

## THE BIRTH OF HOPE

Reference: **Luke 2:1-18**

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*Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, **having no hope** and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

### **Ephesians 2:11-13**

This morning I want us to look at Hope – Hope with a capital “H.” In **Luke 2:1-18** we can gain a wonderful look at The Birth of Hope. We will look at: the Essence of Hope, the Substance of Hope and the Proclamation of Hope.

#### THE ESSENCE OF HOPE – verses 1-7

**The Prediction (vs. 1)** – For years prophets of God had spoken concerning the coming Messiah, three of which have direct bearing on our topic this morning.

- First, this hope would be of the lineage of David, found in **2 Sam. 7:12** and **Micah 5:2**
- Second, this hope would be born of a virgin, stated in **Isaiah 7:14 c.**
- Third, He would be born in Bethlehem, **Micah 5:2.**

These predictions, some almost 1000 years old, were brought to pass with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem that first Christmas morning!

**The Passage (vs. 4-5)** – the trip to Bethlehem

- The Decree from Cyrenius was God’s way of placing His servants where He wanted them, when He wanted them.
- The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem is about 70 miles as the crow flies – figuring 20 miles a day and depending on the route, it could have taken anywhere from 4 to 7 days.
- For a pregnant woman, close to her delivery date, this would have been a hard trip and could have induced labor.

- But we must remember God is in charge of not only the heavens and earth, not only of rulers, but of the womb also, & His timing is always impeccable!

**The Person (vs. 7)** - This Christmas let's take time to Praise God for His Son – the Hope of the Nations! Jesus is the Essence of Hope.

#### THE SUBSTANCE OF HOPE – verses 10-14

Three things that are the substance of Hope:

- The greatest of these is SALVATION! - the gift of eternal life from Jesus Christ! (vs.11) The testimony of Scripture - **Romans 10:9 & 13**
- Peace (vs. 14) - This peace is two-fold.
  1. Peace **with** God
    - a) We are no longer at odds, at war with God.
    - b) God has brought us from the side of the devil and into His family – into the family of God.
    - c) We no longer have to worry about God's wrath or hell! Praise the Lord!
  2. Peace **of** God
    - a) This is an inner sense that all is okay – God is in control and I need not worry or fear.
    - b) In fact the angels told the shepherds, "Fear not."
- Joy (vs. 10)
  1. This joy is more than passing happiness – it comes from steadfast knowledge that everything is right with God and that He has chosen us to be a light in this dark world of sin.
  2. Joy is beholding our Savior and knowing our sins are forgiven and life in this world has meaning – living for Him.

#### THE PROCLAMATION OF HOPE –

- When the shepherds had experienced what the angels had told them, they proclaimed it to others: they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.
  1. They spoke of the Savior.
  2. How can we do any less?
  3. We need to proclaim the gospel and make it known both at home and abroad for it is the message of Hope that we proclaim.
- But it all starts within our own hearts. (vs. 19-20)
  1. Folks it can all start right here, right now.
  2. Would you open your heart to Him?
  3. Would you be the messenger of the Proclamation of Hope?