

**Title: The Wonder of God's Gift (The Message of the Angels)**

**Text: Luke 2:8-14**

**Introduction:**

**Top Ten Things to Say About a Christmas Gift You Don't Like:**

10. Hey! Now there's a gift.
9. Well, well, well...
8. Boy if I had not recently shot up 4 sizes that would've fit.
7. This is perfect for wearing around the basement.
6. Gosh. I hope this never catches fire! Fire season is just around the corner and there are lots of unexplained fires.
5. If the dog buries it, I will be furious.
4. I love it - but I fear the jealousy it will inspire.
3. Sadly, tomorrow, I enter the Federal Witness Protection Program and cannot take with me such lavish gifts.
2. To think I got this the year I vowed to give to give all my gifts to charity.
1. I really don't deserve this.

Rather, than focus our own gifts to each other, **I WANT TO SPEND A FEW MOMENTS ON THIS SACRED NIGHT FOCUSING ON GOD'S GIFT TO US.** To do so, we need to look at **the message of the angels given to the shepherds** as recorded by Luke. Though much of the focus of the Christmas narrative is on **Mary, Joseph, shepherds and the wise men**, it is the **ANGELS** who give us the interpretation of these events. Without their part, we would not be able to understand that **ALL OF HUMAN HISTORY WILL HINGE ON WHAT IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN IN BETHLEHEM.**

The angels help us understand **EXACTLY WHAT IS GOD'S GIFT and HOW WE ARE TO RECEIVE IT.** So it is to their words we turn.

## The Wonder of God's Gift - Text

Luke 2:8 ¶ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

Luke 2:9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you **good news of great joy** that will be **for all the people**.

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a **SAVIOR** has been born **TO YOU; he is CHRIST the LORD**.

Luke 2:12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:13 ¶ Suddenly (actions associated with the supernatural world) a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel (such events typically only come in visions), praising God and saying, (Angels reveal to shepherds through praise)

Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace to men on whom his favor rests**."

## 1. The BREADTH of God's gift

Notice the Breadth and Scope of God's gift.

Luke 2:10 *But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be **FOR ALL THE PEOPLE**.*

*As a kid, I don't think my brother and sisters ever fairly figured out how to share gifts. I remember one year my older brother, Matt, and my younger sister, Christine, received the classic Milton Bradley game, "Operation". Now the way sharing worked in the Valci home, the older sibling took advantage of the younger ones when mom and dad were not looking. My brother would ask me to take out "the funny bone" on the hand. If I could not, it was his turn. I would then do the same for my baby sister when I wanted to play it. Not so with God.*

Whereas much of the promises of the birth narrative focus on Israel specifically, now the story turns to **THE WIDER GENTILE WORLD**. This will become a dominant theme for Luke in the rest of his work.

Luke 2:11 *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born **TO YOU (or FOR YOU - dative of advantage); He is Christ the Lord.***

Language shows a gift that has been catered specifically to one's personal advantage. **THOUGH BROAD IN SCOPE, THIS GIFT IS NARROW IN FOCUS.** I love the language here. It first applies to the shepherds who heard the angels, but its next application is to all people.

***FOR YOU... (Name 1...Name 2...Name 3).***

Luke 2:14 *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **PEACE TO MEN on whom his favor rests.**"*

When heaven offers praise, men are to have peace. "Peace" here refers not the much needed reconciliation between warring faction in the human race, but ending the skirmish between God and man and ushering into the promised OT era of

Shalom. The Bible tells us human sin ushered not only separation from God, not mere ambivalence toward spiritual matters, but I idea that our selfish inclinations are literally hostile toward God, His purpose and plans and even towards His Son.

**The point is clear. This gift from God to planet earth is something EVERY man, woman and child can share in. This gift is for our SPECIFIC needs. Chief among those needs is the means to BRING PEACE BETWEEN MAN AND GOD.**

## 2. The CONTENT of God's gift

Luke 2:11 Today in the town of David a **SAVIOR** has been born **TO YOU**; he is **CHRIST** the **LORD**.

Of the three title given the baby Jesus (Savior, Christ and Lord), I want us to focus on **ONE** of them - **SAVIOR**. "Savior" finds its roots in the OT (Deut. 20:4; Josh. 22:22; Ps. 24:5; 25:5; Isa. 25:9). **DELIVERER FROM ONE'S ENEMIES. GOD WHO DELIVERS FROM VARIOUS PERILS: ENEMIES THAT SEEK TO DESTROY AND DISEASE THAT SEEKS TO KILL.** For some here, you may say, that gift would be great if I lived in another time or era, but I don't think I need that type of a Savior.

In Matthew's rendition of the Christmas story, an angel appears to Joseph and explains further **what this Savior will deliver people from.**

Matt. 1:20 ¶ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

Matt. 1:21 She will give birth to a son, and **YOU ARE TO GIVE HIM THE NAME JESUS, BECAUSE HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.**"

Sin, the epidemic that affects all mankind. **It is that innate disease in all of us that causes us to allow our selfish inclinations to live life on our own terms and leave God in the wake of irrelevancy.**

The question we need to ask with this gift is: **"What do we need to be saved from?"**

1. Others
2. Ourselves
3. This world
4. Then evil one
5. The wrath of God

I assure you that one or more of these vices will attack and inject their venom into your soul. Chances are you already have a story or several on how one or more of these forces have attacked you, perhaps even prevailed. The result, you can't trust

people anymore, you can't find the courage to take risk, you can't believe life will ever get better, you can't imagine a resolution to what you are facing.

If you don't' feel rescued, perhaps you never have been. Perhaps your are still paralyzed in emotion or belief that there is a hope for my life and my situation. Sin will cloud our thinking and minimize our belief that God exists. **The gift of Christ-child is that a Savior is here now to RESCUE, DELIVER, LIBERATE FROM THE VICES OF THIS WORLD and RESCUE, DELIVER, LIBERATE TO GOD'S LOVE, FAITH AND HOPE OF ETERNITY.**

### 3. The RESULT of God's gift

#### Great joy:

Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you **good news of GREAT JOY** that will be for all the people.

#### Glory to God:

Luke 2:9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, **AND THE GLORY OF THE LORD SHONE AROUND THEM**, and they were terrified.

Luke 2:14 "**GLORY TO GOD** in the highest, and on earth **peace to men on whom his favor rests.**"

It was not just the angel that terrified them but the visible manifestation of the glory of God—something neither Zechariah nor Mary had seen.

The desire to shift focus from US to GOD. To become a reflector of God's light rather than a solar cell that absorbs for its own purpose.

#### Peace to men:

Luke 2:14 "**Glory to God** in the highest, and on earth **PEACE TO MEN** on whom his favor rests."

\*\*\* John Owen \*\*\* email

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9. Well, well, well...
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6. Gosh. I hope this never catches fire! Fire season is just around the corner and there are lots of unexplained fires.
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4. I love it - but I fear the jealousy it will inspire.
3. Sadly, tomorrow, I will enter the Federal Witness Protection Program and cannot take with me such lavish gifts.

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2. To think this year I vowed to give all my gifts to charity.
1. I really don't deserve this.



The wonder of

*God's gift:*

the story of God's gift  
to mankind



# The Breath

of God's gift

<sup>10</sup> " I bring you good news of great joy that  
will be **FOR ALL THE PEOPLE.**"

Luke 2:10

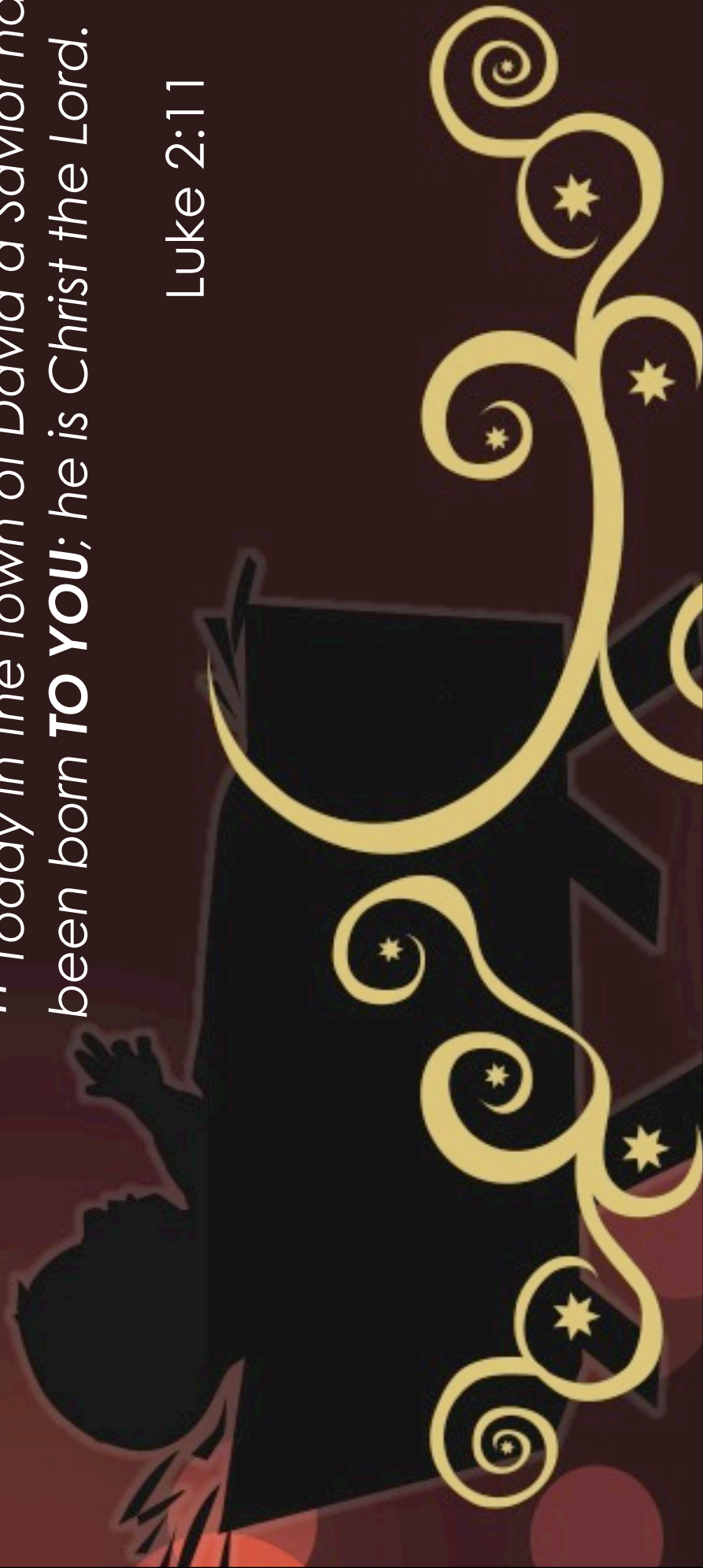


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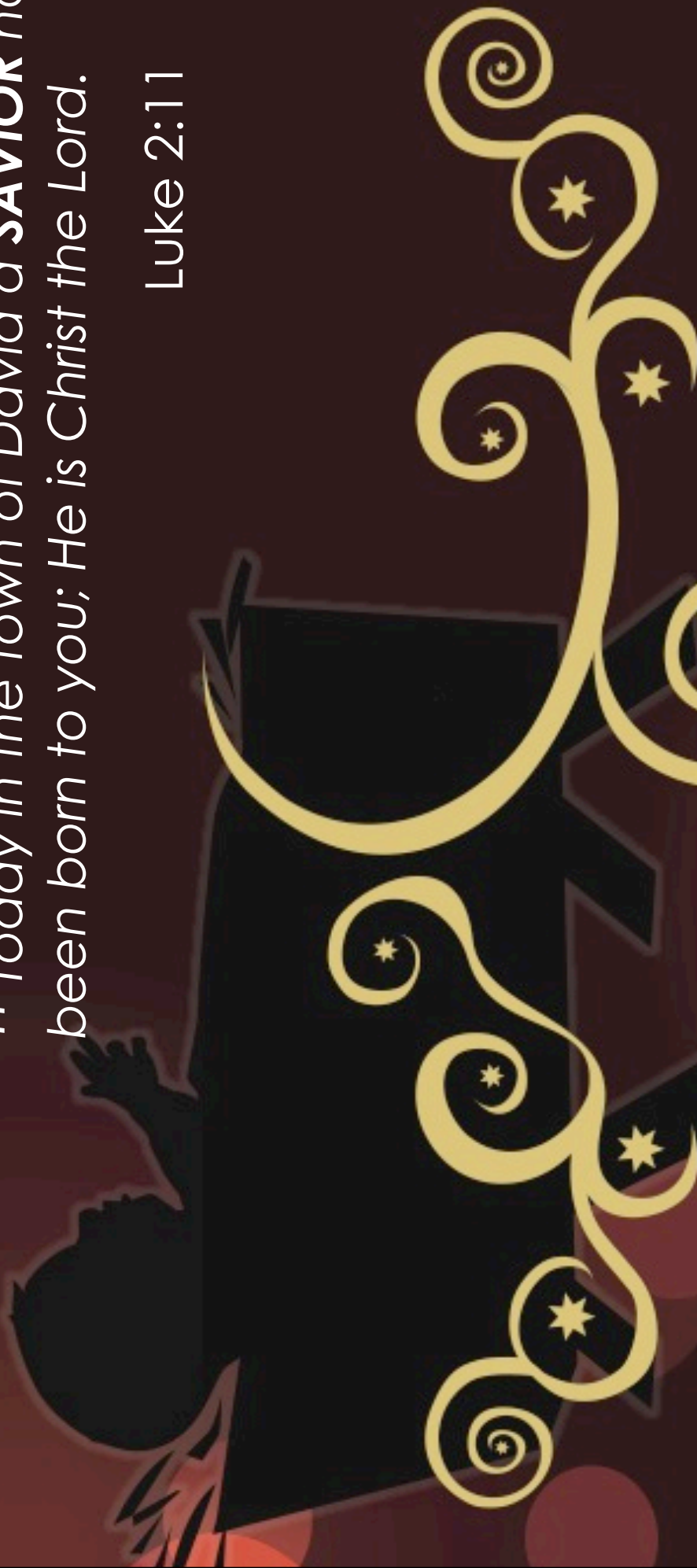


# The Content

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# The Content

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## SAVED FROM...

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2. Ourselves
3. This world
4. The evil one
5. The wrath of God



# The Result

of God's gift

<sup>10</sup> " I bring you good news of **GREAT JOY** that will be for all the people."

Luke 2:10



# The Result

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<sup>11</sup> **GLORY TO GOD** in the highest, and on earth **PEACE TO MEN** on whom His favor rests.

Luke 2:14



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