

Morning Sermon Outline December 25, 2016

Luke 2 Augustus Caesar vs. Jesus Christ

See the comparison drawn here between Caesar Augustus and our Lord Jesus Christ –

I. See it first from the earthly perspective of that night –

1. The passage begins with Caesar's Decree -

And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (Luke 2:1 NKJ)

A. This decree shows us Caesar's power –

B. The name Caesar Augustus used in reference to Octavius is significant:

- "Caesar" connected him to his adoptive father Julius Caesar
- Augustus meant revered or holy one, it was a name typically used in reference to gods – Roman coins had Octavian's picture on them and the inscription "Augustus Our God" on them.

2. The passage continues with Joseph and Mary moving according to that decree –

This census first took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. ³ So all went to be registered, everyone to his own city. ⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife, who was with child. (Luke 2:2-5 NKJ)

A. The census is put in its historical context –

Quirinius was governing Syria -Luke 2:2

B. Everyone had to move, including Joseph and pregnant Mary, to their birth cities –

C. This census was one of many things Augustus did to solidify his empire:

He also –

- * Built roads to reach even the remotest parts of his empire.
- * Started a postal service.

These things helped the Apostle Paul and other early Christians to spread the Gospel

- D. The fact both Joseph and Mary were descendants of David, carries them to Bethlehem which draws us to a prophetic perspective –
3. When Jesus is born His earthly circumstances seem to scream INSIGNIFICANT –

So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:6-7 NKJ)

II. We have to see this comparison from a prophetic perspective –

"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting." (Micah 5:2 NKJ)

1. God had decreed His everlasting ruler would be born in Bethlehem and He was born there –

Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, (Luke 2:4 NKJ)

So it was, that while they were there, (in Bethlehem - :4) the days were completed for her to be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:6-7 NKJ)

2. God had also prophesied the virgin birth –

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14 NKJ)

3. God had prophesied He would bring His King Jesus into the world during the time of certain kings –

"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel 2:44 NKJ)

We find four earthly kingdoms or empires prophesied about by Daniel:

A. The Babylonian Empire ruled by Nebuchadnezzar –

- (1) In Nebuchadnezzar's own dream he is the olden head of the statue – Daniel 2:31-32 - :36-38
- (2) In Daniel's dream Nebuchadnezzar is the lion with eagle's wings – Daniel 7:1-4
- (3) Nebuchadnezzar ruled for 43 years but for 7 years according to Daniel 4, he lost his sanity (his wings were pluck off) and he ate grass like an ox until "... I watched till its wings were plucked off; and it was lifted up from **the earth and made to stand on two feet like a man, and a man's heart was given to it. (Daniel 7:4 NKJ; Daniel 4:33-36)**

B. The Medo-Persian Empire –

- (1) The chest and arms of silver – Daniel 2:32 & :39
- (2) The Bear with three ribs in its mouth – Daniel 7:5-

C. The Greek Empire –

- (1) The belly and thighs of bronze – Daniel 2:32 & 39
- (2) A leopard with four wings – Daniel 7:6

Alexander the Great and his four generals

D. The Roman Empire –

- (1) Legs and feet of iron and clay – Daniel 2:33; 40-44
- (2) The strange beast – Daniel 7:7-8; 11-22; 19-26

This is where the comparison with Christ's Kingdom comes back in view –n**"And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be**

left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Daniel 2:44 NKJ)

E. Christ's Kingdom is not part of the statue at all, but rather in breaks in pieces the kingdoms of this world. Nor is Christ's Kingdom symbolized by any beast.

- (1) In Nebuchadnezzar's dream Christ's Kingdom is the stone that becomes a great mountain – Daniel 2:33; 40-44
- (2) In Daniels's dream He is One like The Son of Man and He is coming with the clouds of Heaven – Daniel 7:9-10; 13-18; 27

Christ's Kingdom is different than these other kingdoms:

1. Christ as the stone that becomes a great mountain is not part of the statue, He does not share nor seek the glory of ungodly men – 1 Peter 2:4-8
2. He is the Son of Man in contrast to beasts, though note Nebuchadnezzar when humbled and when he acknowledged God was said to be given the heart of a man. See also Zechariah 1
3. Christ's Kingdom is eternal -
4. Christ's Kingdom receives Heaven's praise – Luke 2:12-13

III. Now, even from an earthly perspective Christ's Kingdom can be seen as greater than that of Augustus / Or of modern leaders...

1. The world is still trying to destroy Christ and break from His rule – Psalm 2, Revelation 12
2. However, Christ is KING of kings and LORD of lords, HE will certainly be victorious in the end –

"These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful.*" (Revelation 17:14 NKJ)

3. We already see the Gospel spread to the ends of the Earth –**And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation, (Revelation 5:9 NKJ)**

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