

Pastor Brian's  
Midweek Message  
December 15, 2021

**"THE CHRIST CHILD"**

*For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.* (Luke 2:11 KJV)

100s of years ago along the coast of Peru, where survival depends on fish taken from the waters of the South Pacific, fisherman noticed a recurring issue. About every 3-5 years, it fluctuated somewhat, their catch would subside for nearly a year. Typically, the change was noticed in the month of December, early summer south of the equator. As Roman Catholic missionaries had come to the area bringing the Gospel to the people, the locals soon gave this phenomenon a name, "El Nino de la Navidad", or in English, "The Boy of Christmas"...the Christ Child...as it arrived right around Christmas. This climatic shift is known worldwide today as "El Nino". It affects weather patterns around the globe. The Peruvian fisherman had no idea of the science behind it all, but they knew that it had a big impact on their lives. In a nutshell, El Nino is the periodic warming of the waters of the western Pacific just south of the Equator (for reasons not well known). That warm water then spreads eastward and reaches the western coast of South America, often times near the end of the year. The usual pattern of ocean currents brings cool water northward along the South American coastline, which then moves outward, away from the coast near the equator. That results in upwelling of even colder water from below, full of nutrients, which the bait fish love to eat. The bigger fish love to eat the bait fish and so there are usually lots of them for the locals to catch and eat for themselves. In an El Nino situation the currents are shifted, and water comes toward the coastline pushing that colder nutrient rich water far to the south. That means less fish to catch and eat. Now every pendulum swings both ways, and on the other side of El Nino is "La Nina" (the girl) which is a cooling of the equatorial waters of the South Pacific. The folks on the coast of Peru LOVE "this girl"...more fish! Why do I bring all of this up? Well, as I mentioned above, these fluctuations affect the weather over much of the world. For example. Last week we saw devastating tornadoes rip through the mid-Mississippi Valley. This week a huge storm has dumped up to 10 feet of snow in the mountains of California (they ought to be elated about that!), and today record warmth is blowing on strong winds from the southern Plains up to the Great Lakes area. Why is this happening? It's chiefly due the fact that we are in a La Nina situation right now. As the equatorial waters are cooler than normal, the difference in temperature from the equator to the polar regions is less than normal, and certainly less than in an El Nino year. The temperature difference drives the "jet stream" in the atmosphere above. The stronger the difference in temperature...the stronger the winds will be in the upper atmosphere worldwide. Stronger winds tend to keep that jet stream moving west to east, progressing the weather patterns along. In an El Nino year the jet stream is weaker, and tends to have large loops, ridges and troughs, that transport cold air from the north far to the south, and warm subtropical air farther to the north, such as today in the Plains and Great Lakes. Where these airmasses collide, we have a high likelihood of very intense storms, thunderstorms in the warm air and snowstorms in the cold. The La Nina jet stream pattern also changes much more slowly, thus the rather chilly weather we had here most of November, and now the very warm December weather. I find it a bit ironic that the Peruvian fisherman put the name "El Nino de la Navidad" on an event that negatively impacted their lives. What I want to stress here is that even though they didn't have any understanding of the science behind it, they we're well aware of its consequences. We can say the same thing about La Navidad, or the Nativity of Jesus. How it is that the eternal Son of God could step into time and space, and that the "fullness of God"...the entirety of the Divinity...could dwell in a human being, even an infant and an embryo (Col. 1:19). How can that happen? We'll never be able to scientifically explain it, not in this world, but we certainly are aware of the consequences. Note how the angel puts it in the verse up at the top of the page, from the Christmas Gospel in Luke 2? "*For unto YOU is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.*" The incarnation of the Son of God, His coming in the flesh is a Christmas gift FOR YOU! A gift that keeps on giving for all eternity. He is the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, chosen by God to come into the world to bear our sin and be our Savior. There are many mysteries of our faith, but the consequences of all of them are well known, that "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:12) That name is Jesus, the Christ, the Lord...El Nino de la Navidad!