

# Gods Perfect Planning - Part 1

by Erlo Stegen

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*God's perfect planning is seen in the fulfillment of prophecy and the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, despite the opposition and immorality of the world.*

**Duration:** 1:09:55

**Scripture:** Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:6-23, Luke 2:15, John 6:35, Romans 12:2

**Topics:** "God's Timing"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker addresses the issue of hypocrisy in religious leaders. He emphasizes that while there are strict laws for others, these leaders often have a double standard when it comes to their own actions. The speaker gives an example of a leader who was against abortion but allowed his own daughter to have one. The speaker also mentions the story of Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem, highlighting the importance of surrendering to God's control and trusting in His sovereignty. The sermon concludes with the reminder that when we are committed to God, things may not always go as we expect, but God is in control and will work things out according to His plan.

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## Transcript

We ask you, Lord Jesus, to be with us. Speak to us through your word. Open the eyes of our mind that we may see marvelous things from your word.

Our word for this evening we find in Luke, chapter 2, from the first verse. Until the seventh verse. In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

He went there to register with Mary who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born. And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

She wrapped him in clothes and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. We'll end reading there. It says, in those days, the time had come for the Messiah to come into the world.

The time was fulfilled for our Savior to come into this world. And when the time came for him to be born, Caesar Augustus issued a decree. Caesar Augustus was the very first Caesar in the Roman Empire.

His real name was not Augustus, but Caius Octavius. That was his real name, Caius Octavius. He was the son of a woman named Ophelia.

Ophelia was his wife. Philip was her uncle. Philip was her great-uncle.

Ophelia was her great-uncle. Now, he was, or let's put it this way, Julius Caesar was his great-uncle. And there's a reason why he was called Caesar Augustus.

Now, Augustus was a title that he was given, August. He was given that title or name of Augustus. And then with some, that title fell away and he was just called Caesar.

Caesar was a title given to a ruler that ruled over a whole empire of nations. And this Augustus was a brilliant man. Very powerful and strong.

He was a strong person and also a strong warrior. And he had his rank, Imperator, so he was actually a military ruler. And as he was going to be confirmed as ruler, the Senate wanted to give him a title.

He said, I don't want you to call me a dictator or to be known as a dictator. Is it for a dictator is known for the fact of not ruling for very long but just for a very short period of time? He said a dictator is only in office for a short time, temporary. I also too would not like to be called a king, he said.

He said because that title is too degraded, too low down, because it means that person is just the ruler of one nation. And then he was given the title Augustus or August. And that was the title given to him which meant that he was the most powerful ruler, the most high, so to say.

The last one, the highest, 40. He wasn't only the political leader but also the spiritual leader. And in other words, he almost took the place of God.

Not almost, he claimed deity. And that name, Augustus, has a meaning. And had the meaning that he was God because the Caesars ruled as if they were God.

And he also ruled over the Pope. Julius Caesar was born about 100 years before our Lord. And when Caesar Augustus ruled, he didn't only rule over the Roman Republic but he extended the borders to the whole known world of that time, the whole of civilization, right up to England and far afield.

He ruled the whole known world. He wasn't an elected ruler but he was the one who had all the power and who ruled as God. He was the first Caesar, a great and powerful man.

And he came into power as a military ruler. And this was the Caesar Augustus who then proclaimed that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. It's also said that this was the first census that took place.

And even the Jews had to be counted for they were under the Roman heel and under the heel of Caesar Augustus. And the Bible also tells us at what time this was. At what period? It was while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

Because they were governors over the different parts or provinces of the empire. This mighty and powerful man who didn't want to be called king, it was too low down for him who said that I am Augustus, the revered one. In other words, he said, I am God.

He said, a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. Now we don't know what was his motive for proclaiming or issuing this decree that a census should be taken. Perhaps it was because of him wanting to know how many people there were in his empire that he could say that he rules over so many people.

Perhaps it might be that he wanted to know how many people there were that people would understand how great he was because of his pride. That all the nations would fear him. That it would be known how many people he ruled.

It's possible that he also wanted to know that amongst all those that the census would be taken of, that he would know how many warriors there were. How many soldiers? Now not that the Jews entered the army, they didn't, but they had to pay tax. Because even though people might be against those and oppose those, people who have the money and they don't like those people, but they like the money that they've got.

Maybe. They hated capitalism, but they liked the capital. They liked the money.

Even poor people like money. And so Caesar loved the money of the Jews, even though they didn't enter his army, but he wanted to have their tax, their money. Maybe it was a combination of all those various motives.

So he issued a decree, and that was a powerful law, seen as God's law that was proclaimed, and anybody who would oppose that did it at the risk of his own life. Even though he didn't want to be called a dictator, that is what he in actual fact was, because woe to that person who didn't bow to his law and didn't obey his command. And so he said that since they had to be taken, every person had to go to their hometown, to their town of origin, where they were born.

And Joseph was from the royal line of King David. And Mary as well. Mary too was also descendant of David.

She was also in the royal line. Both of them were descendants of King David, even though it branched in different directions, but eventually they came together again as both being descendants of King David. David had two places, or two towns.

The city of Jerusalem was known as the city of David. And Bethlehem was also known as the town of David, because that is where David was born. When they had to be counted and go for the census, they didn't go to Jerusalem, that mighty city of glory, the symbol of the rulership, of Israel.

No, they went to Bethlehem. Jerusalem was that glorious city, that city which was the capital, the emblem of the rulership. The royal city, the city of kings.

Bethlehem was a despised little town, a town of shepherds. When Jesus came into this world, He didn't come to Jerusalem, that city of kings. He came to Bethlehem, a town of shepherds, for He is the good shepherd.

When the Magi from the east came and they followed that star, they didn't go to Bethlehem, they went to Jerusalem, that royal city, that city of kings. And asked, where is he who was born king to the Jews? And the whole of Jerusalem, together with Herod, were greatly disturbed. They said, where is this king? And I said, now who told you about this king? They said, we saw his star in the east from far away and we've come a long distance to him.

And so Herod asked his fortune tellers, he said, tell me, where is this king going to be born? And then he asked his scribes and the Pharisees, those who knew the scriptures, and they then said, he will be born in Bethlehem. And so he was born in Bethlehem. And when he came to Bethlehem, he said to his scribes, He said to his scribes, tell me, where is this king going to be born? And they said, because it is written in Micah 5 verse 2, But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.

And so Herod sent them to Bethlehem. And he said, go and make a careful search for the child, and as soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him. He said, I too want to bow down to this child and worship him.

Little did they realize how hypocritical he was. He didn't want to go and worship the child, he wanted to kill him. He said, I want to go and worship the child, and as soon as I find him, I will kill him.

And so Herod said, if a person doesn't have any discernment, No matter how great a Christian you might be, but you'll make mistakes, serious mistakes, you'll stumble. Because, yeah they were, and they heard that King Herod also wants to go and worship the child. And one could say, oh my, what a mighty revival, that even Herod wants to give his life to the Lord.

Little did they realize what a snake he was. He only wanted to kill the child and destroy him. And until today, it's the same.

So you children of God, cry to God for discernment and wisdom. Lest you too fall into a hole, and you are deceived, and go astray with those who are deceived. There are many who are easily deceived in this world.

Where even parents are deceived by their own children. In fact there aren't people that are deceived as much as parents being deceived by their children. But you children of God, cry to God for discernment and wisdom.

Lest you fall into a hole, and you are deceived, and go astray with those who are deceived. There are many who are easily deceived in this world. Where even parents are deceived by their own children.

But let's leave Herod to the side for the time being. They remained where they were. They weren't like the shepherds who said, let us go and see this Christ child and go and worship Him.

Let's consider the chief priests, the teachers of the law. Let's consider the chief priests, the teachers of the law. They are like road signs who point the way, but don't go to that place.

They don't go to that place. Do you know such Christians? They know the truth. They can tell you the truth.

But it doesn't do anything to them. It doesn't change their lives. They don't take any step to be obedient to it.

They could quote from Micah 5 verse 2 and say that out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel whose origins are from of old, from ancient times. Just that word alone should have caused them to go there and to bow down to Him. But they stayed where they were.

Let's consider the chief priests, the teachers of the law. They remained where they were. They weren't like the shepherds who said, let us go and see this Christ child and go and worship Him.

Who thinks that He is so great and that He is God, but the true God was coming to this world. You will always get that which is genuine and that which is false. And you need to have discernment lest you go for that which is false thinking it is the genuine thing.

Let's leave Augustus, the great emperor who makes himself out to be God. He thinks himself to be so important and in charge like the man who is head of a home and he says, well I am the ruler of my house. My wife, my children, my grandchildren, they all have to obey me and do as I say.

I remember a sick woman. I remember a sick woman. The man said to this woman, he said, so and so, I am going to kill you.

I am the man of the house. You must do what I tell you. He said, you are not going to the service.

You will stay put. You will stay right here. I am the head of this home.

And so she quickly went and she took a little wooden stick. And she took a stool, low stool and she got an axe and she put the stool down there close to him and she lay with her neck on that stool and said to her, my husband, then you better get to business and you better do it now. Take the axe.

Cut my head off. And he said, my husband, then you better get to business and you better do it now. He said, my husband, then you better get to business and you better do it now.

He said, my husband, then you better get to business and you better do it now. And so this man said, go off you silly woman. You women are so troublesome.

And he let her go. Nothing happened. But today, when the husbands don't allow their wives to be Christians, they say, well what can I do? My husband doesn't want to allow me to be a Christian.

You see how wishy-washy and jellyfish-like Christians have become today. And then you also find that parents, their daughters go off and then they have illegitimate children and then they bring their children home and then they leave them here with granny to look after them so that they can go off and have the next one. They're like incubators.

And then the grandmother says, well, you know, what can we do? Christians, it mustn't be said of us that we throw these little babies away. We don't take care of them. But that just encourages the young people to carry on with their moral lifestyle.

And if you allow that in the church, that's enough. So we Christians are despised. We need to return to God's standard so that the whole world will understand that in that church, in that congregation, you can't fool around.

Now, some people, they are very firm and strict when it happens to other people and other families, but when it happens to their own family, then their knees turn to water. Know that in KwaZulu, there was the custom that virgins were tested and examined. And when the Nkosi would call all the virgins together, all the young girls to be examined and it was found that one wasn't a virgin any longer, then the people would spit to the ground and saying she's dirty, she's defiled.



long time I said that the evening services should usually be approximately half an hour but this evening service is a special service a point looking now the last

point old I'm a gay jungle junga my father is obey port goons of Java take win what are we don't be like the Pharisees just like a road sign that points to Durban Maritzburg great town but you don't go there you've got the right teaching the right theology you can quote scriptures but they here and here and not here when is important day so as you see they got a zeal and I'm Jay I'm learning you know footing a quarter in Gishana my verse a Bible got a good lime learning a Google answers when there's a picture petal hair my pet la hair mark who has a good tea in do yes in qua you'll find him in Bethlehem the word Bethlehem with the name Bethlehem means house of bread how funny look what he has a little a corner no by a now cobalt okay we sink was so pina it was footing for him to be born

there for he himself is the bread of life and he is the bread which came down from heaven what's a little one in a nice cottage car August when was he born in the time of Augustus welcome to a shouting a barley I get Kobe make was melena Nangu Maria who's a cool a wake up so we Scott songs are so funny little booty so again as a rater I am a pet la hair ma who goes sooka a pet la hair and as a rater who go a pet la hair oh my who turns in town on TSA who fun a new bungalow sugar love we at a queen and so Caesar Augustus issued this decree that census had to be taken nobody could go against that law and even Mary who was far advanced had to go to Bethlehem from Nazareth to Bethlehem as the crow flies is as far from here to Durban her time had arrived the baby could be born any moment maybe

Joseph said oh Mary now we've got to walk walk from here to Durban on foot if you walk fast three four days if you go steadily just not in a hurry it can take a week to get there Yamakoshi we haven't said Benzene so I'll ghost what do you find a new booty in me now in him fuck more your booty at a barley woman who knew booty as a little Nazareth in poverty a pet la hair they could have found fault they could have murmured and said oh just look at how cruel this Caesar is that we've got to walk all the way now to as far as from here to Durban on foot and maybe this child will be born on the way we don't know what's going to happen but in the meantime God who is sovereign God who is the ruler over all hell is was just using Augustus to make the decree because the child had to be born in

Bethlehem and not in Ezra's when you are in God's hands and surrendered and committed yourself wholeheartedly things can't go wrong even if you think oh my it's going in heaven is in control and he ordains things exactly as they have to happen things aren't out of control it's exactly as God wants it to be and so things didn't go wrong that child wasn't born on the way the child was born in if you're in God's hand then everything will go according to God's plan times are in God's hands and here God only used Augustus so that his plan could be fulfilled people had never been counted there had never been a census it was the first census but God said this child must be born in Bethlehem and not in Nazareth and that's why God only used Augustus to fulfill his own plan that's why people had to

be counted because things were going wrong Jesus would have been born in Nazareth and not as the scripture says in Bethlehem and even the mistake of the wise men that the children were slaughtered was a fulfillment of the Bible because the Bible says Rachel Rachel is lamenting because of her children that have been slain it's wonderful to commit yourself wholeheartedly to the Lord for you be led on the way everlasting have you surrendered yourself already fully to the Lord saying Lord may your will be done may my will come to an end shall we pray we thank you Lord marvelous is your matter even though people might make out to be God in this world and yet the true God is in heaven and he is in control of all things keep us alert not to be like Augustus keep us alert from being like the

scribes and the Pharisees who had head knowledge of the truth and yet it didn't stir them it didn't change their lives keep us from being like the wise men who followed their own common sense their own wisdom and went to Jerusalem instead of keeping the eyes on the star which would have led them to be able to thank you Lord Jesus that you came down from heaven as the bread which comes from heaven which comes from God may we eat you may we digest you that you'd give us life Lord continue with us in this evening grant us heavenly wisdom and discernment that we won't be Christians who are false Christians who are only led astray who are blind

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