

**A Study of the Gospel of Luke – Part One**  
**Lesson 4**

➤ **Read Luke 2:1–20.**

1. Re-read Luke 2:1–7. How does the way Luke begins this account of the birth of Jesus fit in well with the purpose he laid out for the book in 1:1–4?
2. What crucial detail about Jesus' birth is Luke anxious to drive home in verses 4, 11, and 15?


Why is this detail so important?

1 Sam. 20:6

2 Sam. 7:8, 11b–12, 16

Micah 5:2 (*Note that Micah wrote his prophecy hundreds of years after the reign of King David.*)

Luke 1:32–33

3. Caesar reigns and Quirinius governs. Both undoubtedly see themselves as men of power. A decree goes forth, and the inhabitants of the land move about as they are told. What does the following pair of verses show you about the kind of power God holds?  
Micah 5:2 and Lk. 2:1–6 (You may wish to consider Dan. 2:20–21a.)
4. How does Jesus compare with his famous ancestor David? (Mt. 22:41–45; Acts 2:25–36; \* Lk. 11:31–32)

5. Imagine that you know nothing about Jesus apart from this: “He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end” (1:32–33).
  - a. What would you expect his birth to be like?
  - b. Now look again at 2:6–7. How does Jesus’ actual birth contrast with what you would have imagined?
6. Behind the joyful narrative of Luke 1 and 2 there is much that is difficult: the long years of barrenness that Zechariah and Elizabeth endured; the shame Mary would have faced being pregnant before marriage; the Jews’ humiliating subordination to a foreign power (represented in our passage by the emperor Augustus). Yet we see that God has orchestrated all of these circumstances and is using them to bring about joy and peace and salvation. How does this glimpse into the workings of God encourage you?

► **Read Luke 2:8–20.**

7. To whom does God give the privilege of being the first to hear of Jesus’ birth? (vv. 8–11)

Why do you think this is fitting for the kind of king Jesus is?

Describe the shepherds’ experience.

*The Glory of the Lord*

Luke tells us that “the glory of the Lord” appears along with the angel who announces the birth of Jesus. “With the [angelic] messenger came the bright presence of the Lord’s glory surrounding the shepherds. [The Greek word used here] refers to... the bright Shekinah glory, God’s majestic presence.” Such glory will appear again at key points in Luke–Acts in association with Jesus (Luke 9:30–31; Acts 7:55).”

8. What is the “good news that will cause great joy” (v. 10)? (v. 11)

*The Savior Who Is the  
Messiah, the Lord*

Commentator Darrell Bock points out the importance of the three titles in verse 11 for explaining who Jesus is: “Savior points to his role as deliverer; *Messiah* points to his office in terms of the promised Anointed One of God; and *Lord* indicates his sovereign authority.”<sup>2</sup>

To dig deeper into this “good news of great joy” (v. 10), ponder these verses: John 1:14; Titus 3:4; 1 John 1:1–2.

9. Why is this such good news? (Mt. 1:21; Rom. 3:10–18, 21–24)

10. Peace will come to “those on whom [God’s] favor rests” (v. 14). What is the nature of this peace? (Rom. 5:1–2)




Look at Isaiah 9:6 and Micah 5:2–5a to see how the angels’ words in verse 14 show the beginning of the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.)

11. What is one appropriate response to God’s accomplishment of his plans? (1:46–47, 64; 2:13–14, 20)

What other appropriate response do the shepherds model? (v. 17)

What still other appropriate response does Mary model? (v. 19)

As you go about your week, look for opportunities—or create opportunities—to engage in all of these responses to the great works of God.

\* For further study

<sup>1</sup> Darrell L. Bock. *Luke: Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Vol. 1: 1:1-9:50 (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994), 214.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 225.