

04

LUKE 2:1-15

THE PROMISED CHILD

THIS WEEK'S **focus**

You know that feeling when everything is going terribly for the characters in a movie or book that you're reading or watching and you're desperate for the hero to show up and rescue everyone? The big story of the Bible can feel like that. We've been looking into the creation of the world and how wonderful it all was. That is, it was wonderful until sin entered the picture. Genesis 3 revealed to us the horror of sin (and spoiler alert: things will get even worse), but it also pointed us to a promised child. One day, a child of a woman would crush the head of the serpent, Satan. In celebration of Christmas, we'll look ahead to the birth of Jesus. Jesus is the promised Rescuer who left perfection for our sake.



CENTRAL **truth**

Jesus is the promised Rescuer who left perfection for our sakes.



EXPLORE

scripture

LUKE 2:1-15

LUKE 2:1-5

1 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered. **2** This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria. **3** So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town. **4** Joseph also went up from

the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David, **5** to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant.

LUKE 2:6-7

6 While they were there, the time came for her to give birth. **7** Then she gave birth to her firstborn son, and she wrapped him tightly in

cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

LUKE 2:8-15

8 In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. **9** Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. **10** But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: **11** Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12** This will be the sign for you: You

will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger." **13** Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying: **14** Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors! **15** When the angels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us."

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE HEBREWS 2:17

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about humans?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

LUKE 2:1-5

DWELL

Bethlehem was a small place where lots of notable biblical events occurred, like the death of Jacob's wife Rachel (see Gen. 35:19) and the anointing of King David (that's why it's called "the city of David," see 1 Sam. 16; 2 Sam. 5-6). It was also the location from where the prophet Micah said the Messiah would come (see Luke. 5:2). Remember, "Bethlehem" means "house of bread,"² and it's worth considering that Jesus called Himself "the bread of life" (see John 6:35,48).



List the details in today's text. How do they help you understand the event of Jesus's birth as a historical event?



How would the location of Jesus's birth impact the Jews who had carefully studied God's Word?

MEMORIZE

Using colored pencils or pens, creatively write out Hebrews 2:17 on a piece of paper. Then, "take a picture" of it with your mind and try to say the verse to yourself a few times without looking.

PRAY

Praise God for the amazing way He carefully orchestrates the world's events to accomplish His will!

² Duguid, "Ruth," 402.

day 2

LUKE 2:6-7

DWELL

From the time of Adam and Eve on, people had been looking for this Rescuer who God had promised in Genesis 3:15. Jews called this person the “Messiah”: the chosen one. Because the Scriptures taught that the Messiah was a king and conqueror, many people thought He would come in a triumphant way. Jesus’s humble birth was not at all what anyone had in mind!

↔ Why is the humble nature of Jesus’s birth good news?

→ How can you be humble like Jesus?

MEMORIZE

Write out Hebrews 2:17 on a piece of paper or note card, and place it next to your bed. Make it a goal to say it five times before you go to bed and five times when you wake up.

PRAY

Praise God for coming in such a humble way—and for keeping His promise to send a Rescuer.

day 3

LUKE 2:8-14

DWELL

It would be pretty wild to suddenly hear an angel speaking in the dead of night—and then to see the sky fill with an army of angels singing praise to God! The shepherds had to be completely amazed at all these mighty warriors praising God. No one else had much respect for these shepherds, yet these powerful angels were sent by God to see them and to share the good news of Jesus with them.

← How do you think people of Jesus’s day would have reacted when they learned that the angels first brought the news of Jesus’s birth to shepherds?

↔ How does this narrative impact the way you might think about other people who are treated as “less than”?

MEMORIZE

Invent motions that match the words of Hebrews 2:17, and practice them while saying the words out loud a few times. It probably feels a little weird, but when something is weird, it helps us remember!

PRAY

The good news of Jesus is for all! Ask God to help you identify people you can share His good news with.

day 4

LUKE 2:15-16

DWELL

When the shepherds heard the good news of Jesus, they immediately sprang into action! They hurried from the fields into nearby Bethlehem, and they soon found that everything was exactly as the angel had said. Adam and Eve doubted God's words in the garden, but these shepherds believed the angels wholeheartedly, and it impacted what they did.



What is the result when we choose to believe what God says?



What is an area of your life where you are struggling to believe God's words? Why?

MEMORIZE

Write down the first letter of each word of Hebrews 2:17 on a note card. At least five times today, see if you can say the verse just by looking at the letters.

PRAY

Confess any areas of unbelief in your life. Ask God to help you trust Him and to shape your life around His words.

day 5

LUKE 2:17-20

DWELL

The shepherds' experience seeing the baby Jesus compelled them to immediately begin sharing with others. Everyone who heard about it was amazed! Something big was happening in Bethlehem. Jesus's mother, Mary, quietly took all of this in and thought about it all the time as she raised young Jesus. What an incredible opportunity to see, serve, and consider this infant King!



What has God done in your life that you need to quietly ponder? What does this teach you about Him?



Whom do you need to tell about the good news of Jesus?

MEMORIZE

Tell a friend or family member that your memory verse this week is Hebrews 2:17, and explain what it means. Then, invite that person to randomly quiz you at some point today to see if you can remember the verse.

PRAY

Spend some time in prayer recalling all the things God has done for you, and thank Him for that.