

The _____ of a Sovereign God
Luke 2:1-19

Often, things happen in our life for which we have no good explanation, _____ that God has brought or allowed them. How we respond will determine the outcome and our spiritual development. If we believe in the sovereignty of God, then we need to believe: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28. The development of the birth of Christ has no other explanation than the sovereign God was accomplishing his work his way, even though it had its _____.

I. The _____ of life Vs 1-5

A. Life _____ no matter what our circumstances Vs 1a

1. Caesar Augustus (27 B.C.-A.D. 14)-Ordered the census that involved Joseph and Mary going to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1)
2. Caesar-the surname of Julius, which was adopted by those following him as the _____ rulers of the Roman empire
3. Decree-ordinance, a _____

B. Timing for carrying out responsibilities will not always be _____ Vs 1b-5

1. Tax time is never convenient and rarely profitable Vs 1b-3
 - a. This was more than _____ taxes
 - b. This was a census that required each _____ Jew had to return to his home city to register themselves, their property, and their income.
2. The distance from Nazareth to Bethlehem was approximately _____ miles
3. Mary was "great with child" (KJV)
 - a. Mary was _____ pregnant
 - b. Mary was huge and ready to deliver at any time _____ they ever began the long journey

II. The _____ of life Vs 6-7

A. The long hard journey probably contributed greatly to Mary's delivery in a place other than her home

1. In a _____ city-Bethlehem instead of Nazareth
2. In a strange _____-a manger instead of her own home
 - a. Could have been a feeding _____ for animals, or
 - b. Could have been a _____ for keeping animals
 - c. Many scholars believe the location of Christ's birth was a _____ and not a wooden stable as depicted by most Christ's birth scenes

B. She wrapped her newborn son in swaddling clothes

1. The swaddling cloth was _____ strips of cloth
2. She wrapped Christ in these long strips of cloth in the same way as a mother does a _____ today
3. The misfortune of not being equipped at that time for birthing a child, thus she made the _____ with what she had

C. "There was no room in the inn"

1. The _____ of a long journey-the time it took to travel such a long distance
2. The misfortune of _____-there was a crowd of people in Bethlehem due to the census

III. The _____ visitors Vs 8

A.

1. Shepherds were _____ inept due to their line of work
2. Their work kept them ceremonially _____ to come to the Temple for worship
3. Their line of work was _____ for sacrifice offerings and food, but was not considered an important line of work by most people of that day

B. The shepherds were _____ the folks you would want to come to see your newborn son

1. Their _____
2. Their _____
3. Their lack of _____ training

IV. God at work _____ the inconveniences and misfortunes of life and the unwanted visitors

A. God's plans for accomplishing His will are to His _____ alone

B. We make our plans, but God _____ the outcome

1. Joseph and Mary were not planning on this _____ pregnancy
2. The timing for a required government census was **terrible** for Mary
3. Both Joseph and Mary _____ to the difficulties and allowed God to make something wonderful out of them, as only He can do

C. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, Neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.

⁹For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are my ways higher than your ways, And my thoughts than your thoughts." Isaiah 55:8-9