

Finding God in the Christmas Story – Part 1

Text: Luke 2:1-7

Date: 12-12-21 @ 10:30 AM

Truth: God makes Himself perfectly and completely known in the large Christmas story details. But when we study the Bible passages about Christ's birth, we find that God has stamped Himself in every detail of the most anticipated birth in human history.

We find that at the right time, in the right place, through the right people, and in the right setting, God's unique Son became human flesh so that mankind could be redeemed from their sin.

I. At the right time (Luke 2:1-3).

What time was this? Luke tells us it was the time of Caesar Augustus who ruled as the Roman emperor from 27 BC to A.D. 14. What year was Christ born? We know it must be earlier than 4 B.C. since that is when Herod the Great's reign ended. Since Herod killed all the baby boys two years and younger (Matt. 2:16), it seems that Jesus would have been born somewhere in between 6 and 4 BC.

While Augustus was the emperor, God was in charge of what was about to unfold. At the exact moment, at the right time, the Lord Jesus would enter this world, become human flesh, and change the course of human history. God is never late, incomplete in His doings, or does half-hearted actions.

"All of this occurred just as the Scriptures said, and Caesar unknowingly played an important part. A.T. Pierson used to say, "History is His story," and President James A. Garfield called history "the unrolled scroll of prophecy." If God's Word directs our paths, then the events of history only help us fulfill the will of God. "I am watching over My word to perform it," promises the Lord (Jer. 1:12, nasb).¹

II. At the right place (Luke 2:4).

In the providence of God we find that a wicked Roman ruler pronounced this census at the exact time Mary would need to give birth. Living eighty miles away from the prophetic city, this decree forced Joseph to travel from Galilee to Bethlehem. For this 80 mile trip, God would move Joseph to take his *espoused wife, Mary*, and in so doing he would fulfill prophecy. Yet both Joseph and Mary most likely knew they must go to Bethlehem for she was carrying the Messiah (Matt. 1:20-25; Luke 1:30-33). They knew the OT well as there are around 15 quotes in Mary's prayer in Luke 1:46-56.

Micah 5:2-3 - But thou, Beth-lehem 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.

Joseph and Mary obeyed both the human rulers and God. Knowing they needed to be in Bethlehem at the birth, knowing that God was in this whole event (Luke 1:34-35; 48), they obeyed without hesitation.

¹ Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [*The Bible exposition commentary*](#) (Vol. 1, p. 175). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

III. Through the right people (Luke 2:5-6).

The fact that Matthew traces Christ's genealogy through Joseph is very important. This proves Jesus had a legal right to the throne of David, which was prophesied to be the case. Isa. 11:1; Jer. 23:5; II Sam. 7:16.

This was also God's Son (Gal. 4:4)! The Lord Jesus was born of a virgin (Matt. 1:23) and this child had been conceived of the Holy Spirit. Here we find God indelibly and forever stamped upon the Christ-mas story:

- **God gave His one and only Son.**
- **The Son was also God who became human flesh (Phil. 2).**
- **The Holy Spirit was involved in the conception.**
- **Thus we can unequivocally say that God can be found in the Christmas story. God placed Himself from beginning to end in the advent.**

IV. In the right setting (Luke 2:7).

The location that Jesus was born was a humble abode in the city named as the House of Bread in a location far from the kingly setting this should have been. Christ did not come to conquer; He came to die on the cross.

Conclusion

What can we learn from this? It is obvious that God has a plan for the redemption of humankind. It is woven throughout the OT, but really comes to life here in the birth of Jesus. The God who revealed Himself through clouds, light, fire, a voice from Heaven, who used prophets to speak for Him in the OT is now coming to us in human flesh, coming to the earth, where we can see Him, touch Him, hear Him. How amazing! How glorious! What a reason to celebrate!