

Rev. Lex DeLong / General

2023 Christmas / Jesus' Birth / Luke 2:1–20; Isaiah 9:6–7

What God promises, He will do. You can count on that no matter what.

Notes

12/10 Luke 2:1-20 "The Christ Was Born," Subtitle: As God promised, so He would be born, Scripture: Isa. 9:6-7

What God promises, He will do. You can count on that no matter what.

Luke: An Introduction and Commentary G. The Birth of Jesus (2:1–7)

1. There are difficulties posed by the facts that our knowledge of the times is imperfect and that what Luke says is not easy to fit in to what we do know. Thus there is no record of any law of Augustus that a universal census be held. But he did reorganize Roman administration, and there are records of censuses held in a number of places. In Egypt, where the custom is unlikely to have differed significantly from neighbouring Syria (of which province Judea was a part), a census was held every fourteen years. Actual documents survive for every census from AD 20 to 270 (Barclay). When Augustus died he left in his own handwriting a summary of information, such as statistics on direct and indirect taxation, which would most naturally have been derived from censuses.³ The evidence seems best satisfied if we understand the decree of which Luke writes, not as a formal law, but as an administrative direction which set the whole process in motion and had its effect in distant Judea.

Luke: An Introduction and Commentary by Leon Morris

Luke: An Introduction and Commentary G. The Birth of Jesus (2:1–7)

There is no record outside Luke for a census at this time, but there is nothing improbable about it.

Christ was born just like God promised
(Luke 2:1-7)

A sign was given just like God promised
(Luke 2:8-14)

God's promises fulfilled is a treasure
worth proclaiming (Luke 2:15-20)

- Sometimes God accomplishes His eternal decree through the world's governments and powers, like He did with Caesar Augustus and Quirinius.
- Sometimes He reveals His eternal decree through the angelic hosts of heaven, like He did through the angels' revealing to the shepherds.
- Sometimes God confirms His eternal decree through normal people and normal human experiences.

Whatever God uses to confirm His eternal decree, His intent is for humanity to accept that what God has promised, He will do. That is true no matter the geo-political state of the world, no matter what evil forces might oppress us, and no matter what life's experiences might bring.

- What God has promised, He will do.

Jesus came just like God promised, not as a warrior or king, but as one who would serve His heavenly father and earthly created beings, as Phil. 2 states, even to the death of the cross. That, as v. 14 states, brings peace among men on whom God's gracious purpose rests.

God's favor brings peace. Peace overcomes this world. Who are those who overcome the world as the recipients of God's favor?

1 John 5:4-5 NASB95

⁴ For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. ⁵ Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

The governments of the day were completely unaware of what was going to happen. The shepherds were completely unaware of what was going to happen. Even Joseph and Mary didn't fully understand how this was all going to happen.

We don't always know what God is going to do or how He is going to do it, but we can always trust that He will do as He has promised, no matter what our circumstances may be.

Are you an overcomer? Not that you alone have enough resilience to rise above this world and its challenges, but do you have faith in what God has promised, do you believe that Jesus is the Son of God, do you believe that He truly was born, lived, and died for you?

Like Mary and the Shepherds did, may we all this Christmas treasure all these things in our hearts and ponder over it all, so deeply that we cannot help but go on our way glorifying and praising God.

What God promises, He will do. You can count on that no matter what.