



12/24/25

*Merry Christmas Eve!*

*Luke 2:1-7*

*"Oh, the depth of riches, both of wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and how inscrutable His ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to Him that He might be repaid?' For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be glory forever. Amen" (Romans 11:33-36).*

*What wisdom, planning, and knowledge it took to make sure the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem! Micah 5:2 says, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for Me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." But how would that be? Mary and Joseph were from Nazareth! God can do anything. He can even move the heart of a king, "The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; He turns it wherever He will" (Proverbs 21:1). God moved the heart of a pagan king, Caesar Augustus, to demand a decree that "all the world should be registered". He demanded a census, which meant that "all the world" had to go to the place of their lineage.*

*So Joseph, with his betrothed who was pregnant by the Holy Spirit, left Nazareth in Galilee and headed to Bethlehem. Mary was VERY pregnant, close to the time of giving birth. They had to travel about 70 miles... not by car... not by carriage. They were too poor. They either walked the whole way, or possibly Mary rode a donkey.*

*Why would God not make this easy??? Who can know the mind of the Lord? Who can be His*

counselor? I have often tried to be His counselor. Apparently, He doesn't think He needs my help!!! I see why. Easy would have made it too "easy" to argue coincidence. God was making it clear that this was His impossible-to-understand plan. He was making it clear that He can do anything. He was making it clear that this Savior would be for ALL THE WORLD, just as the census had been. No one would be excluded from the opportunity to know Jesus and receive Him as our personal Savior.

*Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, and then her water broke! It was time! I would bet she was praising God that her rough journey to Bethlehem didn't cause an early delivery. God was and is in control.*

*It was time to give birth, but there was no place to give birth. No one had enough compassion to make room for Joseph and Mary. She had to give birth in a stable. (She would never be able to say to Jesus, "What do You think about this mess? Were You born in a barn???" Well, kinda. Yes. But also, He was perfect. He probably never gave her reason to say that.)*

*Again, why would God allow His Son to be born this way? Didn't He care? Didn't He care about Joseph and Mary who were being His faithful servants? Who has known the mind of the Lord? Who has been His counselor? Who has given a gift to Him that God owes him anything?*

*The truth is, Mary and Joseph were the privileged ones. Mary had said to Gabriel in Luke 1:38, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be to me according to your word." These circumstances may have seemed odd to Mary, but I doubt she ever complained about them. She, like me, was on a need-to-know basis. She probably handled it a lot better than I often do.*

*What I may miss if I move on too quickly is that God was fulfilling prophecy. He devoted a whole chapter to Jesus in the book of Isaiah. Isaiah 53:2 says of Jesus 700 years before He was born, "For He grew up before Him (the Father) like a young plant, and like a root out of DRY ground; He had NO form or majesty that we should look at Him, and NO beauty that we should desire Him." Jesus truly emptied Himself of His glory and majesty when He left His throne and came to be the Savior of the world.*

*The truth is, I can look at the circumstances of His birth and "appreciate" the way God designed His plan. But when He designs His plan in my life where circumstances don't line up with my desire for the comfortable and easy, I don't appreciate it quite as much. What does it take for me to be content living on a need-to-know basis? Trust. Trust that His ways are*

*higher than mine... Trust that His plans, though impossible to understand in my finite mind, are always good... Trust that He doesn't need me to tell Him what He's missing... And HUMILITY... Humility to understand that He owes me NOTHING but gives me ETERNAL LIFE WITH HIM. That is the perspective I want to embrace today.*

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