

## **Birth of Jesus**

**Text:**

**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 his 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 lineage 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 room for them in the inn.**

**Commentary:**

**Luke 2:1, In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.**

I. When the time for the birth of Jesus approached, an order was given by Caesar Augustus (Gaius Octavius) that the entire Roman World should take a census. This was a means of achieving a more efficient tax collection system.

A. Roman censuses were taken every 14 years.

B. An accurate record is available of all Roman Censuses from 20 A.D. to 270 A.D.

**Luke 2:2, (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)**

- I. Quirinius was governor, leader of Syria twice, 10-7 B.C. and in 6 A.D.
- II. The first census had been ordered in 8 B.C. but implemented in Palestine in 6 B.C.
- III. The second census was in 6 A.D., 14 years following the first census which was ordered in 8 B.C.

**Luke 2:3, And everyone went to his own town to register.**

- I. Each citizen, family head obeyed the order of Rome... or else!
- II. The edict required that each citizen be enrolled in the census in his own district. Methods of enrollment varied from country to country.
- III. Joseph and Mary, being great with child, made the trip to Bethlehem as ordered.

**Luke 2:4, 5, 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 lineage of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.**

- I. This verse explains why Joseph and Mary, residents of Nazareth, made the difficult trip to Bethlehem for the census.
  - A. Joseph was a descendant of David whose city was Bethlehem.
  - B. Micah 5:2, “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one

who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.”

C. Adam Clarke, “It was not necessary for Mary to have gone to Bethlehem,” a trip of approximately 70 miles.

D. Mary made the trip because: (1) of her love for Joseph, (2) she wanted Joseph present at the time of delivery, (3) of the leading of the Holy Spirit, (4) Joseph and Mary may have planned to move to Bethlehem, at least they remained in Bethlehem following the birth of Jesus, (5) work for Joseph may have been available there as Bethlehem was the headquarters of the guild which included carpenters.

**Luke 2:6, 7, While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.**

I. Swaddling clothes consisted of a square cloth with a long, bandage-like strip coming diagonally off one corner. The child was first wrapped in the square of cloth and then the long strip was wound round and round about the baby. William Barclay.

II. The manger denotes the entire stall or crib. Proverbs 14:4, Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest.

III. The limited capacity of ancient inns (a Roman concept) along with the influx of people for the census left no place for Joseph and Mary to stay except in the barn.

IV. No room for the Son of God then and, in many people’s hearts and lives, none now!

V. We don't know with any degree of accuracy when during the year Jesus was born.

A. Adam Clark wrote, "Fabricus gives a catalogue of no less than 136 opinions concerning the year of his birth; and, as to his birthday, it has been placed by Christian sects and learned men in every month of the year;... but the Latin church, supreme in power and infallible in judgment, placed it on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December, the very day on which the ancient Romans celebrated the feast of their goddess Bruma!"

VI. Jesus was the firstborn child in this family with all the rights attached to that position, status.

A. Exodus 13:2, "Consecrate to me every firstborn male. The first offspring of every womb among the Israelites belongs to me, whether man or animal."

B. Deuteronomy 21:15-17, If a man has two wives, one beloved and another hated, and they have borne him children, both the beloved and the hated; and if the firstborn son be hers that was hated, Then it shall be when he maketh his sons to inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved firstborn before the son of the hated, which is indeed the firstborn; But he shall acknowledge the son of the hated for the firstborn, by giving him a double portion of all that he hath: for he is the beginning of his strength; the right of the firstborn is his.

**Matthew 1:25, And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.**

I. A couple customarily waited until after marriage was finalized to occupy a common residence.

II. Under the circumstances Joseph took Mary to his residence, but did not have sexual relations with her until after Jesus was born.

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### Questions

1. In those days \_\_\_\_\_ issued a \_\_\_\_\_ that a \_\_\_\_\_ should be taken of the entire \_\_\_\_\_.

2. This was the first \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Everyone went to his ancestral \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_. Roman censuses were taken every \_\_\_\_\_ years and were a means for achieving a more efficient \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Joseph went to \_\_\_\_\_ the town of \_\_\_\_\_ because he was of the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_. From Nazareth to \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_ miles.

5. While there Mary gave birth to her \_\_\_\_\_, a \_\_\_\_\_ who was named \_\_\_\_\_.

6. Jesus was born on \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ B.C.

7. Why did Mary go with Joseph on this registration trip? \_\_\_\_\_

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Finished exam can be mailed or dropped off at:

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