

Luke 2:1-7: God's Greatest Gift

Since the birth of Jesus was the most important thing that had ever happened, God had carefully planned it in advance. This was recognized immediately. **As Simeon said when Jesus was presented at the Temple in Luke 2:30-32 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation, 31 Which You have prepared in the presence of all the peoples: 32 A light for revelation for the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.**" We see this plan really begin to take place in the life of Abraham.

Call of Abraham-- Genesis 12:1-3 saying "Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you. The first thing God did was to tell Abraham he would make him into a great nation. This didn't make sense, as Abraham was 75 years old and Sarah was not only past the childbearing years, she couldn't even have children anyway. God's central promises to Abraham center around fixing this central tragedy of Abraham's life—that he had no children. Abraham knew that he was powerless, so he put it in God's hands. **Covenant with Abraham--Genesis 17:1-8 Now when Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, 2 I will make My covenant between Me and you, And I will multiply you exceedingly." 3 Abram fell on his face, and God talked with him, saying, 4 "As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, And you will be the father of a multitude of nations. 5 No longer shall you be named Abram, But your name shall be Abraham; For I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. 6 I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of you, and kings will come from you.** Notice that it was the promise of descendants that caused Abraham to fall down in worship, praising God.

Notice that nearly all of the covenant to Abraham was about prospering His many descendants.

Davidic Covenant 2 Samuel 7 10-16 The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. 12 When your days are finished and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.... This is an unconditional covenant made between God and David through which God promises David and Israel that the Messiah (Jesus Christ) would come from the lineage of David and the tribe of Judah and would establish a kingdom that would endure forever. The Davidic Covenant is unconditional because God does not place any conditions of obedience upon its fulfillment. Notice that the central promise here is the same as for the Abrahamic covenant, a son. **Isaiah 9:6-7 For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore.** Jesus Christ was born a child in his human nature, he is born, begotten of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary. But as Jesus Christ, God's Son, he is not born, but given, begotten of his Father from before the foundation of the world, begotten—not made, being of the same substance with the Father. Jesus is the Son of Abraham, the Son of David, the Son of Mary, the step-son of Joseph, and as God's Son, given to us. **16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life.** He sent into this world as God's Son, given, so that we could be saved.

Annunciation to Mary--, the angel Gabriel said **31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."**

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. Now in saying that the census covered the world, literally the inhabited land.

³And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.

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 prophecy could be fulfilled. The prophecies of God are always fulfilled, completed from the time they're spoken. So Joseph returned to the City of David as the ancestral home of that branch of the tribe of Judah.

⁴Joseph 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 with several hundred inhabitants. But this city of Ruth and Naomi, Boaz, and of course David was where God had said that the Messiah would be born, and this one prophecy effectively eliminated all other cities and towns throughout the world as a place in which the Messiah could be born. Mary and Joseph were both of the House of David, so they would be going back to their ancestral home of Bethlehem.

⁵in 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 together for the census. This verse emphasizes the relationship between Mary and Joseph, since it indicates that Mary would not want to give birth without Joseph being there. Mary was still in danger as a woman who had become pregnant before marriage. Mary was safe as long as it was clear that Joseph was accepting responsibility for the family, and that meant she needed to stay with him.

⁶While 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 night, so the shepherds could receive their visitation from the angels who pointed them to Jesus. Thousands of years of waiting for the Messiah, but suddenly when God's timing was fulfilled, everything happened. God doesn't usually explain Himself to us. Our job is just to wait on the Lord and trust Him that He will see things through.

⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son;

Mary gives birth to her firstborn son. Mary and Joseph had other children later. The mention that Jesus is the firstborn states clearly that Jesus is the firstborn son of a Davidic family in the ruling line, and therefore a legal 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 ancient practice to Mary and Joseph as well. It helped identify 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 animals.

because there was no room for them in the inn.

It was likely that there was no room in the guest rooms of people's houses, because David had a lot of descendants, and there were a lot of people crowding into this small town for the census.

God, knowing that man would sin, knowing that He would have to send Jesus to Earth, and knowing that each and every person that Jesus saved 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 choosing. No-one made room for them. When we're comfortable 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 difficult circumstances to wake us up to our need for Him. 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, immediately 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 provision is more than we could have hoped for.