

Luke 2:1-7: Jesus Born in Just the Right Place

2 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

Caesar Augustus had brought the Roman Republic so much under his control, that finally he had transformed it into the Roman Empire. But in the hands of God, this Emperor was just a _____. God needed to get Mary, who was nine months pregnant to make a journey of about 75 miles overland from Nazareth to Bethlehem, so that _____ could be fulfilled. The prophecies of God are always _____, completed from the time they're spoken.

³ And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

Bethlehem Ephrathah was just a small city, likely about 300-1000 inhabitants. But this city of Ruth and Naomi, Boaz, and of course David was where God had said that the _____ would be born, and this one prophecy effectively _____ all other cities and towns throughout the world as a place in which the Messiah could be born.

Now Mary and Joseph were both of the House of David, so they would be going back to their _____ home of Bethlehem.

⁵ in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

So, we know from verse 5 that Joseph and Mary travelled _____ for the census. This verse emphasizes the _____ between Mary and Joseph, since it indicates that Mary would not want to give birth without Joseph being there.

⁶ While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

Jesus arrived at the exact day and hour he was supposed to. He arrived at _____, so the shepherds could receive their visitation from the angels who pointed them to Jesus. Thousands of years of waiting for the Messiah, but _____ when God's timing was fulfilled, everything happened.

Our problem is that we usually are too _____ to wait for God's timing.

⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And she gave birth to her firstborn son;

Mary gives birth to her _____ son. Mary and Joseph had _____ children later. The mention that Jesus is the firstborn lets us know why we find Mary and Joseph and Jesus at the _____ 8 days later in Luke 2:23-24.

But, Luke is also stating clearly that Jesus is the firstborn son of a Davidic family in the ruling line, and therefore a _____ right to inherit David's throne, along with inheritance rights from Joseph.

and she wrapped Him in cloths

Wrapping newborns in strips of cloth, or swaddling, is not only an ancient practice to us today, but was an _____ practice to Mary and Joseph as well. It helped _____ the baby to the shepherds who were looking for him. In Luke 2:12, when the angels announced the birth to the shepherds, they told them "**This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.**"

and laid Him in a manger,

Jesus was laid in a manger, a feed trough, so therefore likely in a room designed to accommodate _____.

because there was no room for them in the inn.

And it would be quite possible that there was no room in the guest rooms of people's houses, because David had a lot of _____, and there were a lot of people crowding into this small town for the census.

Ancient tradition associates the birth of Jesus with a _____. Both Jerome and Paulinus of Nola mention a desecration. This indicates that the cave was a sacred site to Christians before the 2nd or 3rd century.

God, knowing that man would _____, knowing that He would have to send Jesus to Earth, and knowing that each and every person that Jesus _____ would be a sinner, knew that humble beginnings would best prepare Jesus for His mission. Romans 5:8 puts it like this: **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.**

Bethlehem, this little, seemingly insignificant town, only gained prominence because it was a place of God's _____. It was the place that our friends Naomi, _____ and Boaz were from, a city of the Tribe of Judah where God had David born, who would later be anointed the King of Israel. No-one made room for them. When we're _____ in our own surroundings, the tendency is not to make room for Jesus—and maybe that's why we find ourselves so rarely in comfortable surroundings! Sometimes it takes these _____ circumstances to wake us up to our need for Him, day by day, hour by hour.

How many times have you been so concerned about how God was going to solve a problem you're praying about, and then are amazed that God, once you gave it over to His provision, _____ provided the solution? God is waiting for us to realize that should be calling on Him to meet our needs according to His will. His _____ is more than we could have hoped for. Or, as Ephesians 3:20 puts it: **Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.**