

Luke 2:1-21  
The Birth of Jesus

Introduction (1-3).

A. The decree.

1. Caesar Augustus.

- a. Great nephew and adopted son and heir of Julius Caesar.
- b. Julius Caesar assassinated 44 BC.
- c. After years of warfare, Augustus became the first Roman emperor (27 BC – AD 14).
- d. The start of the *Pax Romana* (200 years of relative stability and peace).
- e. The census was taken for taxation purposes.

2. Publius Sulpicius Quirinius.

- a. Well-known, successful general.
- b. Governed the combined provinces of Cilicia and Syria (4BC -1BC).
- c. Governor of Syria (AD 6-7).

B. The location.

1. Each to return to his hometown.
2. God used historical events to fulfill his prophecy.

II. Joseph and Mary (4-7).

A. Bethlehem (House of Bread).

1. About 90 miles south of Nazareth (4 days on foot).
2. Both were descendants of David through different lines.
3. Fulfilled Micah 5:2.

B. Mary.

1. Engaged to Joseph.
2. Pregnant with the baby Jesus.

C. Jesus born.

1. Laid in a manger.
2. No room in the inn.
3. Just the right time (Gal. 4:4-5).

### III. The Shepherds (8-15).

- A. In the fields with their sheep.
  - 1. Bethlehem about 6 miles from Jerusalem.
  - 2. Sheep were raised there for the Temple sacrifices.
  - 3. Shepherds were among the lowliest class of people.
- B. Angelic appearance.
  - 1. Probably Gabriel.
  - 2. The Glory of the Lord (Shekinah glory).
  - 3. Shepherds were terrified.
- C. Great news that would bring great joy.
  - 1. The Saviour is born.
  - 2. The child is the long-expected Messiah.
  - 3. The sign – wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.
- D. The angelic host.
  - 1. Praising God.
  - 2. Announcing peace (Ro. 5:1; 8:1; Phil. 4: 7 & 9).

### IV. The Shepherds' Faith (16-20).

- A. Hurried to Bethlehem.
  - 1. Didn't go to verify the message.
  - 2. Believed the message and then went.
- B. Found everything as the angel had told them.
- C. Spread the good word.
- D. Returned to the sheep, praising God.
- E. Mary pondered these things (cf. Lk. 2:51).

### V. Naming the child (21).

- A. Eighth day, along with circumcision – as the Law prescribed.
- B. Jesus (the LORD saves).

### VI. What can we learn?

- A. Jesus was a historical figure.
- B. Jesus was God in human flesh (Is. 9:6).
  - 1. Contrary to Gnostic view that he simply appeared to be a man.
  - 2. Contrary to Gnostic view that he was simply a man who became enlightened.
- C. An encounter with Jesus changes people's lives.
- D. The ultimate response is to give glory to God.

