

Luke 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

Analysis

The nativity verse: 'And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn' (καὶ ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτῆς τὸν πρωτότοκον, καὶ ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτὸν ἐν φάτνῃ, διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ καταλύματι). 'Prōtotokos' (πρωτότοκος, firstborn) indicates Jesus was Mary's first child, contradicting perpetual virginity doctrines. 'Sparganōō' (σπαργανόω) means to wrap in strips of cloth—normal infant care. The 'phatnē' (φάτνη, manger/feeding trough) and lack of 'topos' (τόπος, room) in the 'katalyma' (κατάλυμα, guest room/inn) emphasize the incarnation's humility. The Creator of the universe entered His creation in the lowliest circumstances, foreshadowing His identification with the poor and marginalized.

Historical Context

Bethlehem's 'inn' was likely a caravanserai (traveler's lodging) or possibly a guest room in a relative's home. The manger suggests a stable or cave used for animals—traditional sites in Bethlehem include the Church of the Nativity built over caves. The swaddling and manger would have signaled to shepherds (themselves socially marginal) that this was indeed the prophesied child. Jesus' birth in poverty fulfilled no one's messianic expectations, challenging assumptions about divine power and glory.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does the incarnation's humble circumstances reveal about God's values versus worldly power?
2. How does Jesus' birth in a manger foreshadow His entire ministry of identification with the lowly?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἔτεκεν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῖς τὸν πρωτότοκον καὶ
And **she brought forth** G3588 **son** **for them** G3588 **firstborn** **And**
G2532 G5088 G5207 G846 G4416 G2532

ἐσπαργάνωσεν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἀνέκλινεν αὐτοῖς ἐν τῇ
in swaddling clothes **for them** **And** **laid** **for them** **in** G3588
G4683 G846 G2532 G347 G846 G1722

φάτνη διότι οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τόπος ἐν τῷ
a manger **because** **no** **there was** **for them** **room** **in** G3588
G5336 G1360 G3756 G2258 G846 G5117 G1722

καταλύματι
the inn
G2646

Additional Cross-References

Galatians 4:4 (Parallel theme): But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

John 1:14 (Parallel theme): And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

Matthew 1:25 (Parallel theme): And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

2 Corinthians 8:9 (Parallel theme): For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Matthew 8:20 (Parallel theme): And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Isaiah 7:14 (Parallel theme): Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

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