

## **The Birth of Jesus**

Luke 2:1-20

by Don Falkos

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Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, ordered that a census be taken throughout the entire Roman Empire. Everyone was required to go to his ancestral home to register. So even though Joseph was centuries removed from King David, he had to go to David's hometown of Bethlehem to be counted in the Roman census. From Nazareth in Galilee, Joseph and his future wife Mary, now in the later stages of her pregnancy, traveled south into Judea to Bethlehem.

Because of the Roman census, large numbers of people were traveling at this time. So when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem, any of the rooms that might normally have been available to them were already taken. And even though it wasn't particularly convenient, Mary's time came, and she gave birth to a son. She wrapped him up and placed him in a manger.

That night, in the fields near Bethlehem, some shepherds were guarding their sheep. Suddenly, an angel appeared, and the glory of God was like a bright light shining all around them. The shepherds were terrified.

But the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, and for everyone. This very day in King David's hometown of Bethlehem a Savior has been born for you. He is the Anointed One, the Messiah, Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him wrapped up and lying in a manger."

The shepherds left their flocks in the fields and, running to Bethlehem, they found Joseph and Mary and the baby. Seeing was believing. Everything was exactly as the angel had told them it would be. The shepherds went back to their sheep singing praises to God.