

Luke 2:1-7—The Journey

I. The Decree

- a. Shows absolute power that Caesar Augustus had over that land; anyone in ancient world would agree he was the sovereign
- b. Yet unknowingly his decree sets the stage for the real sovereign power...the birth of a baby in an obscure village... this birth, not Caesar's decrees, brings forth the angel's chorus

II. The Journey

- a. Bethlehem—the city where David was born... God uses this decree to fulfill the prophesy that the Messiah will be from Bethlehem: *Micah 5:2*
 - i. God uses humans and their decisions (even ones that are not intentionally about following God's will) to carry out his purposes
- b. Nazareth, Galilee to Bethlehem, Judea was roughly 80 miles
 - i. Mary in full term pregnancy, a very unpleasant journey

III. The Birth

- a. Ever wonder if the Innkeeper found out who he turned away that night?
- b. Inns—usually the second story of a house where animals were on the first or a one-story building with a stable attached (not a Marriot)
- c. Manger—may very well have been a cave with a feeding trough for animals
 - i. NOT a comfortable place to give birth! No real bed, pungent smell of animal urine and dung
- d. *** From the beginning the Lord enters this world in a humble and mundane way... the Majesty in the midst of the Mundane
 - i. This sets the precedent for Jesus' life and ministry and death

IV. So what?

- a. We learn how God identifies with us...not lording over us in his greatness, but coming alongside us in our weakness...God identifies with the "least of these" and he identifies with us in our weakness and our most vulnerable moments
- b. We ought to make no pretenses before God
- c. We are compelled to identify with others in the same way—we are there for the weak, the poor, the sick, the dying
- d. God often does miracles in the midst of the mundane—miracles can happen in the little things in life: listening to co-worker share her problems, inviting a lonely neighbor to church, showing patience or forgiveness to someone, etc.
- e. So much of life is trying to prove our significance or jockey for position; the Christmas story reminds us that Jesus did the opposite (c.f. *Phil. 2*)