



**CAPITOL[®]
COMMISSION**

Gospel Hope & Spiritual Strength for Government Leaders



Ron Comoglio, Alabama State Minister

Ron.Comoglio@capitolcom.org

PHONE: (334) 476-9333

WWW.CAPITOLCOM.ORG

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased.” The Heavenly Host, Luke 2:14

Luke 2: - Unto Us a Son is Given – the Birth of the God/Man Jesus Christ

Although it is now two months past Christmas, we turn to the birth of Jesus in Luke Chapter 2. Read vs 1-7. Ever the careful researcher and historian, the timing of the events leading up to the first Christmas occur after the Imperial decree for a census of “all the world” (which of course only ranges as far as the Roman Empire). V 2 even gives more detail that “this was the first registration” under Governor Quirinius. This was typically an accounting of the subjects of the Emperor for taxation purposes, thus each household is ordered to return to the town of the birth of the head of that family. This also establishes that Israel was not self-ruled.

Because Joseph is a descendant of the house of David he must return to Bethlehem, a small village not far from Jerusalem, but over 75 miles from Nazareth. On foot. With a pregnant woman. This is a grueling trip for them both but it will fulfill a prophecy (Micah 5:2) when Mary delivers her firstborn son. Of the four gospels, only Matthew and Luke tell us about His birth, and only Luke lets us know that the Son of God came into the world in a lowly stable and was laid in a manger due to the great crowds in the small village. This is an exceedingly humble beginning for the Son of God.

One of the most amazing aspects of the Christmas story centers on how the first to learn of this momentous birth were shepherds, out tending sheep. Read vs 8-21. The duty of a shepherd was an isolating and lonely existence. Constant vigilance to protect the sheep from intruders and predators meant they would not participate in the Jewish community as much as they would like. Being unable to wash they were often ceremonially unclean and not included in social events. They basically smelled like the flocks they watched. However, their contribution to that society was immense. There in the shadow of the Jewish temple, these men raised up the lambs for the Passover feast and the sheep for the daily sacrifice. But now they will come to meet the one born to be the Lamb of God (as described by John the Baptist, John 1:29-30). And they see the glory of God.

Capitol Commission state ministers are pastor-missionaries who in session teach weekly verse-by-verse Bible studies for all those working in state capitols. The Bible studies are hand distributed to each legislative office and available by email and shared across the Capitol Commission community. This ministry is an extension of the church seeking to proclaim the gospel message and help believers mature through Biblical expositional instruction. Prayer is foundational to this ministry, consistent with proper submission to governmental authority (Romans 13:1-7) and obedient to the command to pray for our appointed leaders (1 Timothy 2:1-4).

Our desire is to witness God’s work in transforming hearts.

Capitol Commission is a non-political and non-lobbying 501(c)(3).

The angels appearing to them at night, shining with glory light, certainly terrified them. But the proclamation begins with an encouraging “Fear not” because the message is one of joyfully **good news**, a Greek word from which we get the word evangelist and will be used eight more times by Luke in this gospel. What is the good news? A Savior is born in the City of David (Bethlehem) who holds the title of Christ and Lord. Christ is the Greek word for an “anointed one”, which from the Hebrew would be translated “Messiah”. The anointed ones in Scripture held that title, most notably Saul, the first king of Israel, and David, his successor. This is a loaded word to say to a first-century Hebrew. The title “Lord” here is “*kurios*” and was already used to describe the angel and the glory around him in v 9. This sets Jesus apart from the kings that came before Him: He is the Messiah king who is also the Creator God. After making this key identification, a host of angels suddenly appear in full praise of and glory to God, pronounce peace on earth. Notice they do not promise worldwide peace, as our history since that day attests. This peace is only among those “with whom he is pleased”.

When the angels disappear, the shepherds clearly have an action to take: Go and verify what God had just revealed to them. They quickly leave to find the only newborn in the village lying in a feed trough. They relate their angelic visit to Mary and Joseph (who are well acquainted with such visits) but Luke tells us Mary particularly treasured these things in her heart. It is very likely that Luke interviewed Mary in his investigation for this book as she lived for some time after the crucifixion in the care of John the Apostle in Judea and later the city of Ephesus. The shepherds depart to return to guarding their sheep, but with exuberant praise and hope.

Our text ends with a simple verse (v 21) informing us the young couple observed the law of God to circumcise the new baby after eight days and name Him **Jesus**, as instructed by Gabriel in 1:31 even “before he was conceived in the womb.” As Michael Wilcock observed, “Not only was God indeed at work in salvation, but he was about to accomplish that work once and for all, in and through an actual son of Israel.”* God is a god of order and detail. He purposed His Son to be born exactly when, where, and how He ordained it, using even the Roman authorities to shake up the entire Empire for a census to accomplish His means. Give Him the glory!

Application

1. The peace we talked about today is also described in Scripture as a “peace that passes understanding” (Philippians 4:7) and is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). Have you experienced God’s peace? It is contingent first on His being pleased with you and the only way we can please God is to be In Christ; following Christ and identified with Him so that God sees Christ when He looks on you.

My desire is to highlight Jesus Christ to you. Toward that end, I am available to discuss any biblical topic or question you may have. I especially want to ensure all who read the studies understand how Jesus Christ is distinctively important to the entire world and to each of us individually. Lastly, in case you miss one, all Bible studies are available at Capitol Commission’s Alabama page: <https://capitolcom.org/state/alabama>.

NOTE: Plan to attend our in-house Bible Study during session: Tuesdays at 11:00 am in Room 123. Bring a beverage, a light lunch will be provided.

A key facet empowering our ministry is prayer, especially prayer for our elected leaders. 1 Timothy 2:1-4 commands Christians to obediently pray for all in authority. A tool for America’s churches to help consistently pray for you, our elected leaders, is available to all via:

www.Pray1Tim2.org - You can select Alabama and sign up for daily email reminders, courtesy of Capitol Commission

* Wilcock, *The Message of Luke, The Bible Speaks Today*, Inter-Varsity Press, pg 46