

# Christmas: The Invasion of the Kingdom of God – *Luke 2:1-7*

**Introduction** – At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of a Child and the birth of a King. This King has a kingdom which is “*not of this world*” (John 18:36), but this does not mean that Christ’s kingdom is only “up there” to be found in heaven. The King came and brought with Him His kingdom forces, forces which are not carnal but are mighty (2 Cor 10:4). The world was about to be taken over. This was the invasion of the devil’s world by the Kingdom of God. Christmas is a story of war, of the battle of cities, and of the toppling of one government by another (Isaiah 9:6-7).

**The Battle of the Kingdoms** (vv1-7) – One of the great subplots in the story of the birth of our Savior is the paradox of God’s sovereignty and man’s free will. Who was the most free, autonomous, powerful man in the world at this time? Without exception, Caesar was. And how hard did God have to work to accomplish His kingdom purposes through this man? This is the great twist, the great irony, the great comedy of the gospel. Yes, kingdoms are at war. But no, there is absolutely no uncertainty as to the outcome. The city of man, born out of the seed of the serpent, looks to be in complete control. The city of God, born of the seed of the woman, is about to directly enter into human history.

**Caesar Augustus** – He was the adopted son of Julius Caesar. After a bloody civil war, Augustus turned the Roman republic into an empire, with himself at the head proclaiming that he had brought justice and peace to the whole world. Declaring his dead father to be divine, he framed himself as ‘*son of god*.’ Poets wrote songs about the new era and historians told the long story of Rome’s rise to greatness, climaxing of course with Augustus himself, known as the ‘*savior of the world*.’ This god-king can tell “*all the world*” that they should be registered.

**Jesus of Bethlehem** – This ‘*bastard*’ son was brought into the world boasting nothing. Bethlehem is just a little town outside of Jerusalem and there is no room in human society even for his birth – he is placed in a feeding trough. But this will be the sign. Why are Joseph and Mary and Jesus in Bethlehem? Because of Caesar’s decree (v1) or because of God’s omniscient plan (Mic 5:2)?

**Kingdom Invasion** – “Joy to the world, the Lord is come” means that the Caesars of this world are put on notice. God is declaring the New Empire, the World-rule, and the King of kings. He has made clear that absolutely nothing can stand in the way of His purposes (Ps 33:10-11, Isaiah 40:15, 17). He laughs at their attempts to thwart Him (Ps 2:4).

**Kingdom Conflict** – At the same time, there is true terror that is a part of Christmas. This declaration brought and brings great conflict. We are celebrating world conquest, and those who receive it don’t like it. Consider what Herod would do. Consider what Judas would do, what Pontius Pilate would do. Consider what good, upstanding Jewish citizens would do. Consider what Nero did. Consider what is happening this very day to followers of this God-man today all over the world.

**Christmas is Bad News** – For the devil, Christmas is the truly disastrous news, and so for those who follow in his destructive ways. The manger foreshadowed the victory of Christ on the cross, where the devil and all his principalities and powers were decisively put down (Col 2:15). And so those who prefer a lifestyle of rebellion to God, of lies and deception, of envy and covetousness, of lewdness and immorality, of holding grudges against others, of taking advantage of others for personal gain – these should be troubled by the news of the Baby born at Christmas. He is planning to ruin your ways.

**The Antithesis is Faith** – Christmastime is not primarily about “family time”; it is bad news for those who cling to human relationships in idolatrous ways (Luke 12:49-53, 14:26). Christmas is not a time for healing old family wounds without faith in Jesus Christ as the Conquering King. Christmas is not a time for peace and goodwill among those who refuse to fear God and call upon the Lord Jesus. Christmas is a declaration of war – but that war is also itself Good News.

**Christmas is Good News** – Christmas is the manifestation that God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever should believe in Him should not perish but have everlasting life (John 3:16). That means that this war saves liars and deceivers, and the covetous and immoral, and all those who call upon Jesus and believe upon Him to be the Savior of the world and therefore their Savior. That is why the angels could and did sing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men” (Luke 2:14). And so, for the faithful, Christmas is the celebration of the restoration of man to God and through Christ, men to one another as well. But that is because Christmas is the celebration of the invasion of the kingdom of God here, in time and space.