

Luke 2 CHRISTMAS 2022 PART 2

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Jesus' Birth in Bethlehem

Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. ²This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city. ⁴Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, ⁵in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. ⁶While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. ⁸In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

¹⁵When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds *began* saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.

¹⁷When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Jesus Presented at the Temple

²¹And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was *then* called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. ²²And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every *firstborn* male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"),

²⁴And to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." ²⁵And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, ²⁸ then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

²⁹ "Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word;

³⁰ For my eyes have seen Your salvation, ³¹ Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³² A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

³³ And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. ³⁴ And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this *Child* is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— ³⁵ and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

³⁶ And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with *her* husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. ³⁸ At that very moment she came up and *began* giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

What questions were provoked within you?

Did anything confuse you?

Did anything move you emotionally?

Did God instruct you to do something?

Did you gain any insight into God's character?

These birds represent: the pigeon, simplicity; the turtledove, chastity.

The *consolation of Israel* refers to the promised Messiah. To console is to alleviate grief or to take away a sense of loss or trouble. The Messiah, the consolation of Israel, was to remove sorrow and comfort the nation. Simeon and generations before him waited for the coming of the One who would console God's people. Isaiah predicted that the Messiah would take on the ministry of consolation: "Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for"

Isaiah 40:1–2

Many in Israel thought that the Messiah, the consolation of Israel, would bring them political and national freedom (John 6:15; Luke 19:11).

But the consolation Jesus brought was better than any political freedom He could have provided: He gave them spiritual freedom and forgiveness of sin.

David described the guilt of his own sin this way: "My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear. My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly. I

am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning. . . . I am feeble and utterly crushed; I groan in anguish of heart”

Psalm 38:4–8

The Son of David came to bear the burden away, to lift up those who were bowed down, to replace the anguish with joy.

All who trust in Him know that He is truly the consolation of Israel—and the consolation of all who believe.

The Jews already hated their pagan conquerors, and censuses were forbidden under Jewish law.

The assessment was greatly resented by the Jews, and open revolt was prevented only by the efforts of the high priest Joazar.

Despite efforts to prevent revolt, the census did trigger the revolt of Judas of Galilee and the formation of the party of the Zealots, according to Josephus

1. Why do people take up a census?
2. Who was this Governor?
3. The requirements of this census was to register at the place of birth.
4. Joseph, who came from Nazareth, the city of David.
5. What does Bethlehem mean and what happened there?
6. Joseph is of the line of David.
7. He was engaged to Mary.
8. She was with child.
9. It was while Mary is in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, that her time came. When your time comes there's no stopping it!
10. She gave birth, it is a natural birth, to her son, Jesus, he is her baby, her firstborn son, even though He was God's son.
11. Mary treasured Jesus as any mother would treat her baby.
12. There being no room at the inn, they stay in a barn where it is dry.
13. While all this is going on, over in the fields yonder, shepherds were also encountering the celebration party of the angels.
14. The angels bring good news of great joy.
15. The good news is for all the people of the world.
16. The angel informs them of God's salvation plan and he instructions them not to be afraid.
17. A saviour who is Christ the Lord, they declare.
18. The shepherds do what Mary does, seek reassurance by going to the stable as instructed by the angels, to see Jesus lying in a manger.
19. When God is glorified peace will come.
20. When the shepherds see the son they bring reassurance to Mary and Joseph by revealing all that was said to them.
21. Mary treasures all these things in her heart having heard the shepherd's words.
22. She 'ponders', it means contemplate the significance.

23. The shepherd's make their way back to the field, praising God for the privilege of the experience.
24. Before the eighth day they name Him Jesus, not Joseph, in obedience to the angel.
25. At the right time Jesus is presented to the temple as required by the law.
26. Jesus being the first born who opened the womb, a womb that had been His home for nine months.
27. Mary and Joseph make their offering, the offering they made is the poorest couples offering – two pigeons or two turtle doves.
28. We are introduced to Simeon, a man of God, waiting for the Christ to come.
29. What is a consolation of Israel?
30. The Holy Spirit came upon people before the Holy Spirit came to live in people.
31. Simeon had a conviction he would not see death until he set his eyes on the Christ.
32. Simeon, a righteous man, came into the temple, in the spirit, being upon him.
33. He was to perform his duties according to the law.
34. He takes hold of Jesus and declares a blessing and revelation.
35. Simeon knows Jesus is God's provision for salvation, he says 'my eyes have seen the Lord, the glory of Israel'.
36. Mary and Joseph are amazed at all the things that are said of Jesus.
37. He prophesies over Jesus to Mary, he declares 'she will have her soul pierced by pain'.
38. Anna, the prophetess, gets the opportunity to bless Jesus also, she addresses it to those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.