**JESUS, THE SAVIOR KING (I)**

**Luke 2:1-14**

**Key Verses: 2:10,11**

**"But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.'"**

**Study Questions:**

1. What do verses 1-7 teach about the times when Jesus was born? (What do you know about the Roman Empire, Caesar Augustus, etc.) What does this event reveal about the suffering of colonial people?

2. Describe the beauty and sorrow of the scene of the birth of Jesus. What does "there was no room in the inn" tell us about the people of that time? How have people past and present tried and failed to make the world bet­ter?

3. Why do men need a Savior from sin? Who is Jesus that he can be our Savior? (Jn 1:3) How does his birth in such fatalistic circum­stances make him better able to be our Savior?

4. How did sin come into the human race? What are sin's conse­quences? (Ro 6:23a; Heb 9:27; 1Co 15:32) How did Jesus help a lone­ly, fatalistic tax col­lector? (Lk 5:27,28) Think of others he also helped.

5. How can Jesus rescue those pierced by the horn of Satan ("horn" rep­re­sents power)? And those living in darkness? (Lk 1:69,78,79) Who is Jesus (Lk 1:32b,33), and what did he do about our sin problem? What does he give us? (Jn 3:16; Lk 9:25; Mk 10:45; Da 2:44-45; 2Ti 2:12)

**This passage is the Christmas message to the shepherds living out in the field, keeping watch over their flocks at night. The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." Bible narra­tives are written mostly in under­state­ment. The Bible nev­er exaggerates. But it says good news plus great joy.**

**First, the time when Jesus was born (1-7).**

**Luke the historian depicts the historical background of the time of Jesus' birth. Verse 1 says, "In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be ta­ken of the entire Roman world." The Roman Em­pire extend­ed west­ward to Eng­land and eastward to Asia Minor and to North Africa across the Mediter­ranean Sea. The world was a Roman world. Rome ruled the world with the slogan, "Peace of Rome," which meant the Roman Empire rules the world with peace. But the census reveals the cruelty of Caesar's inner motive of squeezing poor colonial people. As much as the Roman Em­pire pros­pered, the colo­nial people suffered.**

**Look at verses 4-5. "So Joseph also went up from the town of Naza­reth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledg­ed to be married to him and was expecting a child." This story reflects the social unrest of that time. All the people of the colonies had to stop what they were doing and go to their own town to register because they knew that Cae­sar was despotic and his decree was inflexible. Be­cause of the decree, some­one might have post­poned the day of his wed­ding cere­mony. There was no exception to the de­cree. Joseph knew that it was not good for a wo­man who had reached the full term of her preg­nancy to travel such a long way. But there was no choice. He went to his home­town to regis­ter with Ma­ry, traveling 100 miles on foot, risking the lives of both the baby and Mary.**

**Look at verses 6-7. "While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." This story tells us about the distressing situa­tion of the times. Maybe someone who made a hotel reservation want­ed to give his room to Mary when he heard Mary crying with deliv­ery pains. But for his own sur­vival, he hardened his heart and turned deaf ears to a woman crying with birth­pains. Many people might have done the same.**

**As a man, Joseph should provide a room in which Mary could deli­ver the baby. But he could not afford it. Probably, he felt like dying. So with no choice, Jo­seph and Mary went into the stinking stable of an animal, where many flies were buz­z­ing around, and she gave birth to a son and placed him in a man­ger. To be the mother of Jesus was literally a suffering servant, and it was in­deed glorious.**

**In view of history, people have toiled too hard to live in this world, hoping that the world would be better off, and that they would live a better life. But the world in which sin reigns had never been bet­ter off. In the time of the Re­naissance, people hoped so, but they failed to see the world be­come better. The communists hoped so, but they failed to see the world be­come better. The communists only victimized 50 million hus­band can­di­dates, in order to materialize their utopian dreams. As a re­sult, 50 million beautiful Russian women could not marry and became end­lessly sorrowful, for only lucky ones could marry. The peo­ple in the demo­cratic coun­tries be­lieved that they would live in a paradise if only they could enjoy unlim­it­ed freedom. But instead of para­dise, they live in a rest­less and fearful world. In the name of human freedom, people enjoy the life of sin at ran­dom. In result, violence and immorality ruin the fibre of this nation. Without Jesus the world can never be better. The world needs a Savior.**

**Second, Jesus saves men from their sins.**

**Thus far we thought about why we need a Savior. But how can a baby in a manger save men from their sins? Even though he was laid in a manger, he is the Creator God. John 1:3 says, "Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." But in order to save men from their sins, Jesus gave up everything and was born in such a fatalis­tic way so that he might save all the fatalistic people. Jesus was born in such a fatalistic way so that he might be a comfort to sorrowful people. Jesus was born in such a fatalistic way so that he might be a friend to us.**

**There are many prob­lems. But fatalism seems to be the worst prob­lem and it is the source of all sin. Many American people are ran­corous about the insid­ious influence of John Stuart Mill or Jean Jacques Rous­seau, think­ing that their skep­tical relativism influenced most Amer­i­cans not to keep the law of God. As a result of their bad influence, many American people lost the fear of God and a holy mission. They are now taking the conse­quences of relativ­ism, such as moral de­pravity and lethal vio­lence and so on.**

**But the Bible says that through one man Adam's dis­obedi­ence, sin came into the world. And sin made man very fatalis­tic. Romans 6:23a says, "For the wages of sin is death." After death, the un­godly are sup­posed to stand before the judg­ment seat of God. After judgment the ungodly will be put into eternal condemna­tion. As we know well, death makes men very fatalistic. All those who have the fear of death are kind of pessimistic philos­ophers. Their theme is, "Let's eat and drink, for to­morrow we die" (1Co 15:32). They are endlessly sor­rowful, living under the power of sin and death, working until their bones are cracking. In the fatalistic view of the world, they want to live an easy­going life and want to enjoy physi­cal plea­sure like the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. They think that hard work does not make sense to those who are per­ishing. Men cannot live without dreams and vision. The Bible says, "...your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams" (Ac 2:17b). Fatalistic people have no eyes to see tomorrow.**

**There was a man named Levi. He did not want to live a poor life like his father. So he decided to become a tax collector in order to make money, thinking that he could buy happiness with money. In order to become a tax col­lec­tor, first he sold his conscience, next he betrayed his people suffering un­der the Roman yoke. He made some money. But his people isolated him like a leper. Peo­ple's isolation made him too sorrow­ful to work any more. He was perishing. One day Jesus visited him and said to him, "Fol­low me." Sud­denly, Levi felt that the power of darkness disap­peared from his heart and the bright heaven­ly sunshine smeared in his soul. He was happy. So he cried many tears quietly and loudly. After crying, he bought a ton of grocer­ies and invited his tax collector friends and had a heavenly feast. When Levi followed him, Jesus helped him and raised him as the best teacher through­out history. Levi later be­came Mat­thew, who quoted Je­sus' words, "You are the light of the world." There is no fatalism in Jesus.**

**Jesus can destroy the power of sin and death. Luke 1:69 says, "He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant Da­vid." Zech­ariah nicknamed Jesus the horn of salvation. Zecha­riah un­der­stood the power of sin. Satan has seven heads and ten horns (Rev 12:3). The horn of Satan is the symbol of sin and it is the most powerful on earth. There is a story about Pedro, a very handsome and popular bull­fighter. One day he didn't feel like fight­ing. But because of his people's nagging and for the sake of his own popularity, he went out to fight. When he saw an angry bull paw the ground several times and dash toward him, sud­denly, he became blank. The angry bull pierced his ribs on the left side. Pedro was badly injured and was popular no more. Likewise, there are many young peo­ple who look nice out­wardly, but inwardly each of them has incur­able wounds caused by the horn of Satan. One young man was pierc­ed by the horn of Satan when his moth­er divorced. His wound is so deep that he cries endlessly.**

**There are so many young people whose souls were pierced by the horn of Sa­tan while enjoying the dark­ness of sins. But Jesus saves them. Luke 1:69 says, "He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his ser­vant David." To rescue us, Jesus de­stroyed the horn of Satan through his crucifix­ion and resurrection. As a matter of fact, we wanted to serve God. But we could not serve God because we were fear­ful of everything, even a dog Mike. Now we can serve God free­ly without fear in holi­ness and righteous­ness.**

**Sin is compared to leprosy. Sin is incurable like cancer. Most im­por­tantly, sin makes man meaningless. There was a very handsome young man. He studied hard and obtained fame and wealth in his twen­ties. Be­fore obtaining fame and wealth, he was good. But after ob­taining a San­hedrin seat and a golden chariot, he felt empty. Whenever he fought against politi­cal opponents and won to keep his honor and posi­tion, he felt a sadistic joy, not a real joy. But whenever he wanted to get some sleep he always felt uneasy. Finally he could not sleep well. He could not eat well. The townspeople envied him, but he felt he was fall­ing down from the peak of a mountain to a bottomless abyss. He con­fronted human limits comparatively earlier. So he dis­guised him­self and visited Jesus at night secretly with his several bodyguards. As soon as he saw Jesus, the heavenly sunshine shone in his soul. He was saved from his life of dark­ness. Jesus could save him because he is the ris­ing sun. Luke 1:78,79 says, "because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in dark­ness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." Man cannot obtain true happiness with money and fame. One must come to Jesus to rescue him from the shadow of death.**

**Third, Jesus gives us eternal life.**

**What is the most important to anyone in the world? We agree that each one's life is the most important. We can trade many things with others. But we cannot trade our lives with oth­ers. Jesus said, "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?" (Lk 9:25) John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever be­lieves in him shall not perish but have eter­nal life." To save us from our sins, God cruci­fied his one and only Son Je­sus Christ, and made him a ransom sac­ri­­fice. Jesus gave his life to give us eter­nal life.**

**Fourth, Jesus is the Savior King.**

**The baby Je­sus was wrapped in cloth and was placed in a manger. The Bible teach­es that Jesus' life began in a manger and ended on a cross. Hu­manly speaking, Jesus was born and lived the most tragic way. But Luke the evangelist and historian says Jesus is a sign of the Savior King. Look at verse 12. "This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." The baby Jesus is the sign that God came to this world to save men from their sins. This baby laid in a manger is a sign that God's will for world salvation is ful­filled. This baby is a sign that Jesus is the Savior King. In order to become a Savior King, Jesus gave up his heaven­ly glory and humbled himself, and came to this world. Without knowing hum­bleness, we cannot come to Jesus, the Savior King. Humble Jesus became a friend to a lonely tax collector. Humble Je­sus became a father to a smelly Samaritan wo­man. Final­ly Jesus took up all our sins and shed his holy blood on the cross as a crim­inal. Jesus gave his life for us.**

**Fifth, Jesus gives us the kingdom of God.**

**As history attests, the kings and kingdoms of the world are temporal. There is noth­ing eternal in the world. The agony of the kings of na­tions in history is that they wanted to keep their king­doms forev­er. Only the king­dom of Jesus is forever. There are many stories about nations and king­doms in the Bi­ble. Among them, the kingdom of Christ is unique­ly eter­nal (Dan 2:44-45). The Bible says that this king­dom is the climax of God's will for world salva­tion. And all Chris­tians' ultimate desti­nation is the kingdom of God. The pur­pose of our Lord Jesus' coming to this world was to bring us back to his eternal kingdom. The Bible says that we will reign with Jesus forever (2Ti 2:12). When we have faith in the kingdom of God we can live a life of holy pilgrims with no anxiety for our future se­cu­ri­ty. When we have faith in the kingdom of God we can have hope to raise 10,000 Bible tea­ch­ers in America. The world is too sorrowful to live in, but we can have joy and hope when we have faith in the kingdom of God. Luke 1:32b,33 says, "The Lord God will give him the throne of his father Da­vid, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."**

**The birth of Jesus is glory to God and peace to men (14). God tried to fulfill his will for world salvation. But his people disobeyed God's will for 42 genera­tions. At last, through the birth of Jesus, God reveals his love for his lost children. Also, the birth of Jesus is peace to men on earth be­cause Jesus, the Savior King, sets us free from the pow­er of sin and rules us with love and peace. The baby Jesus gives eternal life and the kingdom of God to those who believe in him.**