

lr-nt-03  
January 14-20  
“We Have Come to Worship Him”  
(Luke 2; Matthew 2)  
By Lenet Hadley Read

(This material confirms *all* of the events of Christ’s birth, most of which had been foretold, were not accidental, but deeply meaningful).

- I. It has been previously prophesied that Jesus’ birth would be in Bethlehem.
  - A. So had prophesied Micah (Micah 5:2). And this prophecy had much significance.
    1. “Bethlehem” means “House of Bread.” **For out of this house would come Holy Bread.**
    2. Bethlehem was also called the “City of David,” **the birthplace of the first shepherd-king, and now of the more kindly and greater shepherd King.**
    3. And because he was to be a shepherd King, **sheep and shepherds were the first to honor him.**
- II. It had been previously prophesied that Jesus’ birth would be proclaimed by angels.
  - A. Both Isaac’s and Samson’s births had been proclaimed by an angel, as foreshadowings of Jesus’s birth.
  - B. Now we see a greater proclamation, not only by Gabriel, but **even by choirs of angels.**
- III. The wisdom of Jesus Christ had been foreshadowed through the life of Solomon, and was now emphasized by the coming of the Wise Men.
  - A. As wise men came seeking Solomon, son of David, so wise men came to honor Christ, the Greater Son of David, who would truly lighten all the earth with His wisdom.
  - B. Consider how we are manifesting our wisdom when we seek the Lord as our greatest source of truth and light. And we are rewarded with more wisdom.
- IV. It had been prophesied that Jesus would be preserved from Death at Infancy.
  - A. As Moses’ life as infant had been preserved from Pharaoh’s deadly jealousy, so Christ’s life alone was preserved when Herod, fearing rumors of a Jewish King’s birth, destroyed all male infants in Bethlehem under two.
  - B. Thus, even from the first, **here was a witness that *only God’s son* had power to be saved from death.**
- V. It had been prophesied that Jesus would be “called Out of Egypt” (Matt. 2:13-15).
  - A. Through Hosea the Lord testified, “Out of Egypt have I called my son” (Hosea 11:1), referring to Israel’s Exodus. **But here was also prophesy of Christ.**
  - B. Moses came up out of Egypt to establish a Kingdom of Israel. **Now the greater than Moses had arisen, out of Egypt, to establish a Greater Kingdom of Israel.**
  - C. Consider how we are being called “out of Egypt,” or the false doctrines and wickedness of the world today, to come into Christ’s Latter-day kingdom.

VI. It had been prophesied Jesus' birth would be that of the First born.

- A. The Mosaic law pertaining to the firstborn was fulfilled at its greatest height by Jesus the Christ.
  - 1. "... they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord." [It is written in the law of the Lord, **Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.**] Luke 2:22-23; Exodus 13:2, 12].
- C. Jesus was not only the firstborn of Mary, but most importantly the firstborn of His Father in Heaven (Col. 1:15).
- D. Thus from the beginning, Jesus was consecrated to the Lord.
- E. For this reason, turtledoves were offered, symbols of purity and peace and the offerings of those consecrated to the Lord (Luke 2:24; Exodus 13:2).

VII. At his first visit to the temple, other witnesses testify that Jesus is the Christ.

A. Simeon was one who had waited long for the Messiah. However, the Spirit had testified to him that he would not see death until the Savior came. This must have become a growing trial, for obviously he was very aged.

As he took Jesus into his arms he rejoiced that the promise was finally realized: "...mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people, Israel And he added, "now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace" (Luke 2:25-32).

B. Under the influence of the same Spirit, Simeon made other significant prophecies of Christ's work, **including that of the Latter-days**. For he prophesied, "Behold, this child is set for **the fall and rising again of many in Israel**" (Luke 2:34). He meant that Jesus' coming would cause some to fall at that time [those of Israel who did not accept Him]. But He also testified that in a future time, **some of Israel would rise again because of their faith in Christ in the Latter-days**. [When read carefully, this is not a prophecy of the rise of the Gentiles, but **another of the many prophecies of Christ's work of re-gathering a religious Israel in the latter-days**] (Luke 2:34). This means the Latter-day Restoration was prophesied as a work of Jesus the Christ.

C. He further prophesied that through Jesus "the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed" (Luke 2:35).

1. As was pointed out by C.S. Lewis, whether Jesus Christ was the Son of God, as He claimed, is a crucible which proves our hearts, and the true essence of our faith.

"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the **Son of God**, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God."

D. Another witness was made by a prophetess, Anna, “who departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke 2:36-38).

1. Note that not only did she recognize the truth concerning Him, but she bore her witness to all she could that He had come.

VIII. The Law of Circumcision testified of Christ, and was fulfilled by Him (Luke 2:21).

- A. Thus Jesus had been brought to the temple to be circumcised.
- B. But He would later fulfill the witness and covenant of circumcision --- undergoing wounds in the flesh that He, the Seed of God the Father, might be revealed, and especially *that the hearts of men might be circumcised, by the humble recognition of all He has suffered for our sakes.*
- C. Consider how Jesus later ended the law of circumcision, putting in its place His New Covenant.

IX. Jesus’ appearance at the temple at the age of twelve (12) was also rife with meaning.

A. Review Luke 2:40-52 which tells that Jesus’ parents took him to the temple at the time of Passover when He was twelve.

B. Traditionally, *all Jewish boys went to the temple when twelve to be tested for knowledge and responsibility to the law. Those who passed were viewed as taking upon themselves “the yoke of the law.” In doing so they bound themselves to fulfill the precepts of the law.*

C. Jesus not only knew that law, *but taught the priests concerning it* (JST Luke 2:46). As for taking upon Himself the yoke of the law, *Christ alone could do that. He not only took upon Himself the yoke of the law, but fulfilled it, and substituted for it His yoke of mercy.* For this reason He later taught any willing to hear and repent, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me.... For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:29-30).

1. Consider how can we make greater use of Christ’s proffered “yoke of mercy?”

X. Jesus’ response, when His parents expressed worry at His absence after the temple visit, shows He already knew and accepted His consecration to the Lord. That consecration had become first and foremost in His mind. “And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” (Luke 2:49).

A. A major purpose of Jesus’ birth would be like that of Samuels: *to bring forth a new and righteous Priesthood.*

B. Hannah’s barrenness and long pleading for a son led her to consecrate her son to the Lord, to be a priest. More than that, Samuel would replace a corrupt priesthood with a righteous one. This was precisely what Jesus the Christ did when He came to Israel.

C. In fact, the thoughts of Hannah in receiving word of her blessing has similar concepts to the words Mary says, when she receives her wondrous news (Compare 1 Samuel 2:1-10; Luke 2:46-55).

D. Furthermore, the growth of Samuel and Jesus are spoken of in similar phrases. (Compare 1 Samuel 1:26 and Luke 2:52), verifying of how Samuel had foreshadowed His role in many ways.

E. Consider how we can make ourselves more fully “consecrated to the Lord?”