joyful and are in major keys – "Angels We Have Heard on High (Gloria)," "Angels, from the Realms of Glory," "Away in a Manger (Cradle Song)," "Christians, Awake, Salute the Happy Morn," "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus," "Go, Tell It on the Mountain," "Good Christian Men Rejoice," "Hark! The Herald Angles Sing," "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," "Joy to the World! The Lord is Come," "O Come All Ye Faithful (Adeste Fideles)," "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "Once in Royal David's City," "Silent Night! Holy Night!," "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks," etc.
16. But some beautiful Christmas hymns are in minor keys. "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" and "I Wonder as I Wander" are two notable examples.
17. *O come, Thou Day-spring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.* (translated from Latin by John M. Neale).
18. *I wonder as I wander out under the sky,
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die.
For poor orn'ry people like you and like I..
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.* (Collected by John Jacob Niles)

I believe these songs are sad because Jesus was born to die. His birth was a doomed birth.

CONCLUSION:

1. Someone said, "The greatest gift wasn't placed under a tree. But He was hung on a tree."
2. This is the real message of Christmas, but sadly very few people seem to understand it.
3. I remember that when Carl was working in a bank, he told me about a Hindu co-worker who told him that she was "giving up on Christmas" because she "couldn't afford it."
4. But her concept of Christmas was materialism and covetousness and consumerism, etc. It had nothing to do with the Lord Jesus Christ.
5. When people do not understand the Gospel, they miss the true meaning of Christmas.
6. We need to see beyond the manger to the cross.
7. If you can see the reason why Christ came into the world, and if you can believe that He died in order that you might receive eternal life, then you can be saved today.