

## Luke 2:1-7

*Dan & Beth Pomeroy*

This passage in Luke gives us the reason why Joseph and Mary had to travel to a different town and ultimately why Jesus was born in Bethlehem. For Joseph, he was just being a good citizen going to his hometown and since Mary was going to marry this man, she needed to go with him. They knew that Mary was getting close to giving birth but also knew that they needed to respond to this census request. Wrapped up in this story of a man and his fiancée doing what was right from the world's view, we also see that their obedience completes a promise that was made years earlier. In Micah 5:2 we read:

***“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah though you are small among the-clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”***

It was not clear to those hearing Micah at the time, and to those talking about it for many years, but now, years later, once that ‘Promise Made’ was kept, it made everything much clearer.

Our lives are much like the experience that Joseph and Mary had. We don't know all the promises that God has for us, but if we are faithful to trust Him and be open to what He wants us to do, we can also experience those ‘Promise Kept’ moments in life.

## Luke 2:19

*Sarah Pomeroy*

In Luke's account of the gospel story, we get a more in depth look at who Mary was and her reaction to the foretelling of the coming Messiah. We see how deeply Mary loved her God and wanted to serve Him with her life, even if it meant potential ridicule from society and possibly losing her fiancé as well. The angel's instructions did not necessarily include the promise of a loving husband in the picture. It did not promise comfort and support from friends and family when this first-time mother would need it most. However, the words of Gabriel did point to the power and faithfulness of the Lord Most High and who this baby would be: the fruition of promises made to Israel in the past; the answer to a promise made eons ago in the Garden.

Luke's account also places a special emphasis on the message from the angel to the shepherds in the field. God let the news be known first to the lowly shepherds that the promise made to His people was being fulfilled that night, and they could go see it for themselves. They shared the special moment with Mary and Joseph when they came to see with their own eyes the long-awaited answer to so many prayers.

When Mary heard all that the angel had told the shepherds, I can imagine her joy in knowing this truly was the King they had anticipated and that the angel had told her about nine long months earlier. I can see her hanging on every word the shepherds conveyed with teary eyes and a heart quivering with excitement. Hearing what the shepherds had to say was, I'm sure, so reassuring to her that this was indeed the Savior, and God had been faithful to keep His promises, not only to her, but to all His people.

With the Christmas season upon us, a season filled with blessings, let us keep in mind the promises God has been faithful to fulfill. Not only promises made and kept in the pages of His word, but also in our everyday lives. God said He will work everything out for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28). How has God worked out a seemingly impossible situation for your benefit, either this year or in years past? What heavy and broken-hearted prayers has He answered? What blessings has He gifted you?

This year, let us heed this reminder to, like Mary, treasure these answered prayers from God. Let us cling to His goodness in His word and His faithfulness in our lives as though they were precious heirlooms, meant to pass down from generation to generation. Let us tell our children of the goodness of God and how he provides for us, guides us, loves us, and is a trusted Keeper of promises.

Praise God for His faithfulness.