



Scripture for the week of December 20: Luke 2:1-7

“1 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 while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register. 4 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. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and 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.”

Sunday, December 20:

Action: Read above Scripture slowly (even if it is very familiar to you).

Questions to Ponder: What stood out for you as you read this Scripture? What do you hope to be reminded of as you focus on this Scripture this week? Will you spend time this week looking carefully at the Christmas story and what it might mean for your life? Did you know that only Luke gave this detailed version of the birth of Jesus?

Prayer: Jesus, I know that in growing up I have had all sorts of ideas of what Your birth looked like. Help me as I walk through this week to really get a glimpse of the true meaning of Your birth. Show me how I should look at it in a new light and the effect it should have on my own life. Reveal Yourself to me and also reveal Your plan for me this week.

Monday, December 21:

Action: Read Luke 2:1-2: “1 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 while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)”

Questions to Ponder: Did you know that such a census was taken every 14 years? Did you also know that the exact timing of this birth was predicted back in the Old Testament? Do you find it amazing that this birth was foretold ahead of time even down to who would be the rulers? Does this give you a more amazing view of God?

Prayer: Lord God You are amazing the way You work all things out for good and for Your purpose. Help me to see that this week especially when I am feeling frustrated. I want to be able to trust You in all of life’s situations, knowing that Your plan for me is good and perfect.

Tuesday, December 22:

Action: Read Luke 2:3: “And everyone went to their own town to register.”

Questions to Ponder: Can you imagine what this must have looked like during this time period? All the people travelling to get to where they have to go and trusting that they will find a place to stay? Did you know that it is 80 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem? Can you imagine travelling with a pregnant person or being pregnant for 80 miles riding an animal?

Prayer: Dear Lord, sometimes I have looked at this story as only about the actual birth and not what transpired before the birth. Open my eyes to the stories about what happened before the actual birth so that I can realize all that Mary and Joseph went through when they said “Yes” to You and how Your hand assisted in this story.

Wednesday, December 23:

Action: Read Luke 2:4: “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.”

Questions to Ponder: Did you remember that it was prophesied that Jesus would be born from the line of David? Did you know you can find this in Jeremiah 23:5 (and other places) where it says “Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgement and justice in the earth.”? Does this help you to see that God played more in this than you might have thought?

Prayer: Father God, again we see that there was a lot of information prophesied about Jesus' birth. Thank You that Your purposes and plans are always in place. Help me to trust this and that this is true for my life as well. Encourage me as I see Your purposes and plans continuously working.

Thursday, December 24:

Action: Read Luke 2:5: "He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child."

Questions to Ponder: Do you see how serious they took the idea of being married during this time period? Do you see that at this time they were not married yet? Don't you think it again changes how you look at Joseph? Do you think this story helps you to really look at all that was involved in the Christmas story?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I am inspired by the devotion and faithfulness of your servants Mary and Joseph. When they said yes to You it was not going to be easy as we have seen this week. But yet they still moved forward. Help me to be that devoted to You and to keep going when things get more difficult when I say "yes" to You.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Friday, December 25:

Action: Read Luke 2:6-7: "6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and 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."

Questions to Ponder: Isn't God good? Do you see that just the right Scripture was in place for Christmas Day? (I did not plan it that way, it just fell that way when I was doing each day of this week) Because of this, how can you deny that God has a purpose for us? Do you see that His birth long ago still has an impact on our lives today?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for the reminder that Your ways may not be my ways but Your ways and thoughts are higher than mine. Remind me to count on You and Your ways and thoughts and begin now to let this be a habit that I can incorporate into my life.

Saturday, December 26 :

Action: Read Luke 2:1-7 again: "1 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 while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 And everyone went to their own town to register. 4 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. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. 6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and 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."

Questions to Ponder: What do you think you will remember from the Christmas story besides the manger and the birth of Jesus? Do you think it matters to be reminded of the whole story and not just what we can remember from years past? Has this helped you to be reminded how amazing God is?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, thank You for this walk of the story of Your birth getting a fuller picture of all that occurred. As we know, the story is not over yet. We look forward to hearing about the visitors to Your birth and how they responded. Help all of these stories help me to be more reactive on what this story means and how it should impact my life.