



Daily Bible Study Questions

Study Procedure: Read the Scripture references before answering questions. Unless otherwise instructed, use the Bible only in answering questions. Some questions may be more difficult than others but try to answer as many as you can. Pray for God's wisdom and understanding as you study and don't be discouraged if some answers are not obvious at first.

FIRST DAY: Read the Introduction and Luke 1:1-4

1. From your notes, list several facts about the author and gospel of Luke.
2. To whom is this narrative written and what was the stated purpose?
3. Scan Luke 1. What sources did Luke use in writing his gospel, and who might have been some of the human sources for this story?

SECOND DAY: Read Luke 1:5-25

4. What information is given about Zacharias and Elizabeth that links them to the Old Testament priesthood? See Exodus 28:1 and Numbers 3:5-13.
5. Discuss verse 15 in relationship to Numbers 6:2,3.

6. (a) What was Zacharias' response to the angel visitation?

(b) What did the angel say was John's mission? Read Malachi 4:5,6.

7. (a) For what was Zacharias asking in verse 18?

(b) How did this indicate doubt and unbelief?

8. What was Elizabeth's reaction to her pregnancy?

THIRD DAY: Read Luke 1:26-55

9. What do both verses 27 and 34 tell about Mary?

10. (a) What does Gabriel tell Mary about Jesus?

(b) What confirmation does Gabriel give in verses 36 and 37?

(c) What was Mary's response to Gabriel's announcement?

(d) Can you say those same words to God? Explain.

11. (a) How did Elizabeth's baby react to Mary's arrival?

(b) What did the Holy Spirit utter through Elizabeth?

(c) How would this encourage Mary?

12. From Mary's Song, complete the chart.

Attributes of God	Acts of God

13. Read Genesis 12:2,3 and Luke 1:55. What did God promise Abram?

FOURTH DAY: Read Luke 1:56-80

14. (a) What had Zacharias learned during nine months of silence?

- (b) What was the reaction of those who heard about Zacharias and his son?
15. (a) What theme is repeated in various phrases in verses 68-75?
- (b) What did Zacharias prophesy about his son? Compare with Luke 1:17.
- (c) What part of this song of Zacharias is meaningful to you?

FIFTH DAY: Read Luke 2:1-21

16. Read Micah 5:2. How did God bring Mary and Joseph to the prophesied birthplace of Messiah?
17. (a) What effect did the angel's announcement have on the shepherds?
- (b) What effect should God's Word have on your life?
18. (a) How did people respond to the message of the shepherds?

(b) How did Mary respond to the shepherds' visit?

SIXTH DAY: Read Luke 2:22-52

19 How did Jesus' parents obey the Jewish law? Read Leviticus 12:1-8.

20. (a) Give the phrases that recount the Spirit's work in Simeon's life.

(b) What did Simeon say about Jesus?

(c) What did Simeon say to Mary? Read John 19:25,26 and comment on his meaning.

21. How did Anna (verses 36-38) become another witness to Jesus' mission?

22. What in Jerusalem attracted Jesus' attention and what did He do there?

23. How does Luke describe Jesus' boyhood in Nazareth?

Notes

Birth and Boyhood of Christ (Luke 1:5-2:52)

The Birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-25)

True to characteristics of an historian, Luke, at the beginning of his gospel, does not hurry his reader over names and circumstances which a critical inquirer would like to know. He gives the names of kings, priests, and others to give opportunity to test his accuracy according to historical events.

John the Baptist, by both father and mother, was born into the priestly line, however, he never claimed that priestly succession as the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth. Although this was a self-chosen course on the part of John, it was also divinely appointed, as he was the one to usher in the kingdom of grace and to abolish the old order of the priesthood which was through family inheritance. It was very probably partly due to the fact that he was of a priest's family that so many went out to hear him as he preached in the wilderness. This would give him authority and influence with the multitudes who flocked to hear him.

The announcement of the birth of John came to Zacharias from the angel Gabriel as the old priest ministered in the holy place. The messenger informed him that his prayer was heard and that God would give him a son. The current prayer of Zacharias was probably that God would remember Israel and send a redeemer. So much time had passed for Zacharias and Elizabeth that it is probable his prayer for a son would have been made long ago, for according to the course of human events, such a blessing would not be possible. It is good to remember that what appears to us to be unanswered prayer is not disregarded prayer. Know that in God's time and in His way, prayer is answered. Answer to prayer is sometimes "No," sometimes "Yes" and sometimes "Wait." Always be assured that God knows best what to give, how to give it, and where and when to give it. We are commanded to pray and must be faithful in exercising this privilege.

John is one of seven names in Scripture which was given by God to those unborn. Ishmael, Isaac,

Solomon, Josiah, Cyrus, John, and Jesus were all named before their births. The meaning of the names of Zacharias and Elizabeth are, respectively, "Jehovah remembers" and "the oath of God." John's name carries the meaning of "favor of Jehovah." John was not Elijah, but he came in the spirit and power of Elijah (Luke 1:17).

Zacharias received the message from the angel with astonishment and doubt and asked for a sign to confirm and strengthen his faith. The sign given to Zacharias was a reproof for his unbelief. He would not be able to speak until the fulfillment of the prophecy. This was a very significant sign, as Zacharias represented the priesthood of Israel, and this was a type of the unbelief of the nation as to the coming of the Messiah and judgment upon the priesthood for its unbelief. Israel, as you remember, had been made the trustee and messenger of God, but had utterly failed to be true to her divine commission. God would put her aside and choose, instead, a new way through inspired messengers. With the ministry and message of Zacharias and John, the voice of Israel was to cease and the power of the Holy Spirit, through the church, would minister the message of Jesus Christ—salvation to the world. When the church age ends, the second advent of the Redeemer will be eminent. God will silence every voice that fails to honor and uphold the witness to His Son, Jesus Christ.

The Angel's Announcement to the Virgin Mary (Luke 1:26-38)

The angel Gabriel was sent from heaven as the messenger to give the news of the conception of the Son of God. He made his visit to an obscure place in Galilee, the village of Nazareth. The angel was sent to a young virgin named Mary, whom God had chosen to be the mother of our Lord. The announcement of the high honor that would be hers in giving birth to the divine Son of God was made to her in the seclusion of her modest life. *"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS."*

Mary's response was not one of doubt, but one of inquiry, "*How can this be?*" The angel answered her question as to how she would conceive and bring forth a son. He told her that the power of the Holy Ghost, which is the power of the Highest, should overshadow her and make her, though a virgin, to conceive. This miraculous conception, the fruit of her womb, should be called "*the Son of God.*" Christ was that seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,*" as John 1:14 tells us. This was Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God.

"*Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.*" The submission of the virgin Mary to the will of God is beautiful. Considering God's choice of Mary to hold this high and unique honor of being the mother of the Son of God, one wonders what qualities she possessed to make her suitable. She is marked in Biblical history for her humility, which made her great. She never thrust attention upon herself, or in any way tried to share in her Son's glory. She was content, in obedience, to perform the part given her. She seemed always more ready to be silent than to speak and accepted her position without complaint. She remained meek and lowly to the very end. We see her beautifully at the cross, silently allowing the sword to pierce her heart as a mother—still treasuring, in her heart, the message of the angel. Blessed among women and next to the blessed Child, the Virgin Mother is the central figure of the nativity. She is one of the loveliest characters in the Bible. Here was one woman whose consecration and faith rolled back the curse which the sin and folly of another woman had brought upon the human race.

Mary's Visit to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)

As soon as the angel's message was fully realized, Mary visited her cousin, Elizabeth, in the hills of Judea. At their meeting, Elizabeth greeted her with the inspired words, "*Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!*" Elizabeth also addressed Mary as "*the mother of my Lord.*" How meaningful these words

must have been to Mary! The angel had appeared to Mary in private and when she would tell this story to others, who would believe her? In a short time she could be charged with an offense which, by Jewish law, meant death. In bowing to the will of God there were risks, but perhaps they did not enter her heart and mind. If they did, she was willing to face all that God had for her in the future. Her full submissiveness was expressed in joy to Elizabeth.

"*My soul magnifies the Lord.*" This is the song of an unselfish spirit. In one line of her song, she expresses the honor she feels and then follows with the beautiful expressions of praise to God. She praised God for His all-excelling perfection, His holiness (verse 49), His mercy (verse 50), His divine power (verses 49-51), and as helper of the poor, the neglected, the despised, and forgotten (verses 52,53).

The Forerunner of Christ (Luke 1:57-80)

A child was born to the aged Zacharias and Elizabeth. That which was miraculous became natural, and Elizabeth gave birth to the child destined to be the forerunner of Jesus Christ. The work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men can never be explained. It will always be as miraculous as the overshadowing of Mary, or the overruling of nature as in the circumstances of Elizabeth. As the motherhood of Mary and Elizabeth were never doubted, so it should be in the birth of a new life in Christ, the Christian life. The spiritual life must be graced with evidence of spiritual birth.

The neighbors and relatives of Elizabeth assumed the child would be named in the usual manner, as tradition dictated. They wanted to bring the miraculous down to the ordinary process of what was traditional in the family. So it must have been in opposition to neighbors and relatives that Zacharias and Elizabeth decided the name of the child would be John. At the naming of the child in obedience to God, Zacharias' mouth was opened. He immediately gave praise to God. Someone has said that praise is the rent charge we owe to God for His blessings. Something to think about, isn't it?

This song of praise from the lips of Zacharias is called the Benedictus. It includes the keynote of incarnation, echoes the message of the cross, and expresses the salvation He is about to reveal. Following this song, we have the special introduction of John's ministry as prophet of the Highest, going before the Lord to prepare His way and to preach repentance and remission of sins through the tender mercies of God.

The Birth of Christ at Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7)

The fullness of time had come. At last the promised Savior of the world was born as God had explicitly promised in the Scripture. The eternal Son of God left the glory He shared with the Father and was born of woman in the town of Bethlehem and laid in a manger. Luke very beautifully portrays the birth of Christ. The whole of the world's history led up to this night. It is the hinge on which the history of man turns. From the time of Adam, mankind waited for this night. When Christ came in such lowly circumstances, with none of the pomp of royalty about Him, it was a message in itself to the vast majority of the world. The multitude whose condition is one of struggle, deprivation, and anxieties finds a bond between themselves and Christ.

The Message of the Angels to the Shepherds (Luke 2:8-20)

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The spirit of the message is one of joy and gladness. The keynote of the message is no longer the joy of a little exclusive company, but *"I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."* And then the climax, *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"* The shepherds acted on the information received and *"found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger."* The inauguration of the world's redemption was with a company of shepherds at their nightly task, as the first witnesses. Thus the story of salvation is begun and the Savior of sinners enters upon the stage of human suffering as our Redeemer.

The Testimony of Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:21-38)

One more testimony must be added to this chain. The circumcision and presentation of Christ brings into the record Simeon and Anna. The offering Mary and Joseph brought to the temple was the offering presented by the very poorest of people, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons. As Christ was presented and the aged Simeon received Him in his arms, the scene was transfigured. Simeon said, *"For my eyes have seen Your salvation."* This is a beautiful picture of faith of not only accepting but embracing the Lord. In his song, referred to as the Nunc Dimittis, we see the gospel for both Jew and Gentile. As the scene closes, he turns to Mary and tells her that *"Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."* The shadow of the cross would not only fall upon Him, but also upon her and upon all that receive Him. They must die before they can live. There must be a bowing before the cross before there can be a rising to holiness and heaven.

Anna was next to give testimony. She went to tell the joyful news to those who waited for the redemption of Jerusalem. What a heritage of blessing we have to give to the world.

In Nazareth (Luke 2:39-52)

Mary, Joseph, and Jesus returned to Nazareth. Twelve years passed and Jesus grew from infancy to boyhood. Every Jewish boy of twelve visited Jerusalem at the time of the Passover or great festivals. When Jesus was twelve, he went with Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem. He must have watched with great interest as the lamb was selected and at the appointed time watched as it was offered in a sacrificial service. It was on this occasion that Jesus found His way to the classroom where the doctors of the law were discussing the deep questions of their national faith. Jesus became completely engrossed in the discussions, and the doctors were amazed at His understanding and His

answers. Mary and Joseph had left Jerusalem to return home thinking that Jesus was in the company with the other children. When they missed Him they eagerly retraced their steps to find Christ still in the temple. He responded to His mother's anxious words, "*Why did you seek Me? Did you not know*

that I must be about My Father's business?" This gives us just a glimpse of the development of the character of Jesus in His early years. His first words recorded were witness to His deity. He went down with His parents to Nazareth and was under their discipline. He was obedient in all things.

Notes