Lesson 2, Luke 2

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. 2(This was the first census that took place whileQuirinius was governor of Syria.) 3And everyone went to their own town to register.

4So 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. 5He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

8And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

13Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14“Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
    and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

15When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

16So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. 17When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, 18and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. 19But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. 20The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

21On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

22When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24997b)]),24and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-24998c)]

25Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. 27Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

29“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
    you may now dismiss[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25003d)] your servant in peace.  
30For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
31    which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:  
32a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
    and the glory of your people Israel.”

33The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against,35so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

36There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37and then was a widow until she was eighty-four.[[e](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25011e)] She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 38Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

39When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. 40And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

The Boy Jesus at the Temple

41Every year Jesus’ parents went to Jerusalem for the Festival of the Passover. 42When he was twelve years old, they went up to the festival, according to the custom. 43After the festival was over, while his parents were returning home, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem, but they were unaware of it.44Thinking he was in their company, they traveled on for a day. Then they began looking for him among their relatives and friends. 45When they did not find him, they went back to Jerusalem to look for him. 46After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47Everyone who heard him was amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.”

49“Why were you searching for me?” he asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?”[[f](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke+2&version=NIV#fen-NIV-25023f)] 50But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

51Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.52And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.

1. Why do you think God’s only begotten son was born in a tiny, village, in a stable, and placed in a manger as his first bed? What does this tell you about God, and His plans?

2. Re-read Luke 1:30-33. Do you think Mary had any idea Jesus’ birth would come about in the way that it did, in Bethlehem, in a stable, given Gabriel’s message to her? What do you learn from this regarding how the Lord might work in your life?

3. Of all the people in Bethlehem and the surrounding countryside, why do you think God sent the angels to announce His son’s birth to lowly shepherds? How does this relate to Mary’s song (The Magnificat) recorded in Luke 1:46-55?

4. Put yourself in the place of one of the lowly shepherds to whom the angel appeared, and write in the first person, as if you were writing in a diary, what you felt and experienced on the night of Jesus’ birth.

5. Do you think Mary fully understood who her child was, and the kind of ministry He’d have?

6. When the shepherds came to see baby Jesus, and told Mary and Joseph how the angels had appeared to them, verse 19 says “Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.” Has God said or done something special in your life that you “treasure in your heart”? Explain.

7. Verse 23 says that “it is written in the Law of the Lord that every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”, so Mary and Joseph took baby Jesus to Jerusalem to be circumcised when he was 8 days old, and to offer a sacrifice. Describe in your own words who they met at the Temple, and what happened.

8. Read verses 41-52 about Jesus’ trip to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast, with his parents, when he was left behind. How aware was Jesus, at age 12, of his life’s calling and mission? Explain.

9. Has your hunger for God ever been misunderstood by your family or friends? How do/did you handle this?

10. Read verses 40 and 52. Do these verses inspire you to pray for your children, grandchildren, or other little ones around you? Explain.

11. Journal this passage SOAP style.