**Luke II**

**A Savior, Lying in a Manger**

Theme: God’s salvation, as predicted by the prophets has arrived in the coming of the Messiah—Jesus of Nazareth. He is the savior of the world and this salvation is now spreading throughout the world (including that of the Gentiles, of course).

Theme verses: Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David as Savior has been born to you: he is the Messiah, the Lord.

In Matthew Jesus fulfills the messianic expectation through fulfilling specific prophecies and prefigures. In Luke, Jesus fulfills the messianic pattern in his ministry to the poor, women, the outcasts, the oppressed and in bringing salvation today to Israel and to the whole world.

**Last week: Birth Narrative**

The point of this section is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the pious Jewish messianic expectation. The best the Jews have to offer in terms of piety and righteousness are those whose expectation is fulfilled in Jesus.

Zechariah and Elizabeth (middle aged) are both priestly descendants and observe all the Lord’s commands

Joseph and Mary (very young) are humble servants of God, faithfully fulfilling the commands regarding purification and dedication

Simeon and Anna (very old) are extremely righteous and devout and are waiting for the expected Messiah.

Theme of this section: The arrival of God’s promised Savior and the fulfillment of God’s prophets and promises.

Luke 1:5-25 God has good news for Zechariah, Elizabeth and us!

The Messiah is coming

The old will be as productive as the young

The barren will be fruitful

Luke 1:25 God has taken away our disgrace. (as in Genesis 30:23)

Luke 1:26-38 Mary

Facts about Mary:

1. She was very young. 14-15?

2. She was female.

3. She was poor.

4. She was defenseless and vulnerable

The LAST Jew to whom the Jews would expect God to come.

What does God say to her? Luke 1:26-29. Talk about a turnaround!

You are highly favored. The Lord is with you. v. 28 (Imagine that!!!)

Who is highly favored to God? Who is God with? The young, the female, the poor, the defenseless and the vulnerable.

Mary’s response:

Luke 1:38 I am the Lord’s Servant. May it be to me as you have said.

Luke 1:45 (Elizabeth to Mary) Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished.

Luke 1:46-56 (esp. 51-53) (Mary’s song)

This is salvation in Luke. It is not just something that has happened to us or something that will happen to us. It is something that God is doing today.

 He has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. (v. 48)

He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts (v. 51)

 He has brought down the rulers from their thrones

 but has lifted up the humble

 He has filled the hungry with good things

 but has sent the rich away empty.

In Luke and Acts, “salvation” is not just about a future in heaven. In Luke, salvation is something we have today in the Kingdom of God.

Salvation: Preservation or deliverance from destruction, difficulty or evil.

Luke 1:67-79 esp. v 71 (salvation, rescue from our enemies… the Jewish expectation)

Luke 2:28-32 Q: What did Simeon see? (revelation for the Gentiles and glory for Israel.)

Luke 3:4-6 (quoting Isaiah 40:3-5) What did JTB see? Things in this life will be made right. Paths will be made straight. People will see the right way to live.

Luke 7:36-50 (read v. 48-50) Who did they think would be saved? The Pharisee. Who was actually saved? The sinful woman (or anyone who understands that they are very sinful)

Luke 19:5-10 The lowest of the low… A chief tax collector is saved. (read v. 9-10) *Today* salvation has come to this house. Wait a minute! He was not baptized. In what sense had salvation come to Zachaeus’ house? Jesus. When Jesus enters a house, salvation has come to that house.

Acts 2:38-40 How do we save ourselves? From what? From the corruption **in this world.**

**Q: What has Jesus saved you from? We are saved “already but not yet.”**

**Anger? Loneliness? Addiction? Legalism?**

To quote Joel Green:

Salvation embraces the totality of embodied life, including its social, economic and political concerns. For Luke, the God of Israel is the Great Benefactor whose redemptive purpose is manifest in the career of Jesus, whose message is that this benefaction enables and inspires new ways of living in the world.

**Today: The Birth of Jesus**

Luke 2:1-7 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree… Caesar and Quirinius are some of those historical details in Luke we talked about.

1. In this world, Caesar and Quirinius are in power. Everyone obeyed Caesar.

“Divine Augustus Caesar, son of god, imperator of land and sea, the benefactor and savior of the whole world.”

Augustus means divine one. How wrong they were.

Ironic: This is a description of the baby born in a manger. A new kind of king is born. A “son of God…. whole world.”

2. This decree includes Joseph and his betrothed Mary who is nine months pregnant. But God is in control, because this action sends Joseph from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem, so that Micah 5:2 will be fulfilled. But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah…

Jesus born to poverty, not royalty. Born in a manger. There was no room for him. (Luke 2:6-7)

The wealthy, the powers that be, the well-placed, the good looking, the athletic have no room for Jesus.

What about you? Do you have room for Jesus? Can you look beyond the things of the world, the politics, the push and shove, the need to get ahead and to keep up with the Martinezes to get ahead and to make your mark?

Can you see Jesus, born in poverty, not in a palace, pushed off to the side, ignored, unimportant, born in shame?

Is there room for Jesus in your heart?

This is the ultimate turn-around story. God loves turn-around stories.

Luke 2:8-20

Jesus’ birth announced first to lowly shepherds. His first converts were lowly people. Not to kings, to the landowners, aristocrats or to Pharisees or the Sanhedrin.

In Matthew (2:2) it was first announced to Gentiles—the wise men.

His ministry is first announced by these same lowly shepherds

The shepherd’s terror (v. 9) is turned into joy (v. 10). The humble do not need to fear God.

2:11 “Today” a Savior is born. This is our theme verse of Luke. Jesus is Savior, Messiah and Lord. He is not Savior unless he is also Lord.

Q: Is Jesus your Lord?

2 Cor 6:1 Now is the time of God’s favor. Now is the day of salvation. The day you meet Jesus is the day of your salvation. Do not delay. What are you waiting for?

Isaiah 9:1,6-7 To us a child is born…

Who is this child, born in poverty, lying in a manger, with no room at the inn?

The government will be on his shoulders

We will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace

He will be a king forever on David’s throne

What is your response to the king Jesus?

2:12 What is the sign of this universal Savior, King, Lord and Messiah?

He will be lying in a manger/feeding trough, wrapped in cloths. This is a divine reversal of fortune! No one would have chosen this sign!!!

v. 15 funny… Let’s go to Bethlehem. Good idea!

v. 17 The first evangelists were uneducated, poor, shepherds!

Luke 2:22-40 Jesus presented at the temple.

Luke 2:22-24

Two things are happening here:

1. Jewish law required the dedication of every first-born son (Exodus 13:2, 15).

2. Jewish law also required that a woman who gave birth to go through a purification rite on the fortieth day (Leviticus 12:8).

Here both the piety of Joseph and Mary and the role of Jesus as first-born over all creation (Colossians 1:15) are emphasized.

Here we see that Mary and Joseph are pious, observant Jews. The kind who recognize the Messiah coming.

Luke 2:25-35 Here, Simeon (and Ana v. 36-40) are waiting for the Lord.

v. 25 Like Zechariah and Elizabeth, Mary and Joseph, Simeon is “righteous and devout,” and the Holy Spirit is on him. v. 26 the Holy Spirit revealed to him. v. 27 He was moved by the Spirit. Luke emphasizes this again and again.

1:15 John the Baptist filled with Holy Spirit from birth

1:41-44 Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit

1:67 Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit

2:25-27 The Holy Spirit was on Simeon, the Messiah was revealed by the HS

3:22 Holy Spirit descends on Jesus

4:1 Jesus full of the Holy Spirit

4:14 Jesus returns to Galilee in the power of the Spirit

His will be a ministry of salvation (Luke 2:30) When you see Jesus you see your salvation.

He will be “a light to the Gentiles” (Luke 2:32). (a big theme in Luke)

He will be a sign spoken against (Luke 2:34). Jesus is counted among the outcast and oppressed. This sets up a lot of conflict in Luke. (How do you think Mary felt about this?)

If you bring Jesus to people, you, too, will be “a sign spoken against.”

Luke 2:36-39 Ana, like Simeon, has been staying in the temple, praying and fasting for 60+ years! praising God for the coming of redemption in Jesus, the Messiah. It’s here! It’s here! This lady is sharing her faith.

She reminds me of the “old lady” Bible talk in Jakarta which is one of the most fruitful in the church.

Jesus at the temple Luke 2:41-52. Luke the only one who records this. It marks a transition from the birth to the ministry of Jesus. (part of Luke’s orderly account)

v. 41 “Every year.” Pious, righteous, obedient Jews.

Luke 2:44 A parent’s worst nightmare!!! They found him 3 days later!!!!

Jesus gives his parents a look. Oh, hi, mom, dad! I was wondering when you would find me! You were worried about me? So sorry, but wasn’t it obvious that I would be here, seeking first God’s kingdom?

Then they see this astounding scene of the teachers of the law standing around Jesus!!!

a. We see Jesus beginning to get a sense of his unique role. Although he submitted to his parents (2:51), his first submission was to his Father (2:49). He is starting to realize that he is no ordinary man.

As Jesus will say later, in Luke 14:26, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.” And Mark 10:34 “I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.”

b. Jesus is growing in wisdom (2:52). He knows the scripture at a very young age. The priests in the temple were astounded at his wisdom (2:47). A fulfillment of Isaiah 11:1-2. Jesus is beginning to demonstrate his “messianic credentials” at age 12. (again, this if fulfillment by who he is more than by what he does)

[fun question: at what point in his life did Jesus actually realize that he was the Messiah—God in the flesh?]

Isaiah 11:1-10

Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and strength, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.

His delight will be in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes. He will not execute justice by what he hears with his ears.

But he will judge the poor righteously, and execute justice for the oppressed of the land. (this is Jesus’ ministry!)

He will strike the land with the rod of his mouth, and he will kill the wicked with a command from his lips. (Simeon: a sign spoken against)

Righteousness and faithfulness will be a belt around His waist. The wolf will lie down with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the goat.

The calf, the young lion and the fatling will be together and a child will lead them.

The cow and the bear will graze, their young ones will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like an ox.

An infant will play beside a cobra’s pit, and a toddler will put his hand into a snake’s den (The powerful, influential and wealthy will fellowship on equal terms with the poor, the oppressed, the immigrant, the female, the humble)

No one will harm or destroy on my entire holy mountain, for the land will be as full of the knowledge of the Lord as the sea is filled with water.

On that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The nations will seek Him, and his resting place will be glorious. (Simeon: A light to the Gentiles)

2:51 Mary pondered all these things in her heart. God wants you and me to “ponder” the things of Jesus “in our hearts.”

What will this savior be like? One born in a manger to a poor, humble, pious virgin.

But also one who will strike the nations with the rod of his mouth

One who will care about and minister to the poor, the outcast, the foreigner, the women and the oppressed.

One who will bring together Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, black and white, Latino and Asian, Republican and Democrat, old and young, male and female, intellect and regular folk.

A banner to the people.

Let us, like Mary in v. 51, ponder this in our hearts.