

Bethlehem

12-17-17



Matthew 2:1–4 (ESV)

Now after Jesus was born in **Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; ⁴ and **assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.**

Matthew 2:5 (ESV)

They told him, “In **Bethlehem** of Judea, **for so it is written by the prophet!**”

(The Jewish priest and scribes knew the Scriptures and were looking for the coming Messiah or Christ. **They knew where HE was to be born and they immediately told Herod, Bethlehem.** They quoted the prophet Micah and the verse is from Micah 5:2):
Matthew 2:6 (ESV)

And you, **O Bethlehem**, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for **from you shall come a ruler**
who will shepherd my people Israel.

The prophet, Micah, lived 800 years before Christ's birth and was a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah who prophesied about the virgin birth of Christ in Is.7:14 and 9:6! These guys knew each other.

For context let us backtrack a few days. Joseph and Mary live in Nazareth, which is about 80 miles north of Bethlehem. How is God going to get them to Bethlehem at the right time to have this baby? **This is a small thing for God.** God simply moves the heart of the strongest ruler in the world that lives in 2,500 miles away in present day Rome, Italy to tax the entire world.

Luke 2:1–3 (ESV)

In those days a decree went out from **Caesar Augustus** that **all the world** should be registered. ² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³ And all went to be registered, **each to his own town.**

Now Joseph has to go to Bethlehem because that was his home town where he was born.



Luke 2:4-5 (ESV)

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, **from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem**, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with **Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.**

Note: Everything that God has promised for over 2000 years is coming together.

- ✓ **Mary, his betrothed – Engaged – Virgin birth**
- ✓ **Lineage of David – Descendant of David**
- ✓ **Bethlehem – Birthplace fulfilled by the Roman Emperor making a decree to the whole world!**

Luke 2:6 (ESV)

And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

Now God has brought together all the powers of heaven and earth to fulfill what HE has promised! We should also note that God's method was to do it in an obscure town, in a stable, in a manger!

Luke 2:7 (ESV)

And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and **laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.**

What does this tell us? 800 years before Christ was born, God told us exactly where HE would be born. Bethlehem was where God chose to reveal Himself and show HIS presence. God's timing is crucial! In God's timing, God moved all of heaven and the entire Roman Empire to have Joseph and Mary to travel 80 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be exactly where God wanted them to be!

Lesson: God will move Heaven and earth to put you in your Bethlehem. Your Bethlehem, the seemingly insignificant place where God has you is the very place God will reveal Himself and show HIS presence to you. As with Jesus, your Bethlehem is the place where God's angels are going to appear, where kings and riches are going to come, where God is going to do a mighty work, where God will use you to change the world.

Lesson: Over the years I have talked to numerous people who want out of their particular situation. Hindsight has shown that almost always they are trying to escape the training ground that God is using to develop them. By escaping they never learn the hard lessons God is trying to teach them, but not only that, they will follow their own disobedient heart into a worse situation. God does not call you from something! God calls you to something!

Lesson: Your Bethlehem is where God is working! When you move without learning God's lessons, you just move your problems with you to a new location. Not only do you bring your problems with you, they get worse.

God knows each one of us and God is moving in each one of us. God is fully aware of our circumstances. God is moving heaven and earth for us even though we may feel overwhelmed and insignificant – like – a baby in a stable in a manger. Be Encouraged!

Ephesians 1:4 (ESV)

God chose us in him before the foundation of the world!

You are significant in the eyes of God! Just as God identified Jesus' Bethlehem 800 years before HIS birth, God knows you and your situation. What do we need to know about our Bethlehem; our situation; our location. **Trust God!**

Proverbs 3:5 (ESV)

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.

We sing the Christmas carol, “O Little Town of Bethlehem” every Christmas. Therefore, I want to read it reflecting on the magnitude of God.

O little town of Bethlehem **(The Fulfillment)**
The hopes and fears **of all the years**
Are met in thee tonight **(2000 years of promises)**
For Christ is born of Mary!

And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love **(The Fulfillment)**

O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth
(Angels who knew all the promises of God declare and rejoice in the fulfillment of all these promises)

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given
No ear may hear His coming
But in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive him still
The dear Christ enters in

(Silently, wonderfully, in this world of sin, meek souls receive HIM still, and the dear Christ enters in our hearts and our circumstances.)

Now the great proclamation of this Christmas carol!

**O holy Child of Bethlehem (The Right Location!)
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today.**

**O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel (God with us!)
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel (God with us!)**

**The Unfolding Revelation of Christ and the
Unfolding Revelation of the Redemption of Man **all
in a magnificent explosion of divine revelation** in
Bethlehem, in a stable, in a manger. All this to
manifest God's son and God's love for us!**

John 3:16 (ESV)

**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in him should not perish but have
eternal life.**

Prophetic Team
***Hear from the Holy Spirit to change the current
situation or impact the future.***