

Luke 2:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

Analysis

Joseph went 'to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.' The phrase 'espoused wife' indicates their betrothal, legally binding though not yet completed in marriage ceremony. Mary's advanced pregnancy ('great with child') made the journey difficult, yet they obeyed governmental decree. This detail emphasizes the real humanity of Jesus's birth—He entered the world through normal human gestation and birth, yet under difficult circumstances common to the poor. That Mary accompanied Joseph, though not legally required for census, suggests either divine prompting or mutual recognition that the birth should occur in Bethlehem. Their obedience despite hardship models submission to authority even when costly.

Historical Context

The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem required 3-4 days for a pregnant woman, demonstrating remarkable faith and endurance. Mary's advanced pregnancy meant Jesus's birth was imminent, perfectly timed to occur in Bethlehem per prophecy. God's sovereignty coordinates natural processes with historical events.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Jesus's birth under difficult circumstances demonstrate His identification with the poor?
2. What does Mary and Joseph's obedience despite hardship teach about submission to authority?
3. How does God coordinate natural processes (pregnancy) with historical events (census)?

Interlinear Text

ἀπογράψασθαι	σὺν	Μαριὰμ	τῇ	μεμνηστευμένη	αὐτῷ
To be taxed	with	Mary	G3588	espoused	his
G583	G4862	G3137		G3423	G846
γυναικὶ,	οὕση	ἐγκύω			
wife	being	great with child			
G1135	G5607	G1471			

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