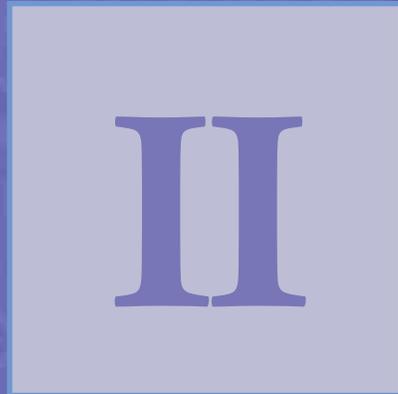
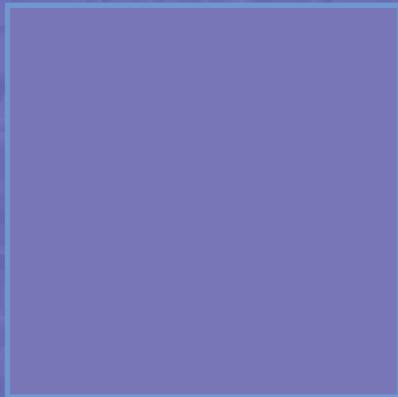


C H A P T E R



1. Please read Luke 2, at least twice. Ask God to open your eyes, ears and heart to all the wonderful treasure to be found.
2. Who is the ruler mentioned in verse 1?
3. Rome controlled the world, at this time, and ruled with an iron fist. After many years of wars on land and sea, the area surrounding the Mediterranean Sea had political unity. Under the rule of Caesar Augusta, the Roman Empire became the greatest power of the known world. We are told Caesar issued a decree, which ordered a census to be taken. Why do you believe Rome would care how many Jewish people were living in the land of Israel?

What are some reasons for a census?

4. For many years, Rome prided itself on being a republic – a nation governed by laws. The ruler Octavius would change all that. In 27 BC, Octavius arranged for the Roman Senate to give him the title “Augustus,” which means ‘exalted’ and ‘sacred.’ At this time, Rome was an empire, governed by an emperor. Caesar Augustus became the first Emperor of Rome. With this ruler we see an example of the way power corrupts and people suffer. As a person’s power increases, their moral sense diminishes. It has been said, “Power corrupts; absolute power corrupts absolutely.” Why do you believe this happens?

5. This decree for a census must have been a very serious thing. Joseph traveled with his espoused wife, who was great with child. The Romans may have thought they were in control, but in reality, this brought about the fulfilment of the prophesy spoken by Micah. Fill in the missing words.

Michah 5:2

“But you, \_\_\_\_\_ Ephrathah, though you are \_\_\_\_\_ among the clans of \_\_\_\_\_, out of you will come for me one who will be \_\_\_\_\_ over Israel, whose \_\_\_\_\_ are from of old, from ancient times.”

6. Look back to Luke 1, what had the angel said about Mary in Luke 1:28?
7. If one is merely looking at Mary’s circumstances it might not appear that she is “highly favored” or that the Lord was with her. Therefore, it is imperative that we get to know the unchanging character of our good God. How much of God’s eternal plan do you believe we see at any given moment? If we know our God, what can we know about our situation? Read Romans 8:28.

Romans 8:28 ***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.”***

8. Where were Joseph and Mary living?
9. According to verse 4, where did this young couple have to go to register for the census? Why did they go there?

## Day Two

10. Look at the map and mark the journey of Joseph and Mary, mentioned in Luke 2:3-5.

I have chosen a topographical map, so we can see a bit of the difficulty they would have faced.

What is the major difficulty you see by looking at this map?



11. Mary was about to deliver her first child and now she is faced with a journey of approximately 70 miles. She must remain focused on the sovereignty and love of God. How might maintaining this mindset enable Mary to do what she was called to do?

How important is it for us to have the right mindset when things become difficult and do not go as planned?

Finish this sentence:

If we trust that God is sovereign, and that he loves us with an everlasting love...

12. Are you practicing keeping your mind fixed on things above?

Or are cares and difficulties squeezing the joy out of your days?

What do you do to maintain the right focus and live pleasing to our God?

13. After a long and tedious journey what was the next difficulty for this precious young couple when they arrived in Bethlehem?

Can you imagine how badly Joseph felt as he came out of each inn and had to tell Mary the bad news?

What accommodations did he finally secure for them?

14. Have you ever been on a trip and driven too late into the night?

How did you feel when you came to a hotel only to hear, "Sorry, no vacancies?"

What did you do?

15. In verses 8-20, who does Luke tell us became the next important characters in the story of Jesus birth?

16. What were these men doing?

17. Who appeared to them?

18. How did these men respond to the messenger?
19. Why do you suppose men and women tend to respond like this when an angel appears?
20. In verse 10, how did the angel describe the news he was bringing them?
21. Specifically, what news did he bring them?
22. Look up and define these words. Then write Luke 2:11, in your own words.
  - a. Savior, Greek word Soter
  - b. Messiah, Greek word Christos
  - c. Lord, Greek word Kurios
23. Do you think there may have been other babies born in Bethlehem that night?

## Day Three

What was the sign they had found the Messiah?

24. Verse 13 mentions the appearance of a “great heavenly host”, these were angels as well. The Greek word for host is *stratia*, meaning ‘army,’ such as an army encamped. One commentary said, “...it was thousands and thousands.”  
What were these angels doing?
25. The shepherds wasted no time going to find this baby lying in a manger. Did they find him?

What did they do with the information they had been given?

26. Are you moved to share the good news you have?

When you experience a treasure from God’s word, are you ready to talk about it with others around you?

27. We do not want to miss Mary’s response to all that was happening.  
What did the scripture tell us she did?

28. What does it mean to ‘...treasure and ponder?’

Are there things you have experienced, causing you to ‘...treasure and ponder?’

Some people keep a journal so they can look back over the entries and see God working in their life.

29. What was the response of the shepherds to all they had seen and heard?

What did this experience cause them to do?

## Day Four

30. Have you ever been so moved by an experience with Jesus, it caused you to respond like the shepherds?
31. Verse 21 tells us it was the eighth day after Jesus' birth. Where did Mary and Joseph take him?
32. This was a very important ceremony. Read Genesis 17:9-14 (key verse is 11) and Acts 7:8. Why was this such an important ceremony for the Israelites?
33. In verses 25-32, we are introduced to a man. What is his name and what did you learn about him?
34. Where was Simeon when he met Jesus?

Did you notice the scripture said he had been "waiting for the Consolation of Israel." This was a messianic title. The word consolation is the Greek word Paraklesis- one who is called or summoned, (esp. for help) admonition, encouragement, comfort, solace; that which affords comfort or refreshment thus of the Messianic salvation.

35. Simeon praised God, for he had gotten to see the One who had been promised. Why do you suppose someone like Simeon got to see and recognize the Messiah, while so many others missed his birth?
36. Have you noticed that we often find things we are looking for, and we miss some very important things when we are distracted? What has your attention today? Would you say you have your mind set on things above?
37. Notice who is included in Simeon's words of blessing...all nations. God's purpose for the people of Israel was to be a light to all other nations, pointing them to God. God is not only the God of the Jews, but the sovereign God of the universe. What do you believe Simeon meant, when he said, "...a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel"?
38. In Luke 2:34-35, what difficult prophetic news did Simeon share with Mary, on that day?
39. Luke 2:34 refers to Jesus as a sign.

Jesus came as a sign of God's everlasting and unending love for his creation. Sadly, because of his meek and humble ways and their own prideful hearts, many would not recognize his deity. What comes to your mind and heart when you think of Jesus?

Have you accepted his gift of salvation?

Have you placed your trust in Him?

I understand if that is not something you have done. However, I encourage you to pause long enough to seriously consider why not. Be honest with yourself. You have everything to gain, and nothing to lose, except the guilt and shame of sin. If you hear a voice trying to persuade you to ignore this invitation, let me tell you that is not the voice of a friend. That is the voice of your enemy, Satan, who wants you to miss out on a loving relationship with God.

40. Next, we read about a woman who was in the temple, the day Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to be circumcised. What was her name?
41. The scripture says she was a prophetess. She knew the Old Testament and willingly shared its truths with others. What other facts did you learn concerning Anna?
42. Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus left Jerusalem and went home, to Nazareth. Luke 2:40 *tell us that Jesus “...grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom.”* Jesus had a normal childhood and grew up just as all children. He grew physically each year, as boys do. He grew in his mind, will and emotions. God’s grace was increasingly upon him.  
This should be the desire of our heart as a parent to see our children, not only grow physically but, grow stronger every year in their relationship with God, the Father.  
If you have young children at home or grandchildren with you from time to time, what are you doing to help them grow in their walk of faith?
43. What holiday is mentioned in Luke 2:41-42?
44. Verses 42-53 tells us:  
When Jesus was 12 years old, he went with his parents and many other family members to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem, as was their annual custom. When the celebration was over, and they were traveling home, Mary and Joseph began to worry, since they had not seen Jesus all day. After looking among their family members and friends traveling with them and not finding him, they returned to Jerusalem.  
How long had he been missing when they located him?
- Where did they find him?
- What was he doing?
- What did his questions show?
45. How might you have felt as a parent of a missing child?
- What was Jesus’ answer to his parents’ concern?
46. According to verse 52, “Jesus grew in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ with God and man.” Let’s define these three words to gain a greater understanding.
47. Think back on this last year of your own life, would you say you are growing in these same ways? Give an example of this growth.
48. What have you learned about our God and His character from this chapter?
49. What comfort and encouragement have you received from your study of Luke 1-2?
50. In what way are you better equipped to stand the frustrations, trials, and temptations that come your way?

51. Max Lucado said, *“There’s a difference between expecting God to be faithful and anticipating the specific ways he will demonstrate his faithfulness. The first attitude hopes in God’s constancy and wisdom: the second may assume that we know what’s best. If we get the two confused, we are liable to be disappointed with the results.”*

After studying Zechariah, Elizabeth, Mary, Simeon and Anna, do you see God’s faithfulness in a different light? Be specific so you can share your answer with your small group.

