

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 04

Chapter 2 of Luke's gospel describes many of the circumstances and events surrounding the birth of Jesus. Luke writes: "And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.' Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.'"

With these words, Luke paradoxically describes the majesty and humility of God. The majesty of God is conveyed in the angelic appearance, the Lord's glory, and the company of the heavenly host praising God. On the other hand, Luke describes the humility of God in that the Savior was born a baby in swaddling cloths in a manger in Bethlehem. Later, Jesus affirms His humility, saying, "Come to me all you who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

The apostle Paul, writing to the Philippians, reinforces this idea, "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled

B. Israel was to have only one high priest at a time (Hebrews 5:1-6). Why then does Luke refer to the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas (3:2)? (Hint: Knowledge of Jewish/Roman history or a Bible footnote will help.)

C. What is the common denominator in the second half of verse 2 and the following passages? Jeremiah 2:1, 7:1; Ezekiel 3:16; Hosea 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 3:1; Micah 1:1; Zephaniah 1:1; Haggai 1:1 and Zechariah 1:1

D. From verses 3-6 and Matthew 3:1-6:

(1) Describe John's appearance, eating habits and the location where he began his ministry.

(2) What was John's message?

(3) How was John the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy?

3. Read Luke 3:7-18 and Matthew 3:7-12.

A. What did John call the crowds coming out to be baptized by him?
Can you think of a similar reference elsewhere in the Bible?
Please describe.

B. From verses 7 and 8, what warnings did John give the people?
What exhortations?

C. How is the warning in verse 9 both individual and corporate?

D. From Luke 3:10-14, how does John answer the crowd, the tax collectors and the soldiers when they ask, "What should we do?"

E. From Luke 3:15-18, when asked if he might possibly be the Christ

(1) How does John respond?

(2) How does his answer reveal his humility?

(3) From these verses and John 1:29-34, how does John point to the Christ?

4. Read John 3:5-8; Galatians 5:16-18 22-23; Ephesians 5:18; Isaiah 26:11; Hebrews 9:27, 10:26-27 and 12:28-29. What does it mean to be baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire?

