



**Mustard Seed Children's Summary for December 23, 2007
Released on Wednesday, December 19, 2007**

"Called to Rejoice" (Christmas)

MEMORY VERSE:

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 1:76)

SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Luke 2:1-14

- 1** And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.
- 2** (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)
- 3** And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.
- 4** And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)
- 5** To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.
- 6** And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.
- 7** And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.
- 8** And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.
- 9** And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
- 10** And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
- 11** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
- 12** And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.
- 13** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
- 14** Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

THE OBJECT IN VIEW:

Teach that the birth of Jesus was announced as good news for all people and also why it was good news.

TRUTHS TO STRESS:

1. God made different things happen to prepare for and then spread the good news.
2. Jesus' coming was good news because He would die to take away the sin of the world.
3. God's plan today is for His people to tell the good news.

PLANNING LESSON AIDS:

For Helping to Remember, each student will need crayons or colored pencils, a long envelope, a sheet of white paper, and star stickers. Make a copy of the word search for each student.

LESSON BACKGROUND:

This week's lesson deals with the birth of our Lord Jesus. Luke presents the historical setting for the birth of Jesus. He was born during the time that Caesar Augustus was the Roman emperor and when Cyrenius (or Quirinius) was governor of Syria.

The good news of the Messiah's coming was foretold in the Old Testament in verses such as Micah 5:2, where the prophet Micah prophesied the place of the Savior's birth. His birthplace was to be Bethlehem.

In Luke chapter 2, we are told that Caesar Augustus published a decree that required that "all the world should be taxed." It is interesting to note how God made use of the Roman emperor's desire to have a record of the tax-paying population to fulfill the prophecy of Micah. The year that the census was due to be taken "happened" to be the year that Mary's baby would be born. It "happened" that citizens were required to register in their family's hometown. Joseph "happened" to be a descendant of King David, whose hometown "happened" to be Bethlehem. Mary, who "happened" to be close to giving birth, accompanied Joseph to Bethlehem.

But we know that nothing just "happens." God is in control of everything. So just as Micah prophesied, the Savior of the world would be born in the city of David, Bethlehem.

TEACHER'S NOTES / TELLING THE LESSON:

Consider the following as you prepare your lesson for your students:

1. How did the decree from Caesar impact the story of the coming Messiah?

In those days the king counted his people every once in a while so that he could get tax money from all of them. Caesar issued a decree that required everyone to take part in a census. To be counted, the head of each family was required to travel back to whatever town his family used to live in (where the family records were kept). Joseph's family used to live in Bethlehem, so he and Mary had to travel there.

Centuries before Caesar issued his decree, God had said (through his prophet Micah) that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem. This decree was God's way of making it happen. The decree ensured that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

2. What happened in Bethlehem while Joseph and Mary were taking part in the census?

Lots of other people were also traveling. By the time Joseph and Mary got to Bethlehem, there was no place for them to stay (there was no room in the inn). Joseph and Mary stayed in a stable with the animals. While in Bethlehem, it came time for Mary to have her baby. So the Baby Jesus was born in the stable and wrapped in "swaddling clothes." Swaddling clothes were strips of cloth wrapped around an infant to ensure that the limbs would grow straight. Not to swaddle a child would be a form of neglect (Ezekiel 16:2-4). This wrapping would serve as a sign and aid the shepherds in identifying Jesus. He was then placed in a

manger – a feeding trough for livestock. This manger, probably filled with hay, served as the first cradle for the Saviour of the world.

3. How did God announce the birth of the Savior?

The good news of the Savior's birth would be announced first to a group of shepherds who were taking care of their sheep near Bethlehem. As the shepherds watched over their flocks during the night of our Saviour birth, a bright light and an angel surprised and frightened them.

The angel told them not to be afraid and that he had good news for them. The shepherds learned that in Bethlehem a special baby had just been born. He was the Savior, the One who would save people from their sins.

4. What made the news about Jesus' birth so good?

The news was good because the baby was the Messiah, the one promised to come to save the people from their sins. He was Christ the Lord and was specially sent by God to take care of the problem of people's sin once and for all. He would grow up to personally pay humanity's sin debt.

The news was also good because it was for all people. Jesus had come to make eternal life available to every man and woman, boy and girl. Jesus was sent from heaven to do this for us.

TELLING HOW TO LIVE:

Each of us should understand that the coming of Jesus is a reason for great joy. We need to be thankful that Jesus was born into the world to save us from all our wrongdoings. He was sent from heaven for each of us. Now if we just believe that Jesus came to die for our sins, God forgives us and makes us His children.

Just as the angel announced the good news of Jesus birth, it is God's plan that His people (each of us) keep telling and spreading this good news!

The Christmas narrative remarkably illustrates our Father's ability to orchestrate the ordinary events of life so that His plans are carried out. Man is allowed to make choices as he pleases, but at the same time God so oversees those choices that in the end He accomplishes His own goodwill. That too should fill every believer with joy.

HELPING TO REMEMBER:

The following is a creative way for children to help spread the good news of the birth of the Savior: Direct the children to print the golden text at the top of their paper and then draw a manger scene below it; fold this message and place inside the envelope. Have them print "GOOD NEWS" and "HAPPY NEWS" in large letters on the envelope and decorate the envelope with stars. Suggest that they give the envelope to someone who needs to hear the good news.

A word search for this week's lesson is included at the end of this summary with key words from the lesson.

EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:

"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11)

That is what God's angel said to the shepherds out on the hills the night Jesus was born. "The city of David" was just another name for Bethlehem. It was called that because King David's family had lived there long ago. The angel called Jesus "Saviour" because He was going to save people from their sins. And he called Jesus "Christ the Lord" because God wanted us all to know this was a special baby. "Christ" means someone specially chosen or anointed to do something. Jesus was the "Anointed One" - chosen to come and die for the sins of the world.

ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:

Next week's lesson is "Called to Witness" from Luke 2:22-35 and focuses on the presentation of the infant Jesus in the temple.

Lesson Summarized By:

Renee Little

Jesus Is All Ministries

www.jesusisall.com

WORD SEARCH

Called to Rejoice (The Birth of the Saviour)

Luke 2:1-14

Find each of the following words.

TIDINGS

GOOD

MARY

PEACE

JOSEPH

SAVIOUR

DECREE

TAXED

GLORY

CHRIST

MANGER

BETHLEHEM

SWADDLING

SHEPHERDS

GOODWILL

REJOICE

S L I M Y A T S Y R N S H M O J H A Y G L R G
H Y E C H R I S T D E O E P S I O H N I E L S
H D E O D E L H P L O I S E B A S I J S E I I
H I O M I S C R D E D E X A T G L W H O E L I
E L O I O H D W R C A E I E H D P E A R R S C
D O I L R P H P E S O J H E D H P C E O C E T
B N E C E R O A O E D E S A T H I J C I E M R
O O M A N G E R A M D M W C E G O S I L D E H
D H R T H D G G N C O S E R N I G A R R R H D
L A S R M E H G L T P B D A C N R V C E E E I
E N H G O O D W I L L S E E I R A I E Y O L V
G I T E U O E P E A C E V D G M H O S R I H G
T O N O D N H S E R H H I G E N Y U W A O T R
G R O O R Y R O L G N T H R E G I R C M H E L
T E D D R G O A E W C L O D E H A S E R Y B E
A E E B O D L G E D S B C M O E R R J A J H I

Solution for Word Search (Called to Rejoice – Luke 2:1-14)

C H R I S T
D E X A T L H E
D E R R
H P E S O J D P E C
A H J E M
M A N G E R W E O S D E
S R I G A H
D C N V E
G O O D W I L L S E I I Y L
G P E A C E D O R H
O I U A T
O Y R O L G T R M E
D B