

Read the first two chapters of Luke this week. Here is a suggested plan for reading.

**Day 1 - Luke 1:1-4 – Luke's method and purpose
Luke 1:5-25 – Gabriel visits Zechariah**

Day 2 – Luke 1:26-38 – Gabriel visits Mary

**Day 3 – Luke 1:39-45 – Mary visits Elizabeth
Luke 1:46-56 – Mary's song**

**Day 4 – Luke 1:57-66 – John's birth
Luke 1:67-80 – Zechariah's song**

Day 5 – Luke 2:1-20 – Birth of Jesus & Announcement

**Day 6 – Luke 2:21-35 – Simeon's message about Jesus
Luke 2:36-40 – Anna's message about Jesus
Luke 2:41-52 – Jesus 'lost' in the Temple?**

**Day 7 – reread or reflect on these questions:
What have I learned about God?
What have I learned about humanity and myself?
What have I learned about how God interacts with humanity
and me?**

Attached are some questions that might be helpful. Since this is a narrative pay particular attention to the settings, the characters, and the plot.

Luke 1:1-4

What does this passage tell us about the methods and purpose of its author?

The author says this is an account of 'events that have been fulfilled among us' (1:1 CEB). Why might he author introduce his account in this way rather than saying this is an account of the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth?

What is the main point the author wants the reader to know up front before we even begin to read his account of the 'good news of Jesus the Christ?'

Luke 1:5-25 – Gabriel visits Zechariah

What is the setting for this story (who, what, where, when)?

Describe Zechariah and Elizabeth. What is their life like before the angel Gabriel visits Zechariah?

What do you think Luke is seeking to emphasize through the details he chooses to share about Zechariah and Elizabeth?

How is the angel's announcement, 'good news' for Elizabeth and Zechariah (see 1:13, 25)? How is it 'good news' for Israel (see 1:14-17)?

Luke portrays Zechariah as an ordinary Jewish priest engaged in his usual routine and everyday life when he receives a surprising message from God through an encounter with the angel, Gabriel. What does this suggest about how God works?

Luke 1:26-38 – Gabriel visits Mary

What is the setting of this story (who, what, when, where)?

How are the settings and stories of Gabriel's visit to Zechariah and Mary similar? How are they different?

What does the angel Gabriel say about the child that Mary will birth (1:30-33)?

What are the implications of the virgin birth?

Sometimes when we read this passage, we become so focused on the virgin birth and the challenges that arise, that we fail to hear the other radical claims found in this passage. Gabriel states that Jesus will be given the throne of David, will rule over Jacob's house (i.e. Israel) and there will be no end to his kingdom. How would Mary and other first century Jews hear this claim? What might be their expectation of Jesus and his destiny?

Luke 1:39-45; 46-56

What grabs your attention when Mary and Elizabeth meet?

What part of Mary's song grabs your attention?

What do we learn about Jesus and his mission/purpose from Mary's song?

Luke 1:57-66; 67-80

Again note the unexpected in the story. The child will be named John not Zechariah.

What do we learn about John's mission/purpose from Zechariah's song?

What do we learn about Jesus' mission and purpose from the song?

Luke 2:1-20

Note the setting of Jesus' birth. How does it contrast with the expectations of how a king might be born?

What do we learn about what God is up to in and through Jesus from the angels encounter with the shepherds?

Luke 2:21-35, 36-40, 41-52

What do we learn about Jesus and mission from Simeon? From Anna? From his encounter in the Temple?

Compare and reflect on what we learn about Jesus and the significance of his arrival through this week's Scripture. What should Jesus matter to us?