The Truth About the Baby in the Manger

David Banning · Luke 2:1–7

INTRODUCTION

- What most people don't realize is that the story that gets told around this year, around the nativity scene, is largely fiction.
- Over time, the story has come to be embellished, and it's grown into something that is really quite different than what you and I would read about in the Gospels.
- I think it is important that we be able to separate the fact from the fiction, and to know actually what the Bible really does tell us about the birth of Jesus.

1 Separating Fact From Fiction

Luke 2:1–7

- We don't know what time of day that they arrive, and we don't know how they were traveling, whether a donkey was involved or not.
- While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.
- We do know that there was no room for them at the inn. But you'll notice there's nothing about an evil innkeeper.
- Where was Jesus born? We don't know. The text doesn't tell us. In fact, the text doesn't mention any animals looking on.
- It's pretty clear that the magi came long after the birth of Jesus.
- We don't know the date of Jesus' birth.

2 Why So Little About Jesus' Birth?

- I think much of the reason for the confusion is because there is so little information about the birth of Jesus.
- Two of the four gospel writers who are telling the story of Jesus' life, pass right over this part of it.
- It would serve us well to remember that the Bible is not a history book. And that the Gospels are not biographies of Jesus.
- It's telling us about how God, through Abraham's seed, Jesus, is working out a plan to rescue man from sin.
- It will not satisfy all of our curiosities.

3 What Matthew Tells Us About the Birth of Jesus

Matthew 1:1; Genesis 12:3; Matthew 1:21

- This isn't just a long list of hard names. It's a critical list.
- This child is not a descendant of Abraham. He is the descendant of Abraham who's going to bring that blessing to everyone.
- Think of the rumor and the scandal surrounding the birth of Jesus.
- She will bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.
- The gospel to the Jews includes a lengthy section explaining how these foreigners, how these Gentile foreigners were led clearly by God to see the child.

4 What Luke Tells Us About the Birth of Jesus

Luke 2:10–11; Luke 2:29–35

- Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy, which will be for all people.
- There has been born to you a Savior who is Christ the Lord.
- It's all tying Jesus in to the broader Bible story.
- For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.
- A light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people, Israel.

THE CHALLENGE

Challenged to consider God's love, challenged to consider his call. Would you serve him today?

MY NOTES