

# GROW IN GRACE

NEWSLETTER

**Volume 45, No. 50b, December 11, 2018** / Southside Baptist Church / P.O. Box 1594 / 1028 South Water Avenue, Gallatin, TN 37066 (615) 452-5951 / **The Grow in Grace Newsletter is a WEEKLY Bible Study**, plus local church news notes— designed first and foremost for members and those attending services at Southside Church; and is sent forth with the desire to aid one and all, (including friends far and wide), in the experience of 2 Peter 3:18. ***"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our LORD and Savior JESUS CHRIST. To Him be glory both now and forever. Amen."***

## **The Order of Events at Messiah's Birth and Lessons to Learn!**

**R.C. Sproul once stated:** "I think the greatest weakness in the church today is that almost no one believes that God invests His power in the BIBLE. Everyone is looking for the power in a program, in a methodology, in a technique, in anything and everything but that in which God has placed it— HIS WORD! HE ALONE has the power to change lives for eternity, AND that power is focused in the Scriptures!"

Sproul is right; and **this truth is clearly set before us in 2 Timothy 3:16-4:4**, *"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. I charge you therefore... Preach the word! ... For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned*

*aside to fables.”* **Multitudes love fables, stories, performances, etc. HOWEVER, LIFE TRANSFORMATION comes through the Holy Spirit breathed WORD OF GOD!** EVEN SO, many seem willingly ignorant of and NOT INTERESTED in Biblical revelation about the birth of Christ! AS A RESULT, the masses are strangers to the profound celebration of both Angels and humans, which took place at Messiah’s birth!

THUS, LET US ONE AND ALL set aside significant time to prayerfully read, mediate through, and respond to the following Scriptures. **We will find this study of Scripture, moving us to worship, to joy, and rejoicing!** The outline of Scriptures are listed in a fashion so as to show the order and time sequence in which events took place. **REST ASSURED— what God reveals in His WORD is supremely important!**

### **Event and Scripture Reference**

Gabriel announces John’s birth, Luke 1:1-25

Gabriel visits Mary, Luke 1:26-38

Mary visits Elizabeth, Luke 1:39-56

Birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:57-80

An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream, Matthew 1:18-25

Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, Luke 2:1-7

Angel’s Announcement **and**

Shepherds visit Jesus, Luke 2:8-20

Circumcision of Jesus, Luke 2:21

Jesus presented in the Temple, Luke 2:22-38

Wise Men Worship Jesus, Matthew 2:1-12

Joseph's family escapes, Matthew 2:13-15

Herod's wrath, Matthew 2:16-18

## **I. GABRIEL VISITED ZACHARIAS: Luke 1:5-25**

By the time this scene finished, Zacharias had been made "dumb, unable to speak"... and his previously barren wife had become pregnant!

**According to 1 Chronicles 24:7-19**, there were 24 courses of priests who served. The courses were counted from the spring of the year.

Scholars tell us that **Zacharias' course was the 8th**. Thus, he would have been serving **around the first of June**. When his responsibility was finished, he went to his home and soon thereafter, his wife (Elizabeth) conceived, (Luke 1:23-25).

**This would place the probable time of John's conception as being in late June or in July. Thus**, John's birth would have been the following spring in March or April.

LUKE also tells us that **it was in the 6th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy that Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit**, (Luke 1:24-26, 36). With these calculations we have Biblical evidence **that the actual birth date of Jesus, (6 months after John's birth), would have been in September or October.**

**This is of particular interest because WE KNOW** that Jesus died precisely on the day of **PASSOVER** and that the Holy Spirit came precisely on the day of **PENTECOST. WE KNOW** that God's

Old Testament Holy Days CYCLED the complete plan of redemption so that Old Testament believers were celebrating the coming FULL SALVATION, every year!

**\*\*\* In the Spring of the year they celebrated:**

**(1)** Passover; **(2)** Unleavened Bread; **(3)** First-Fruits, and **(4)** PENTECOST;

**\*\*\* And in the Fall of the year, they celebrated (5)** The Feast of Trumpets; **(6)** The Day of Atonement, and **(7)** The Feast of the Tabernacles.

**WE KNOW that Jesus** is the ultimate fulfillment all seven of these grand redemption celebrations! **WE KNOW that is was in the spring of the year** when JESUS FULFILLED the first four of these seven. **AND WE KNOW** that it is in the BEGINNING of our being saved by grace that Christians experience the New Covenant fulfillment of these **first four aspects of God's FULL SALVATION:**

- (1) Christ died for us;
- (2) We are separated unto Christ;
- (3) We experience the life of the Resurrected Christ and
- (4) We experience Christ indwelling and empowering us.

**Therefore, we have sound Biblical reason to expect that God will continue to unfold His FULL SALVATION in accordance with the Divine Pattern He has already established.**

**Thus,** the first coming of Jesus (As well as His Second Coming!) likely was and likely will be precisely in the fall of the year time-frame of the Fall Feasts of Trumpets/Day of Atonement and Tabernacles.

## **For indeed, when Jesus came the first time— what happened?**

"THE WORD was made flesh and dwelt **(tabernacled!)** among us..." (John 1:14). Moreover, what happened at His first coming was a veiled foretaste **of things yet to come, when** for all eternity the redeemed will be in a continual "Feast of Tabernacles!"— A continual spiritual feast of dwelling with Him! (Revelation 22:1-4) **O COME LORD JESUS!**

**The Bible unveils that** God has established a SACRED CALENDAR OF REDEMPTION EVENTS which unfold FULL SALVATION!

**NOTE:** We would do well to **build into our lives a sacred, yearly calendar of FULL REDEMPTION/FULL SALVATION—** **focused on** CHRIST and His redemption accomplishments, **but not on** precise calendar dates which God has not specifically preserved for us IN HIS WORD! **BEHOLD, THE FOLLOWING REAL BLESSINGS FROM GOD TO ALL IN CHRIST:**

**(1) Christ** Died for us.

**(2)** We are separated from sin and unto **Christ**.

**(3) Christ** was resurrected for us and we are raised to new life in Him.

**(4) Christ is** BAPTIZING, INDWELLING, and EMPOWERING His Church.

**(5) Christ** came! And Christ is coming back— for and with His saints.

**(6) Christ:** Saints are predestined to be like Him.

**(7) Christ:** All who are in Christ will see Him FACE TO FACE and will rule and reign with Him for all the millennial reign and for all eternity.

**Being reminded of FULL SALVATION** can be used of God to help us be so HEAVENLY MINDED that we will, increasingly, be of great earthly good until JESUS comes back! \*\*\* **THE LORD'S SUPPER** is a grand time and place to rejoice in FULL SALVATION since we are being exhorted **to remember JESUS... UNTIL HE COMES!** \*\*\* At the LORD'S TABLE— let us meditate upon the SEVEN-FOLD BLESSINGS OF FULL SALVATION, FULL REDEMPTION!

## II. GABRIEL VISITED MARY: Luke 1:26-38

**Six months after** Elizabeth conceived John by Zacharias, **Mary (a virgin) conceived the Son of God by the direct agency of the Holy Spirit.** This miracle is astounding and glorious! Thanks be unto God!

Moreover, there are two statements in these Scriptures which we must always be ready to apply to our lives:

\*\*\* **The Angel's confession:**

***"For with God nothing shall be impossible!"***

\*\*\* **Mary's confession:**

***"Behold, the handmaid of the LORD; be it unto me according to THY WORD!"***

May these be guiding, daily confessions!

## III. MARY VISITED ELIZABETH: Luke 1:39-56

When Mary arrived in the presence of Elizabeth, **John** (six months in Elizabeth's womb) **jumped for joy!** (Luke 1:41-46)

**Yes, pregnant MOM—** Inside of you is more than a mere fetus! There cradles a living child who already knows and experiences a lot more than you might think!

AMONG the MESSAGES we MUST draw from these Scriptures are,

[1] **'DO NOT ABORT'**... and also:

[2] **COMMUNICATE** with your unborn child!

**[3] GIVE YOUR UNBORN child a healthy environment of God's Word and PRAISE TO GOD!**

(Note: Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about 3 months and returned to Nazareth)

#### **IV. MARY RETURNED HOME, JOHN BAPTIST WAS BORN, THE ANGEL OF THE LORD APPEARED TO JOSEPH: Luke 1:57-80 and Matthew 1:18-25**

When Mary, (three months pregnant), returned home— Needless to say, Joseph was shocked. Mary and Joseph were betrothed to each other. During this period, they were considered to be husband and wife, although the marriage had not been consummated.

In the will of God, they were to remain VIRGINS during this period. Therefore, at first, Joseph was heartbroken to learn that Mary was pregnant.

**It seemed obvious that she had fornicated.** Joseph could have had her stoned or he could have divorced her. He seemed committed to the latter. (Matt 1:18-25)

**However**, after the Angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph in a dream, Joseph received Mary and together they bore a great shame from society. They were looked upon as fornicators.

In fact, **Jesus lived 33 years under the cloud of being an illegitimate.**(John 8:41) What a price Jesus paid for us sinners, even long before He ever got to the cruel cross of Calvary!

**V. JOSEPH AND MARY went to BETHLEHEM. JESUS WAS BORN: Luke 2:1-7**

**[INN: Literally, “guest room”...** A different word is used when actually speaking of an Inn, such as the Good Samaritan used: Luke 10:25-37.]

**HERE is the likely situation:** The average home in Bethlehem would have had upper living quarters and a lower portion for their animals to use at night. If visitors came, they would normally stay with the family in the upper portion in the guest area.

In Mary and Joseph’s case, this was likely the home of someone that they knew; but the guest room was already filled— thus, they went to the lower level, among the animals. When Jesus was born, after being securely wrapped, he was laid in an animal’s feeding trough.

Again, based on the information under the first point of this article, **the probable time of Christ’s birth was in the fall of the year**— this also gives a good explanation as to why there was “no room in the Inn... or guest room.”

For in addition to the taxing, **the Feast of Tabernacles** would have drawn as many as two million Israelites to Jerusalem. Bethlehem, just five miles north, would have experienced much overflow.

**AND REMEMBER, the Feast of Tabernacles** looked forward to a time of completion and fulfillment, a time when God would dwell with men! **And unknown to the masses— Jesus did just that:** “The WORD became flesh, and dwelt (tabernacled!) among us...!” (John 1:14)

**[1] LET US BE WATCHING AND WAITING! JESUS IS COMING BACK!** (Revelation 19-22)

**[2] CHRISTIAN: Even now** Jesus by His Holy Spirit, dwells within, ‘tabernacles’ within you! CHRISTIAN: Your heart is His home! Let us, WELCOME HIM! Let us REVEAL HIM— Philipians 2:1-15!!

**VI. THE ANGELS PROCLAIMED MESSIAH'S BIRTH; THE SHEPHERDS VISITED THE CHRIST-CHILD IN THE ANIMALS' QUARTERS: Luke 2:8-20**

The angels were rejoicing that God was bridging the un-bridgeable gap between holy God and sinful man, ***“UNTO YOU A SAVIOUR IS BORN, JESUS CHRIST THE LORD!”***

**REMEMBER:**

**Angels were the first to sin. All sinning angels are doomed forever. They received no mercy, no forgiveness. They are reserved in judgment: 2 Peter 2:4.** The fallen angels receive holy justice and wrath!

YET, A NUMBERLESS MULTITUDE OF fallen men receive mercy and grace! BUT NOTICE that the Elect Angels had no complaint against God! Rather, they rested in the good sovereignty of God; and they led the way in WORSHIP.

We have much to learn from their praise and much to learn from the Shepherds who responded to divine revelation with faith, praise, and with spreading the GOOD NEWS!

## **VII. JESUS WAS CIRCUMCISED; PRESENTED IN THE TEMPLE; and ADORED BY SIMEON AND ANNA: Luke 2:21-38**

Let us MEDITATE THROUGH the Scriptures that focus upon the incredible PRAISE and WORSHIP that came forth from the Angels, the Shepherds, Simeon, and Anna! O COME LET US ADORE HIM!

## **VIII. THE WISEMEN COME AND WORSHIP KING JESUS: Matthew 2:1-12**

By this time, Jesus was from 1-2 years old and **living in a house**, not in the animals' stall. The wise men did not worship the star, or Joseph or Mary. They had gifts for JESUS ONLY. With eyes of faith they looked at the young child Jesus and saw and worshipped the King of Kings!

**O, what a wonderful day it is when JESUS IS WHO WE DESIRE and when JESUS IS ENOUGH!**

## **IX. JOSEPH, MARY AND JESUS FLED TO EGYPT. HEROD SLAUGHTERED CHILDREN: Matthew 2:13-15; 2:19-23; Luke 2:39-47.**

Yes, Herod was afraid of Jesus. [SO TODAY, multitudes love their darkness and hate and will not come to the LIGHT! (John 3:19-21)]

TRAGICALLY, HEROD, in his attempt to kill Jesus, slaughtered all the young boys of Bethlehem and the surrounding area, ages up to two. Later, Joseph, Mary and Jesus would return to Israel and take up residence in Nazareth.

**Who can measure REDEMPTION'S cost?**

**O let us walk through these Scriptures and BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD who stepped down from His Glory, all the way to the Cross for sinners!**

***“O COME LET US ADORE HIM!”***

Abundant Grace to all in Christ! James Bell

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**The coming of JESUS was and is the greatest Missionary Journey of all time— Let us set aside EXTRA LOVE OFFERINGS for the work and ministry of MISSIONARIES AROUND THE WORLD!**

**In Christ we have the high calling of God in Christ Jesus to LIVE and TAKE the gospel to the world, from Gallatin/Sumner County to the ends of the earth.**

**LET US GIVE for the furtherance of the Gospel!**

## **SOUTHSIDE NEWS NOTES:**

**MONDAYS:** Jail Ministry— First and Second Monday of each month at 7:30pm. (This ministry is presently ON HOLD... PRAY FOR opening of doors!)

**TUESDAYS:** Come and sing every Tuesday night at Gallatin Health Care Nursing Home. Meet at the front door at **5:15PM.**

**WEDNESDAYS:** → 6:30pm— Children Ministry/activities; → 6:30pm— **Youth** Activities and Bible Study—

**→ 6:30pm— Wednesday CHURCH PRAYER SERVICE...**

(Enter via IRON STEPS; or double doors by gym)

**\*\*\* LADIES BIBLE STUDY— Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, JANUARY 8, 2019 @ 11:00am; Continuing in LUKE.**  
ENTER at the back of the church building,

*[Doors **open** at 10:30am... re-locked at 11:10am]*

**\*\*\* MEN: EVERY SATURDAY @ 8:00am:** Men's Fellowship/Bible Study! **(STUDY: THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN!)** ENTER AT THE back of Church building... under the drive-thru awning. **[DOORS OPEN FOR FELLOWSHIP, Juice, coffee, Hardee's biscuits & Donuts at 7:30am!]**

**SHARE the Preaching of the Word of God!**

<http://www.southsidegallatin.org/>  
[Listen\\_to\\_other\\_sermons\\_on\\_sermonaudio/](#)

**SUNDAY SERVICES: December 16, 23, 30**

**EVERY SUNDAY: Sunday School at 9:30am /Worship at 10:45am**

*ADDITIONAL NOTES... ABOUT EACH SUNDAY:*

**December 16— DURING the worship hour,**

**\*\*\* The Choir and/or others... will share extra music,**  
as we REJOICE in the BIRTH OF CHRIST!

**\*\*\*\* WE WILL PREACH the Word of God; and**

**\*\*\*\*\* Conclude with the LORD'S SUPPER!**

## **NO** evening HOME GROUPS

**2. December 23— NO** evening service

**3. December 30— NO** 5<sup>TH</sup> Sunday Evening Service