

God's Grand Plan for Jesus' Birth in Bethlehem

Monday, 12/24 – 6 PM

The Nativity of Our Lord – 2018

Divine Services – Join Us: 12/25 at 10; 12/30 at 10; 12/31 at 6

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: In today's world many people conclude that things happen by random chance, *or maybe by luck; is that what you think?*

According to the Bible, *thus according to God's very word*, God has *pulled back the curtain* to reveal His grand plan for all time and eternity! Even before God created, He knew all that was to come – *the sin, His promise to save, and Jesus' finished work; He also knew everything about you and me!*

Let's think about ourselves for a moment, *and realize how much we are blessed:*

- ➔ We hunger, *so God gives us food!*
- ➔ It's wintertime, *so God gives us warm clothes!*
- ➔ We need a place to sleep, *so God gives us shelter!*
- ➔ We need love, *so God gives us family and friends!*
- ➔ We have places to go, *so God gives us cars!*
- ➔ We need order, *so God establishes nations!*
- ➔ We need protection, *so God gives us armed forces!*
- ➔ We need forgiveness, *so God gave us His only Son!*
- ➔ We need guidance, *so God gave us His Holy Word!*

Since God has done all of that, *and SO MUCH MORE*, for you and me, let us *better understand* and *marvel* at His grand plan to eternally save us through the Babe born in Bethlehem!

1. **Adam and Eve**: Right after the *first sin* ([Genesis 3:6](#)) came the *first promise* of the Savior ([3:15](#)). The promise indicated that He would be a future descendant of the woman, so, at that point, *it could any son born to any woman!*
2. **Abraham**: He lived about 2,000 years after creation, *thus 2,000 years after the first promise of the Savior*. Then, *to begin to narrow down His grand plan*, God said to Abram, “*...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed*” ([Gen. 12:3 ESV](#)). In other words, *one of YOUR future descendants will be the Promised Savior!*
3. **Isaac**: God blessed him with twin boys, Esau and Jacob; then God made it known that the Promised Savior would be *a future descendant of Jacob!*
4. **Jacob**: God blessed him with 12 sons (*who later became the 12 tribes of Israel, and eventually the nation of Israel*); then God made it known that the Promised Savior would be *a future descendant of his son, Judah!*
5. **The Ruth Connection**: This sermon is part 4 of *The Bethlehem Series!* Parts 2 and 3 focused on the book of Ruth, which took place during the time of the judges (1380 to 1045 B.C.), and before the time of the kings (1046 to 597 B.C.). Regarding God’s grand plan, the book tells us about Boaz – *the great grandfather of David*, and Obed – *the grandfather of David*.
6. **David was from Bethlehem**: We shouldn’t be surprised, *since his family had lived there for*

generations. The Bible says that **“David was the son of an Ephrathite of Bethlehem in Judah, named Jesse...”** (1 Sam. 17:12). The Bible also tells us that it was at Bethlehem where David was anointed king by Samuel (1 Samuel 16:4-13).

7. **The Micah Prophecy:** Up to this point in God’s grand plan, we knew *the family line* through which the Savior would be born; now, *through Micah the prophet*, who lived around 700 B.C., God revealed *the location* of the Promised Savior’s birth: **“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** [thus the King of the Jews, even the King of the Universe], **whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days** [having been first promised to Adam and Eve]” (Micah 5:2 ESV).
8. **The Registration:** Now we jump ahead 700 years; now we are at the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4); now God will take action so that His Son is born into the world at *the very location He had previously foretold through Micah*. This is the beginning of the Christmas story, as recorded in **Luke chapter 2:**
 - a. ¹ **In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered** [for the purpose of being taxed]. // So **“in those days”** when Mary was far along in her pregnancy; that is when the decree went out – *in order to get her on her way to Bethlehem!*
 - b. ² **This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.** // Lenski, a Lutheran Bible commentator, noted that **“‘first’ means,**

not that other enrollments followed, but that nothing of the kind had ever been decreed in the past” (119). Therefore, it is even more obvious that God was at work *to fulfill His grand plan!*

³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴ 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, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. // Both Joseph and Mary are descendants of David – ♦Joseph through David’s son Solomon (Matt. 1:1-17), and ♦Mary through David’s son Nathan (Luke 3:23-38). The trip for Mary must have been very difficult – being far along in her pregnancy and traveling about 100 miles, *but God sustained her in order to fulfill His grand plan for His Son to be born in Bethlehem!*

9. **Our Part in God’s Grand Plan:** Even though we have all sinned, *God loves us; so He made the way for everyone to be with Him through Jesus! So, like throwing a huge party:* ♦the plans have been made, ♦the invitations have been sent, and ♦the food has been purchased. Now, what about you? Will you ♦gladly come, ♦thankfully receive, and ♦eternally benefit? And then, will you **keep** on ♦coming, ♦receiving, and ♦growing?

Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, *You planned;* Lord Jesus, *You executed the plan;* Holy Spirit, *please work through the Word to ♦bring the lost to Christ and ♦always keep us in Christ!*

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