

Call to Obedience #392
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God's Spectacular Moves at Christmas

By Reimar Schultze

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem... (Luke 2:1-4).

Seldom do we see the marvelous operations of God so clearly as in this passage describing the events surrounding the birth of Christ. Here God moved powerfully through time and space on behalf of Mankind, the glory of His creation.

Ever since God made Man, God has always acted with us in mind, because we were created to be His bride, to sit together with Jesus in His Father's throne (Revelation 3:21). God never takes His eye off any one of us! If you can grasp the enormity of this, just fall down and worship. The Christmas story shows how much effort God is willing to expend in order to bring His creation into fellowship with Himself.

1. God moved upon a virgin to bring forth a child. No one can ever be born without the sperm of a male. No one can begin life and develop into a human without two sets of chromosomes. But God moved upon Mary and it was done. Don't you ever say about anything: it cannot be done. Say: all things are possible with God. As long as you have faith, you will see what faith can do. As long as you have faith, you will live in miracles.

2. God moved history to move one couple. God could have sent an angel to tell Joseph to move his family to Bethlehem in order to fulfill the prophecy for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. Instead, God put it into the heart of the Emperor for everyone to return to his place of birth to be registered. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, but because Joseph was born in Bethlehem, he had to return there, bringing his fully pregnant espoused wife with him.

Now notice this remarkable fact: when that decree of Augustus went out, everybody thought that Augustus was moving them. My friend, it was not Augustus who moved the whole of Judea, it was God who was doing it. God wanted Jesus to be born in Bethlehem and He used a Roman census to get Jesus there. Augustus wanted every one of his people registered, but God wanted only the registration of one man: the man Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, the Savior of the world. God moved all people throughout the area around Galilee and Judea to really only move one man and one woman.

Oh, what a commotion all this moving caused so that Joseph would take Mary to Bethlehem. Hundreds and thousands of men packed suitcases, rented donkeys and camels and carts for days and weeks all over the country. This was all to fulfill prophecy. Again, these people thought they were moving for the census. But nobody really knew what they were moving for. Only the Bible tells us that they all moved because a Ruler was to be born in Bethlehem who would supplant every ruler for all eternity: the Son of God.

What do we really know about what is going on in the world anyhow? What do we know about the real reasons for storms, droughts, winds, rains, government policies, decrees, and stirrings among nations? Sailors in the Mediterranean in the days of Jonah did not know why they were in a storm, until the casting of a lot revealed that there was a disobedient prophet on board. Moses was moved about in a desert for 40 years without knowing why. I suffered through the hardships of being born part Jewish in Nazi Germany and all that went with the aftermath of the war. My mother did not know what was going on nor why. None of us children knew. Only God did. Yet all along God was preparing me for a work in America to reach the world for Jesus from here. Friend, God has a destination for every one of you and He is working on it to move you there.

3. God moved Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem to be taxed. There was no room for them in the inn because **God had moved upon people ahead of time to fill up every room in that place.** It was not the innkeeper who kept Joseph out of the inn. It was God Himself. How often do we move along by the mighty power of God and all of a sudden we stand before a closed door and our countenance falls? Joseph had this great God, Who was able to produce a supernatural birth and move the world to move him and Mary to Bethlehem. So why did He now shut the door for him, as he and his weary wife reached their destination? In cases like this, the devil whispers: you have sinned, that is why everything has come to a stop.

Friend, the door was shut to a motel because GOD WANTED A MANGER SCENE CHRISTMAS and not a motel scene Christmas. He caused Caesar to demand that supremely inefficient manner of registering people on purpose **to force Joseph and Mary into a stable.** This manger scene has touched all peoples from the oldest man to the youngest child. It has stirred and moved the hearts of the learned, the unlearned, the rich and the poor alike throughout the centuries, because it was designed ahead of time to do so. God said “no” to the motel. God said “no” to the ordinary way, to the way of comfort and pleasure. God wants to get us to walk in His ways, in the supernatural, and to experience His glory and crown in our day.

What would it have been like if the Savior had been born in a motel or an executive suite on the tenth floor of a five star hotel? Or what if Jesus would have sought out the wisdom of men? Oh, Christianity would have become a religion of the rich, famous and learned and His influence would have been of little appeal to the teeming, squalling masses of the poor, the blind, the broken-

hearted and the captives. He knows how to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows (Isaiah 53:4).

When Jesus came to earth, He emptied Himself of Himself and took on the form of a slave. He needed to be born in a cave: cold and dark. From His birth He remained a servant all His earthly life. Even though He was a king, He did not walk around with a crown on His head, but with an apron of humility (John 13:5). He wants His disciples to walk like that. God wanted a manger scene in a cave. And ever since, He is born anew in hearts that are cold and dark, bringing them the light of the world and the treasures of His kingdom.

4. God moved the shepherds and Heaven. The shepherds did not have to move for the census. They were nobodies in the courts of law. Did not Jesus say that God has hidden these things from the learned, the somebodies and intellectuals, to reveal them unto the nobodies (Matthew 11:24-25)? The Son of God was moved to a manger in their vicinity. It is nearby in the shepherds' fields that heaven exploded: *...a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men* (Luke 2:13-14). A multitude of the heavenly host sang praises – was there any angel missing? Was there ever a time when so many in heaven ministered to so few on earth? Really, how many shepherds heard and saw this magnificent display? Do you think there were 5 shepherds or perhaps 12? All of heaven was putting on this glorious show for so few.

God is the Great Mover. Finally He moved the shepherds, the lowliest and most uneducated to go to the place of the manger scene. After they had seen the Christ child as described by the angels, they went out and told everybody the great news that the King of kings was born at last.

What kind of God do we have? Oh, my friend, we need a manger scene Christmas, we need a shepherd scene Christmas, we need a wise men scene Christmas. We need a heavenly Christmas. Oh, if we only let God move us about, how beautifully everything in our lives would turn out to be fruitful.

Yes, God moves us, and He most often moves us differently than we expect and for reasons we seldom know or understand. But it will always be for His glory. God will move you, if you let Him. And if you move with Him here, in time you will move with Him throughout eternity.

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