

*His  
Name  
is  
Jesus*

**A Sermon based on  
Matthew 1:21 & Luke 2:21**

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Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass. Caesar Augustus has issued a decree that all the world should be taxed. This decree was executed during the time Cyrenius was governor of Syria. All went to be taxed, everyone to his own city. Joseph too, together with Mary his wife who was great with child, goes from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Upon arriving they find the little town packed with travelers. Because there is no room for them in the inn, they find a place for the night in one of the caves or grottos used by travelers for their animals. During the night Mary gives birth to her first-born son. She wraps him in swaddling clothes (strips of cloth) and lays him in the manger.

And that's all we see: just a poor, young man and his wife and a tiny newborn baby boy lying in a manger in a stable on the edge of the village of Bethlehem. There's no more! A baby like all other babies, frail and subject to all infirmities as any other. A young mother and her husband. And it has no meaning or significance for us either. We may perhaps rejoice with that young couple upon the birth of their first child. The circumstances of his birth, the manger, the swaddling clothes may evoke a feeling of pity. But that's all!

That's all unless we see by the grace of God that this baby's name is Jesus! Then everything is changed for us! The night of our sin and death becomes the day of joy and gladness. And, we shall go on our way glorifying and praising God for all the things we've seen and heard.

Yes~ his name is Jesus! God gave him that name!

When he was eight days old, he was circumcised and his name was called Jesus. Mary and Joseph called him Jesus because "he was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb."

This takes us back to Luke 1. Gabriel, God's holy messenger, appeared to the virgin Mary. His message was, "Hail, thou art highly favored among women, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women: Behold thou shalt conceive and bare a son and shalt

call his name Jesus." This means, the angel explains, "He shall be called the Son of the Highest, the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David, He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Mary doesn't understand, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" Gabriel answers, "You will conceive by the power of the Holy Ghost and, therefore, that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

All this comes to clearer light in Matthew's account. Poor Joseph is at a loss. Mary to whom he is espoused, before "they came together, is found with child." Joseph can reach only one conclusion, Mary has committed adultery. He is minded to put her away privily. While he's pondering all this, the angel of the Lord comes to him in a dream and tells him not to be afraid to take Mary to wife. That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. She shall bring forth a son, the angels explains, "and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins." All this was done in fulfillment of that which was spoken by the prophet, "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bare a son and they shall call his name, Immanuel, God with us." (Isaiah 7:14)

For this reason they named him Jesus. Jesus is God with us. He is the Son of the living God, the Wonder of all wonders!

Now let us go back to Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass. There went out a decree of Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. This is God's decree. God's decree to send his Son, Jesus, into the world to die on the cross and be raised again to save his people from their sins. Caesar must serve this purpose of God in Jesus. For this reason Caesar issues his decree and all go to be taxed. Mary and Joseph go too, even to Bethlehem for in Bethlehem the Savior must be born.

While they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. Of course that means Mary's days were accomplished, but it

means so much more! God's days were accomplished. All the Old Testament days were accomplished. It is the fullness of time, the center of all history, the precise point in time when God will send forth his son named Jesus, made of woman, born under the law.

And she brought forth her first-born son. Yes, he's Mary's first-born. But he's God's first-born. His name is Jesus, Jehovah-salvation. He's the first-born of every creature, the Word by Whom and for Whom all things were created. He's God's firstborn in Whom all things consist. Jesus is the first-born from the dead.

Do you see that? With the natural eyes all we can see is a baby in a manger. But by faith we see no ordinary baby, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels, who for the suffering of death is crowned with glory, the Captain of our salvation. We see God with us, wrapped in human flesh.

How wondrous are the ways of God. Unfathomed and unknown! Except, when by grace through faith, we understand that God named him Jesus, Jehovah-salvation.

Why, you ask, does God call him Jesus? The text says, "for he shall save his people from their sins."

His people Jesus shall save!

This means not all People shall be saved. He came unto his own and his own received him not (John 1). To many Jesus is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence (1 Peter 2). Jesus himself was well aware of this and spoke of it often: The Son of Man is come not to save the righteous (self-righteous), but to seek and to save that which was lost. I lay down my life for my sheep (John 10).

His people! These are they whom God predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. His elect are they whom God loved in Jesus before the foundations of the world (Ephesians 1) Those who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1).

These Jesus saves from their sins, from all their willful missing of the mark of the glory of God, from all their transgressions. From all their sins Jesus saves them. And from all the terror of their death!

This is the gospel of Christmas! Take this away, take sin out of Christmas and you have no Christmas. Then all you have indeed is a baby in a manger, the son of Joseph and Mary.

Name Him Jesus, God says, for He shall save His people from their sins. He shall lift them up out of the misery of death and hell into the glory of blessed fellowship with God. He shall bear the wrath of God for them and forever lift the burden of sin's guilt from them. He shall destroy him that had the power of death.

And Jesus SHALL do this! It's certain. It cannot fail for God named Him Jesus.

His name is Jesus! The name of good tidings of great joy!

Fear not! What is there left to fear? God is come in the flesh. Jesus is born and He suffered and died on Calvary's cross, was raised from the dead and exalted to God's right hand in glory! Good news indeed this is! Glad tidings of great joy!

Have you heard the glad news? Does it thrill your heart? Do you belong to His people, the ones whom He saved?

You can know! Do your sins rise up against you prevailing day by day? Do you struggle against those sins? Are you burdened under a load of guilt and shame? Come then to Bethlehem. His name is Jesus! Hear His voice, come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest. His name is Jesus. He's the one who was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God.

Are you grieving? Do the sorrows of death surround you? There's good tidings of great joy for you. His name is Jesus. He's the Man of Sorrows. Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.

Jesus did that! He entered death's grave and He arose again. Jesus lives! That's the baby in Bethlehem,. I hear Him say, don't you? I am the resurrection and the life, he that lives and believes in me shall never die! In my father's house are many mansions, if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you and if I go I will come again to receive you unto myself, that where I am, there you may be also. His name is Jesus and, therefore, we can sing, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?

Are you sick? Do you experience pain and suffering? His name is Jesus. He shall save His people from their sins, from all the effects of sin too. Jesus bore our sicknesses and pains. He heals all our diseases.

Perhaps you are depressed, anxious and in despair. Fear not! Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy! His name is Jesus. He saved us from our sins. He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities and tempted in all points like as we, yet without sin (Hebrews 4). Jesus is our merciful High Priest who meets us at God's throne of grace. Surely we shall find mercy and grace to help in time of need!

This is what Christmas is all about!

His name is Jesus!

Rejoice, child of God, be exceeding glad! Jesus has come. born of the virgin. From the manger in Bethlehem Jesus went to the cross and from the cross to the grave. Out of the grave He arose! He is exalted to the right hand of God.

This same Jesus shall come again. It won't be long now, for He said, "Behold, I come quickly." And, when He comes there will be no more sorrow, nor crying, no more sin or dying. God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes.

I know it's so. His name is Jesus. And that's the only name under heaven, given among men whereby we must be saved!

Amen.

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