

## God Is In Control – Luke 2.1-7

<sup>1</sup> Now it came to pass in those days, there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be enrolled. <sup>2</sup> This was the first enrolment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> And all went to enrol themselves, every one to his own city. <sup>4</sup> And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David; <sup>5</sup> to enrol himself with Mary, who was betrothed to him, being great with child. <sup>6</sup> And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. <sup>7</sup> And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn (Luke 2.1-7, ASV).<sup>1</sup>

### Memory Verse – And she brought forth her firstborn son; and she wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn – Luke 2.7

As we draw closer to Christmas day, we are going to look at the various events which took place around Christ's birth and see how they help move people into the right places to fulfill prophecy while at the same time ask ourselves the question, "How does this affect us today and our message to the world?"

To be clear we will not have time to dive into every aspect of the Christmas story, nor will we be able to chase down every myth, fable or made-up tradition to tickle our fancy. We will do our best to stick with Biblical teachings with some help of course from Biblical scholars and teachers.

Let us start by looking at five simple words, "Now it came to pass..." We must ask ourselves, as good Bible students, what does Luke mean when he says, "Now it came to pass?" Normally when we would see a phrase like this, it is proceeding something from a previous passage or text.

However, there are a couple of things we must note about this phrase; first it is the connection between chapter one and this chapter. John the Baptist is born in chapter one, and verse eighty says, "And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel (Luke 1.80, ESV).<sup>2</sup> So, these words help connect us to the events taking place in John's life and Jesus' life.

Second, this phrase reminds us God is still in control of all the world and universe. There is nothing going on which He is not aware of, and here we see five little words to remind us of that very thing, "Now it came to pass..." Paul writes, "But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law" (Galatians 4.4, NIV).<sup>3</sup> Who's time had come? God's time had come, it was time for God to move into the next phase of His plan.

God had a right time to bring Christ into the world, to become the "Lamb who would take away the sins of the world" (John 1.29). God does not do anything in the spur of the moment nor is He taken by surprise. The author of Hebrews states, "God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world" (Hebrews 1.1-2, NASB95).<sup>4</sup>

Therefore, when we read, "Now it came to pass..." we must always remember who is in control of all the events we are about to read. Likewise, in our lives each and every day, we must remember

<sup>1</sup> *American Standard Version*. (1995). (Lk 2). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

<sup>2</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2016). (Lk 1:80). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

<sup>3</sup> *The New International Version*. (2011). (Ga 4:4). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

<sup>4</sup> *New American Standard Bible: 1995 update*. (1995). (Heb 1:1-2). La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation.

who is in control of our lives. Remembering our decision to receive Jesus Christ into our lives, as our Lord and Savior. We must live with Christ in-control of our lives and not us, this is what it means for Him to be Lord; Master, Ruler, Control of all. Just as Paul said to the church at Galatia, it applies to us as well. “I was put to death on the cross with Christ, and I do not live anymore—it is Christ who lives in me. I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself to save me” (Galatians 2.20, NCV).<sup>5</sup>

Hence, God is in control, in charge of all which takes place. He sees and knows all, and nothing happens without consent (Job 1-2). Do not confuse this statement with sin, God does not tempt us with sin neither does He cause us to sin, because God is not tempted with evil. However, we are tempted when we are drawn away and enticed by our own desires. And “after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is fully grown, it gives birth to death (James 1.13-15, CSB, emphasis added).<sup>6</sup>

God was in control of Caesar Augustus when he decided ‘all the world’ should be taxed or counted, this was like a census. What this allowed was for Mary and Joseph to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem to be counted in the census. God was moving all the right people into the right places so scripture would be fulfilled.

Everyday God is working in our lives, and all around us showing us what to do, where to go, and how to serve Him. He is moving things into place to best suit us to complete the mission and tasks He has called us to. Do we see where God is working? Do we see what He is up to? Do we recognize God is moving all around us, trying to get us involved in His work? Sometimes it is subtle and sometimes it is not, but if we are focused on God we will see what He is up to.

## **Application**

1. When you look at what is going on within your own life, who does it look like is in control? You or God? Please explain your selection.
2. For many of us it is not God, so how can we let go and allow God to be in-control of our life?
3. Talk about a time when your desires overruled what God wanted in your life. How did it make you feel when it was completed? How did God react to you in the end? Where are you now in your walk with God?
4. Commit to learning Luke 2.7 and find one person to share the Biblical Christmas Story with.

## **Prayer**

Our Heavenly Father thank You for Your timing, for Your control over the world and my life. I know I do not always allow You to have control, nor do I follow Your ways as I should. My God, help me to see where You are working and moving and guide me to be a part of Your daily activities. So, I may share the good news of the Savior coming into the world, the good news of His sacrifice on the cross, His burial, and resurrection to save this world from their sins. Give me boldness as I share this message today and everyday until Christ returns. I pray all this in Jesus Christ’s Name, Amen.

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<sup>5</sup> *The Everyday Bible: New Century Version*. (2005). (Ga 2:20). Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc.

<sup>6</sup> *Christian Standard Bible*. (2020). (Jas 1:15). Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers.