

Church Family and Friends,

As we come to another season of Advent, we are reminded once again of the greatest gift ever given. God sent us a Savior, born of a virgin, wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

The Gospel of Matthew 1:21-23 reports that an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph to confirm what had also been told to Mary. That “she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel’, which is translated, ‘God with us.’”

The Gospel of Luke 2:8-11 tells us that as shepherds who were in a field keeping watch over their flock by night, an angel of the Lord stood before them and proclaimed, “I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

The Mishnah (an ancient Hebrew history book) records that the sacrificial lambs were born and raised at the Tower of the Flock in Bethlehem Ephrata. Each year two lambs were raised for Temple sacrifice; the Passover lamb, which was sacrificed on Passover for the sins of God’s people and the scapegoat, which symbolically took away the sins of God’s people. Both lambs had to be a firstborn male without spot and blemish. It is believed that by no coincidence, Jesus was born in this stable. Laid in the manger used to feed these sacrificial lambs.

Jesus came as our ransom, born and wrapped as a perfect sacrifice to do what no lamb could do—take away the sins of God’s people as our Savior. But notice what the angel called Jesus in the presence of those priestly shepherds. Not only Savior, but also Lord. In fact, He is called ‘Lord’ around 700 times in the New Testament, roughly 70 times more than references to save or Savior.

While we celebrate this time of year that many people have decided to make Jesus their personal Savior, do we continue that year round by making Him Lord? Sadly, many who claim Jesus as Savior have yet to truly embrace him as Lord. The first asks people to seek forgiveness of sins, the second summons people to a lifetime of devoted discipleship to Jesus, while inviting others to follow along in the pursuit of the Kingdom.

Do we run to Jesus only when we need saving from something, i.e. when we are sick or in a jam? Or do we embrace Him as Lord over every aspect of our lives?

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas, and praying we all embrace Jesus not only as our Savior, but as Lord of our lives.

In Christ, Rev. Daniel