

"The Miracle of Christmas"
Luke 2:1-7
12-25-16 Sun AM

This child was the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, deity in human flesh, Israel's long-awaited Messiah, the Savior of all who believe.

The EBC states, "Luke stresses 3 things- the political situation to explain why the birth took place in Bethlehem. He stresses that Bethlehem was the town of David to show the Messianic claim, and lastly, he stresses the humble circumstances of Jesus' birth."

I want to share with you **three features** of the miracle of Christmas:

1. The providence of the miracle [vv. 1-3].
2. The prophecy of the miracle [vv. 4-5].
3. The place of the miracle [vv. 6-7].

1. The Providence [vs. 1-3]. "census"

God used an enrollment for taxation to bring about fulfilled prophecy of where the Christ child will be born and fulfillment of Gen. 49:10.

Mary and Joseph were descendants of David so they both had to return to Bethlehem, the home of David. The hand of God was in the whole business.

Caesar was far removed from obscure Bethlehem and certainly did not understand the purposes, prophecies, or plans of God [27 B. C. to A.D. 14].

The enrollment for taxation purposes not only brought about fulfilled prophecy, and not only establishes a historical record of the earthly existence of Jesus, but dates the birth of Jesus between 6-4 B.C.

Providence is defined as the continuous activity of God in His creation by which he preserves and governs his creation and thus denies chance or fate.

God providentially orchestrates world events to fulfill His prophecies and purposes. This means God is still doing the same thing today.

1. The Providence [vs. 1-3].
- 2. The Prophecy [vs. 4-5]. "Bethlehem"**

Micah had declared 6 or 7 hundred years earlier in Micah 5:2 that the Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2-3 “But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. 3. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.”

Bethlehem was a small, insignificant village, yet would produce the ruler in Israel the one who would be of the lineage of David in the house of bread.

Note some truths from **Micah 5:2**:

1. Bethlehem was the birthplace of David and Jesus.
2. The name means “house of bread” and “fruitful.” Jesus was both.
3. This speaks of the Millennial reign.
4. This speaks of the truth of his eternity.
5. This speaks of his rejection at his first coming and His second coming as well as the Regathering of Israel.

We also see here again the tension between God’s sovereignty and free will of man. God willed the events before the foundation of the world, yet in time humans make choices in cooperation with His sovereignty.

Jer. 1:12, I am watching over my Word to perform it.” All history is the fulfillment of Scripture.

Proverbs 21:1, “The king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, He turns it where He wills.”

Acts 17:28, “For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”

Poole in his commentary says, “He is the God that made us that preserves us, and not we ourselves; he keeps us as in the hollow of his hand, and compasses our paths. Our breath is in our nostrils, and when we send it forth we have none to take in again, unless God furnish us with it, as out of his own hand.”

God fulfilled His prophecy in His perfect timing...

Galatians 4:4-5, “But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.” The world was ready politically, culturally, and spiritually.

1. The Providence [vs. 1-3].
2. The Prophecy [vs. 4-5].

3. The Place [vs. 6-7]. “manger”

Mary and Joseph probably arrived in Jerusalem in about 3 days [70 miles] and then traveled 5-6 miles south to Bethlehem.

When they got to Bethlehem we hear the famous words, “No room for them in the Inn.” They were sent out back to a cattle shed. We give the Inn Keeper a hard time...

This inn had a long history. John Phillip's submits, “It was known as Chimham’s Inn [2 Sam. 19:38-40; Jer. 41:17]. It was built by a servant of David who was given land in Bethlehem by David.”

In a feed trough with no fanfare, God in a manger. In a cold cave attached to an inn, the Son of God entered human life outside Mary’s womb.

The uncreated eternal Son took on humanity at his conception. The eternal entered time, the invisible became visible.

1 Timothy 3:16, And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

This is the message of the church!

There were none of the bells and whistles of a modern hospital, only animals and animal smells. Manger means feed trough, crib, or stall. Jesus was born in a cave for animals and placed in a feed trough.

Mary wrapped him in “swaddling clothes” or bandages or strips as was the custom. Even in his birth it prophesied his death.

Note that word “firstborn.” Mary was not a perpetual virgin as the Catholic system teaches. **Matt 1:25** states that Joseph kept her a virgin till after Jesus was born. Jesus had other half brothers and half sisters as recorded in the gospels.

B.H. Carroll says, “He was born with animals, He was with the wild beasts in his temptation. In his life he had no where to lay his head. He came to die as a substitute in the place of lowly, humble, wretched, sinners.”