

Luke 2:1-7

1. Gabriel had spoken to Zechariah and Mary
 - a. Gabriel's words to Zechariah had come to pass accurately
 - b. Now, it is time for Gabriel's words to Mary to come to pass.
2. Before Luke records the birth of Mary's child, Luke provides some more information:
 - a. More details in the narrative
 - b. More historical settings that could be confirmed by the reader
 - c. More clarification of possibilities concerning Mary's child's identity and purpose
3. Titles given to Mary's child such as "Savior", "Messiah" and "Lord" will only be understood when explained in the books of Luke and Acts
4. The census is mentioned 4x in Luke 2:1-7. The presentation of the census takes up more space than the actual recording of Jesus' birth.
5. Purpose of the census:
 - a. Listing each person (males 14 years and up; females 12 years and up)
 - b. Property is listed
 - c. Used for the purpose of taxation
 - d. Used to identify those available for military service (Jews were exempt from military service with Rome.)
 - e. At times a census could be used to secure an oath to the Roman leadership – as seen in the word translated "*to register*" = "*apographa*" - απογραφη used in 2:1
 - f. Collect a denarius per person
6. "Good News" of 2:10-11 refers to:
 - a. Isaiah's Prophecy: Isaiah's vision of the coming of the Lord to bring salvation and establish peace was the "Good News" of Isaiah 40-66.
 - b. Roman/Greek world: The culture of the day used the Greek word "good news" – ευαγγελιζομαι - *euangelidzomai* – to refer to "deliverance and in the imperial cult of the Ceasars it meant the birth of the next emperor.
7. The world of Emperor Augustus and The world of God's purposemeet here.
8. **THE CENSUS:**
 - a. The census is mentioned four times (4x): 2:1; 2:2; 2:3; 2:5
 - b. Luke thinks the census is significant
 - c. Luke appears to want to use the census as a time marker to locate these events historically for his original reader(s)
 - i. Luke mentions the census again when he records the words of Gamaliel defending the Apostles in Acts 5:37:
"After him, Judas the Galilean appeared in the days of the census and led a band of people in revolt."
 - d. Lukes' original reader(s) would easily have been familiar enough with the issues of historical chronology to understand and agree with Luke's association of Jesus' birth with this major census event under Quirinius

- e. The census would have reminded the Jewish people that Israel (the people of God) had to show allegiance to Rome since they were a conquered people
 - f. Two times (2x) Luke describes the census as universal (2:1 and 2:3)
9. Focus begins broad and begins to microscopically zoom in on the minute details:
- a. Augustus, who governed “the world”
 - b. Quirinius, who governed the region
 - c. Joseph, who was in Bethlehem of Judea
 - d. Jesus, the babe in the manger
10. Timing of these events:
- a. 1:5 begins this book by focusing on the timing of events in alignment with Judean history (since John’s ministry was focused on the Jews)
 - b. 2:1 begins by focusing on the timing of events in alignment with world (Roman) history (since Jesus’ ministry was focused on the world, even the universe)

Luke 2:1 – **In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.**

1096 [e]	1161 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	2250 [e]	1565 [e]	1831 [e]	1378 [e]	3844 [e]	2541 [e]	828 [e]
Egeneto	de	en	tais	hēmerais	ekeinaiis	exēlthen	dogma	para	Kaisaros	Augoustou
1 Ἐγένετο	δὲ	ἐν	ταῖς	ἡμέραις	ἐκείναις	, ἐξῆλθεν	δόγμα	παρὰ	Καίσαρος	Αὐγούστου
It came to pass	then	in	the	days	those	went out	a decree	from	Caesar	Augustus
V-AIM-3S	Conj	Prep	Art-DFP	N-DFP	DPro-DFP	V-AIA-3S	N-NNS	Prep	N-GMS	N-GMS

583 [e]	3956 [e]	3588 [e]	3625 [e]
apographesthai	pasan	tēn	oikoumenēn
ἀπογράφεσθαι	πᾶσαν	τὴν	οἰκουμένην .
to register	all	the	world
V-PNM/P	Adj-AFS	Art-AFS	N-AFS

1. “In these days” – eschatological significance
- a. Compare to Greek text:
 - i. Luke 4:2 – “for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days. And when they were ended, he was hungry.”

en	tais	hēmerais	ekeinaiis
ἐν	ταῖς	ἡμέραις	ἐκείναις
in	the	days	those
 - ii. Luke 5:35 – “The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast in those days.”

en	ekeinaiis	tais	hēmerais
ἐν	ἐκείναις	ταῖς	ἡμέραις
in	those	-	days

- iii. Luke 9:36 – “And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.”

en ekeinai tais hēmerais

ἐν ἐκείναις ταῖς ἡμέραις

in those the days

- iv. Acts 2:18 – “even on my male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit, and they shall prophesy.” (quote Joel 2:28)

en tais hēmerais ekeinai

ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις

in the days those

2. Reference to chronological events and political leaders brings prophesied events (“in those days”) into the contemporary historical, social and political day (“in these days”)
3. Augustus
 - a. Born Gaius Octavian
 - b. Grand-nephew of Julius Caesar
 - c. Adopted son of Julius Caesar
 - d. Heir of Julius Caesar
 - e. Civil war with Marc Antony after sharing power with a three man “triumvirate”.
 - f. Marc Antony allied himself with Cleopatra of Egypt, but they were defeated at Actium by Octavian in 31 BC.
 - g. Sole ruler of Roman World beginning in 27 BC until 14 AD
 - h. Augustus restored Roman rule as an empire creating **Pax Romana**, “Roman Peace”
 - i. Augustus was honored as a god
 - j. An ancient inscription called the Myrian Inscription says:
“Divine Augustus Caesar, son of a god, imperator of the land and sea, the benefactor and savior of the whole world...”
 - k. The name “Augustus” was given to Octavian to declare that he possesses divine characteristics.

2:2 – This was the first registration when [footnote A – “before”] Quirinius was governor of Syria.

3778 [e] 582 [e] 4413 [e] 1096 [e] 2230 [e] 3588 [e] 4947 [e] 2958 [e]

hautē apographē prōtē egeneto hēgemoneuontos tēs Syrias Kyrēniou

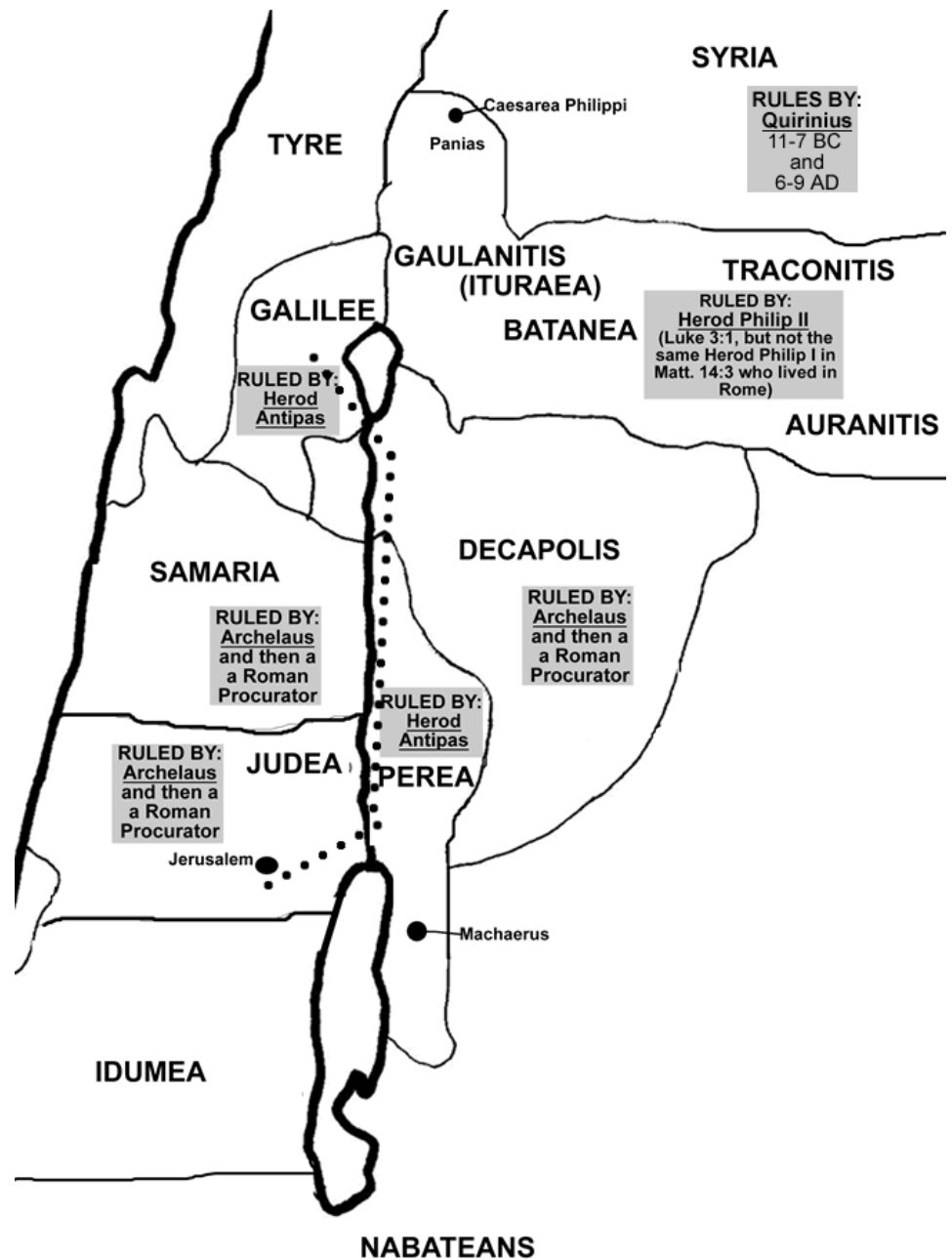
2 αὕτη ἀπογραφὴ πρώτη ἐγένετο ἡγεμονεύοντος τῆς Συρίας Κυρηνίου .

This registration first took place [when] was governing - Syria Quirinius

DPro-NFS N-NFS Adj-NFS V-AIM-3S V-PPA-GMS Art-GFS N-GFS N-GMS

1. The best known and documented administration of Syria by Quirinius lasted from 6-9 AD. During that time occurred the “Great Enrollment” and valuation of property in Israel mentioned in Acts 5:37 by Gamaliel and also recorded by Josephus. These registration/taxation incidents mention by Luke in Acts and in Josephus are a second registration that is not the one mentioned in Luke 2.

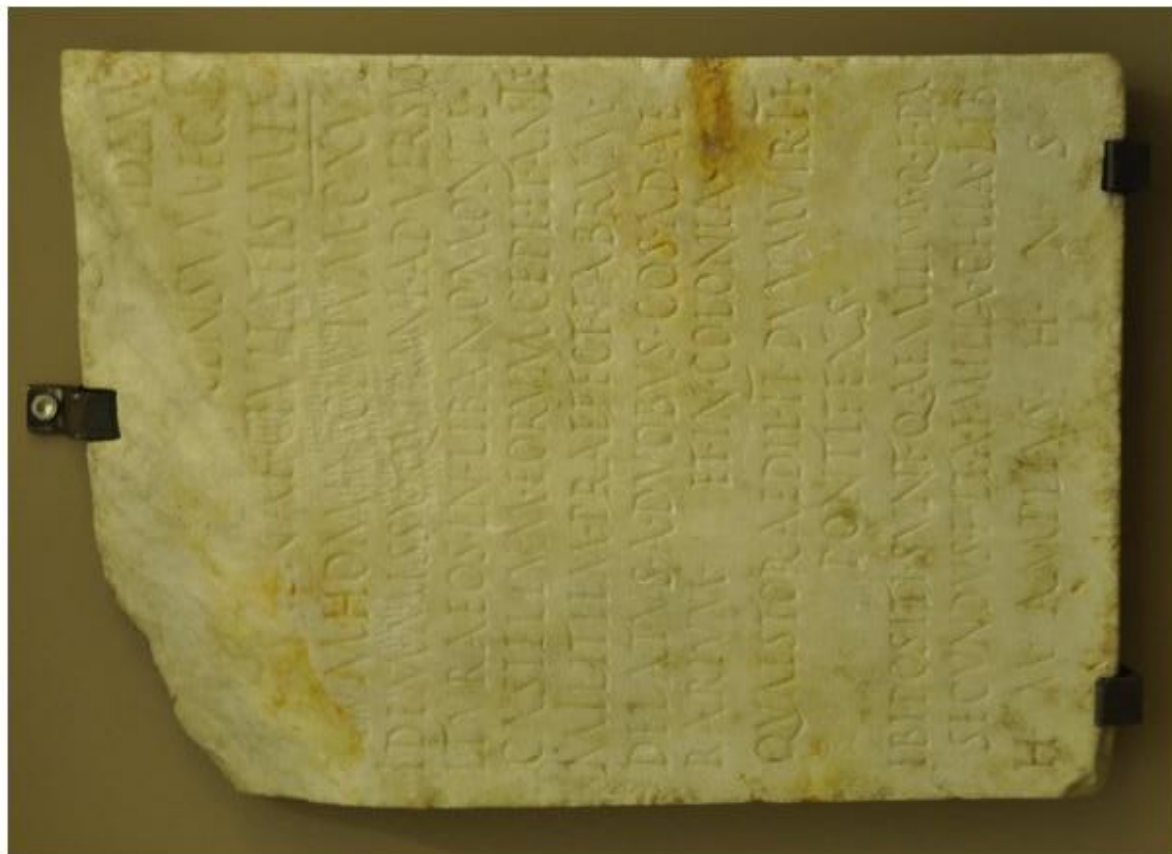
2. There was found near Rome (Tibur, or *Tivoli*) in 1764 a fragment of marble with part of an inscription, which is now preserved in the Lateran Museum of Christian Antiquities with the inscription recording the career and honors of a Roman official who lived in the reign of Augustus, and he governed Asia as proconsul; and he twice governed Syria as legatus of the divine Augustus.
3. The name on the inscription has perished, yet these indications are sufficient to show with practical certainty that the officer who achieved this splendid career was Publius Sulpicius **Quirinius**. His government of Syria, AD. 6-9, was therefore his second tenure of that office.



This inscription called *Latinae Selectae* names P. Sulpicius Quirinius as ***duumvir*** which is Latin for “two men” referring two joint magistrates of ancient Rome.



This inscription is from a tombstone discovered near Trivoli, Italy. It's owner was once "Twice Legate" of Augustus in Syria. Photo



The tombstone of Q. Aemilius Secundus, who conducted a census for the Legate Quirinius in Apamea in Syria.

2:3 – **And all went to be registered, each to his own town.**

2532 [e]	4198 [e]	3956 [e]	583 [e]	1538 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	1438 [e]	4172 [e]	
kai	eporeuonto	pantes	apographesthai	hekastos	eis	tēn	heautou	polin	
3	καὶ	ἔπορεύοντο	πάντες	ἀπογράφεσθαι	, ἕκαστος	εἰς	τὴν	ἑαυτοῦ	πόλιν .
	And	were going	all	to be registered	each	to	the	of themselves	city
	Conj	V-IIM/P-3P	Adj-NMP	V-PNM/P	Adj-NMS	Prep	Art-AFS	RefPro-GM3S	N-AFS

1. “registered, each to his own town”
 - a. Was this a contemporary practice in the east?
 - b. Was this to accommodate the Jewish concerns to ancestral heritage?
 - c. Whatever the reason, this “practice”, “law”, or “decree” caused Joseph takes his pregnant wife to Bethlehem as prophesied.
2. This could have involved a property tax.

2:4 – **And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,**

305 [e]	1161 [e]	2532 [e]	2501 [e]	575 [e]	3588 [e]	1056 [e]	1537 [e]	4172 [e]	3478 [e]	1519 [e]	3588 [e]	2449 [e]	1519 [e]	4172 [e]	
Anebē	de	kai	Iosēph	apo	tēs	Galilias	ek	poleōs	Nazareth	eis	tēn	Ioudaian	eis	polin	
4	Ἀνέβη	δὲ	καὶ	Ἰωσήφ	, ἀπὸ	τῆς	Γαλιλαίας	ἐκ	πόλεως	Ναζαρέθ	, εἰς	τὴν	Ἰουδαίαν	, εἰς	πόλιν
	Went up	then	also	Joseph	from	-	Galilee	out of	[the] town	of Nazareth	to	-	Judea	to	[the] City
	V-AIA-3S	Conj	Conj	N-NMS	Prep	Art-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	N-GFS	N-GFS	Prep	Art-AFS	N-AFS	Prep	N-AFS

1138 [e]	3748 [e]	2564 [e]	965 [e]	1223 [e]	3588 [e]	1510 [e]	846 [e]	1537 [e]	3624 [e]	2532 [e]	3965 [e]	1138 [e]
Dauid	hētis	kaleitai	Bethleem	dia	to	einai	auton	ex	oikou	kai	patrias	Dauid
Δαυὶδ	, ἧτις	καλεῖται	Βηθλεέμ	, διὰ	τὸ	εἶναι	αὐτὸν	ἐξ	οἴκου	καὶ	πατριᾶς	Δαυὶδ
of David	which	is called	Bethlehem	because of	-	being	his	of	[the] house	and	family	of David
N-GMS	RelPro-NFS	V-PIMP/3S	N-NFS	Prep	Art-ANS	V-PNA	PPro-AM3S	Prep	N-GMS	Conj	N-GFS	N-GMS

1. If Mary and Joseph bypassed Samaria the trip would have taken at least three days and covered 90 miles
2. The phrase “his own town” in 2:4 is clarified here in 2:5 as:
 - a. “house of David” meaning his ancestral town
 - b. “line of David” meaning his place of origin
3. “going up” indicates they are traveling up to Jerusalem which is a trip up natural ascension uphill coming from Galilee.
4. Prophecy is being fulfilled
 - a. Gabriel had said the child would be given the throne of his ancestor David (Luke 1:32, 35)
 - b. Zechariah (John the Baptist’s father) confirmed this in his song (Luke 1:69, 78)
 - c. Joseph had been introduced as “of the house of David” (Luke 1:27)
 - d. Old Testament prophecies:
 - i. 2 Samuel 7:12-16 when Nathan told David that David was not to build a house (temple) for the Lord, but instead:

“When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with

*the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. **Your throne shall be established forever.**”*

1. David is from Bethlehem
2. David is born in Bethlehem

ii. Micah 5:2 -

“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.”

5. This birth account is the continuation of God’s work of salvation and fulfillment of God’s promises.
6. Joseph’s journey is in response to Ceasar Augustus’ decree, BUT Ceasar Augustus’ decree is in response to God’s plan and prophecies.

2:5 – to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, [footnote B – “legally pledged”] who was with child.

583 [e]	4862 [e]	3137 [e]	3588 [e]	3423 [e]	846 [e]	1510 [e]	1471 [e]
apograpsasthai	syn	Mariam	tē	emnēsteumenē	autō	ousē	enkyō
5 ἀπογράψασθαι	σὺν	Μαριάμ	, τῇ	ἐμνηστευμένη	αὐτῷ	, οὕσῃ	ἐγκύω .
to register	with	Mary	the [one]	being betrothed	to him	she being	with child
V-ANM	Prep	N-DFS	Art-DFS	V-RPM/P-DFS	PPro-DM3S	V-PPA-DFS	N-DFS

2:6 – And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.

1096 [e]	1161 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	1510 [e]	846 [e]	1563 [e]	4130 [e]	3588 [e]	2250 [e]	3588 [e]	5088 [e]	846 [e]
Egeneto	de	en	tō	einai	autous	ekei	eplēsthesan	hai	hēmerai	tou	tekein	autēn
6 Ἐγένετο	δὲ	ἐν	τῷ	εἶναι	αὐτοὺς	ἐκεῖ	, ἐπλήσθησαν	αἱ	ἡμέραι	τοῦ	τεκεῖν	αὐτήν .
It came to pass	then	in	their	being	-	there	were fulfilled	the	days	of the	giving birth	of her
V-AIM-3S	Conj	Prep	Art-DNS	V-PNA	PPro-AM3P	Adv	V-AIP-3P	Art-NFP	N-NFP	Art-GNS	V-ANA	PPro-AF3S

1. “while they were there”
 - a. This could indicate Mary and Joseph arrived a day or two before the birth.
 - b. This does not mean explicitly that the birth occurred the very night they arrived, but, of course, that could have been the case.

2:7 – And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. [footnote C – “guest room”]

σπαργανώω = **sparganoō** /spar-gan-OH-oh/ -
 "to swaddle", "to wrap in swaddling clothers"
 - this is a verb from the noun **sparganon** meaning
 "a swaddling band" or "strip of cloth"

2532 [e]	5088 [e]	3588 [e]	5207 [e]	846 [e]	3588 [e]	4416 [e]	2532 [e]	4683 [e]	846 [e]	2532 [e]
kai	eteken	ton	huiōn	autēs	ton	prōtotokōn	kai	esparganōsen	autōn	kai
7 καὶ	ἔτεκεν	τὸν	υἱὸν	αὐτῆς	, τὸν	πρωτότοκον	, καὶ	ἐσπαργάνωσε	αὐτὸν	, καὶ
And	she brought forth	the	son	of her	the	firstborn	and	wrapped in swaddling cloths	him	and
Conj	V-AIA-3S	Art-AMS	N-AMS	PPro-GF3S	Art-AMS	Adj-AMS	Conj	V-AIA-3S	PPro-AM3S	Conj

347 [e]	846 [e]	1722 [e]	5336 [e]	1360 [e]	3756 [e]	1510 [e]	846 [e]	5117 [e]	1722 [e]	3588 [e]	2646 [e]
aneklinen	autōn	en	phatnē	dioti	ouk	ēn	autois	topos	en	tō	katallymati
ἀνέκλινεν	αὐτὸν	ἐν	φάτνῃ	, διότι	οὐκ	ἦν	αὐτοῖς	τόπος	ἐν	τῷ	καταλύματι
laid	Him	in	a manger	because	not	there was	for them	a place	in	the	inn
V-AIA-3S	PPro-AM3S	Prep	N-DFS	Conj	Adv	V-IIA-3S	PPro-DM3P	N-NMS	Prep	Art-DNS	N-DNS

φάτνη = **phatne** /fat-nay/ meaning "feeding trough"
 From the verb **passo** meaning
 "to sprinkle" or "to strew"

καταλύμα = **kataluma** /kat-al-oo-mah/
 "lodging place", "guest room"
 Denotes a "guest room" or "a temporary
 place of rest for travelers". Its meaning varies
 slightly depending on the context.
 NOT a hotel or motel.



Mangers, or φάτνη (phatne), in Megiddo

1. Mary's firstborn is mentioned here because:
 - a. It supports Mary as a virgin
 - b. Identifies this child as the one Gabriel spoke of
 - c. Jesus is the possessor of the inheritance given to the firstborn:
 - i. Exodus 13:2 – *"The Lord said to Moses, 'Consecrate to me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is mine.'*"
 - ii. Numbers 3:12-13 – *"And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 'Behold, I have taken the Levites from among the people of Israel instead of every firstborn who opens the womb among the people of Israel. The Levites shall be mine, for all the*

firstborn are mine. On the day that I struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, I consecrated for my own all the firstborn in Israel, both of man and of beast. They shall be mine: I am the Lord.’ ”

- iii. Numbers 18:15-16 –
- iv. Deuteronomy 21:15-17 –
- d. Joseph is of the house of David and has the birthright. This birthright is passed to Jesus
- e. Mary will have to fulfill the Law that required bringing the firstborn to the temple (Luke 2:22-24)

“And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

2. “No place for them in the guest room”

- a. “guest room” – καταλυμα – *kataluma* /kat-al-oo-mah/ - means “lodging place”, “guest room” or “inn” (does NOT mean “hotel” or “motel” like modern Western world.
 - i. It was a temporary place of rest for travelers.
- b. This same word is also used as a noun in Luke 22:10-11 when Jesus is asking for a room for the Last Supper -

*“He said to them, “Behold, when you have entered the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him into the house that he enters and tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is **the guest room**, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ ”*

4226 [e]	1510 [e]	3588 [e]	2646 [e]	3699 [e]	3588 [e]	3957 [e]	3326 [e]	3588 [e]	3101 [e]	1473 [e]	5315 [e]
Pou	estin	to	kataluma	hopou	to	pascha	meta	ton	matheton	mou	phago
Ποῦ	ἔστιν	τὸ	κατάλυμα	, ὅπου	τὸ	πάσχα	μετὰ	τῶν	μαθητῶν	μου	φάγω
Where	is	the	guest room	, where	the	Passover	with	the	disciples	of Me	I may eat
Adv	V-PIA-3S	Art-NNS	N-NNS	Adv	Art-ANS	N-ANS	Prep	Art-GMP	N-GMP	Pro-G1S	V-ASA-1S

- c. This same word is used in the verb form in:
 - i. Luke 9:12 with the sense of “finding lodging” -

“Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, ‘Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions.’ ”

Or, literally:

“into the surrounding villages and countryside they might lodge and might find provisions”
 - ii. Luke 19:7 referring to “being a guest” -

“And when they saw it, they all grumbled, “He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner.”

Or, literally:

“With a sinful man he has entered to stay.”
- d. This is not a commercial inn as is seen in Luke 10:34 which uses a **different word** for “inn” where the Good Samaritan took and paid for the stay of the beaten man -

“He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. And the next day he took out two denarii[c] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, ‘Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.’”

Or, literally:

“on the own beast he brought him to an inn and took care of him...and on the next day having taken out two denarii he gave to the innkeeper and said, “Take care of him...”

- e. Most likely there was no “inn” or commercial inn with an inn keeper in the small town of Bethlehem since no major roads passed through this small town.
- f. There are two logical possibilities to what this KATALUMA refers to for the “guest room” or “lodging place” for Mary and Joseph:
 - i. Guest Room –
 1. They stayed at a two-floor family house in Bethlehem as guest
 2. The first floor, the lower floor at ground level, was where the animals were kept.
 3. The second floor, the second floor or upper level, was where the family lived.
 4. The second floor was so crowded already that Mary and Joseph had to stay on the lower first floor with the animals.
 5. While they were staying there Jesus was born and placed in an animal feeding trough
3. BIRTH: “*wrapped him*”.....“*in bands of cloth*”....“*and, laid him in a manger*” (2:7)
DEATH: “*wrapped*” Jesus’ body...“*in a lined cloth*”...“*and, laid it in a tomb*” (23:53)
4. “Bands of cloth” and manger” are important details picked up in 2:12 and 2:16

Bethlehem

A small village setting in rock 2,500 ft. above sea level.

Bethlehem was east of the main road that ran through Judean Hill Country.

Average annual rainfall allowed good agricultural growth of grain.

The name Bethlehem means “house of bread.”

It bordered the Judean Wilderness to the east which provided pasture for sheep and goats.

It was surrounded by vineyards and trees (almond, fig).

Boaz owned fields here and married Ruth who gave him Obed, David’s grandfather.

Today Bethlehem encircles the site of Christ’s birth with a population of around 22,000 plus suburbs.

In **135 AD** Hadrian built a pagan shrine over a grotto honoring place of Jesus’ birth.

Instead of eradicating the memory of Jewish Messiah, Hadrian’s’ actions marked the location for the Byzantine’s to build the Church of the Nativity in **326 AD**.

The church had 3 entrances (2 are blocked today).

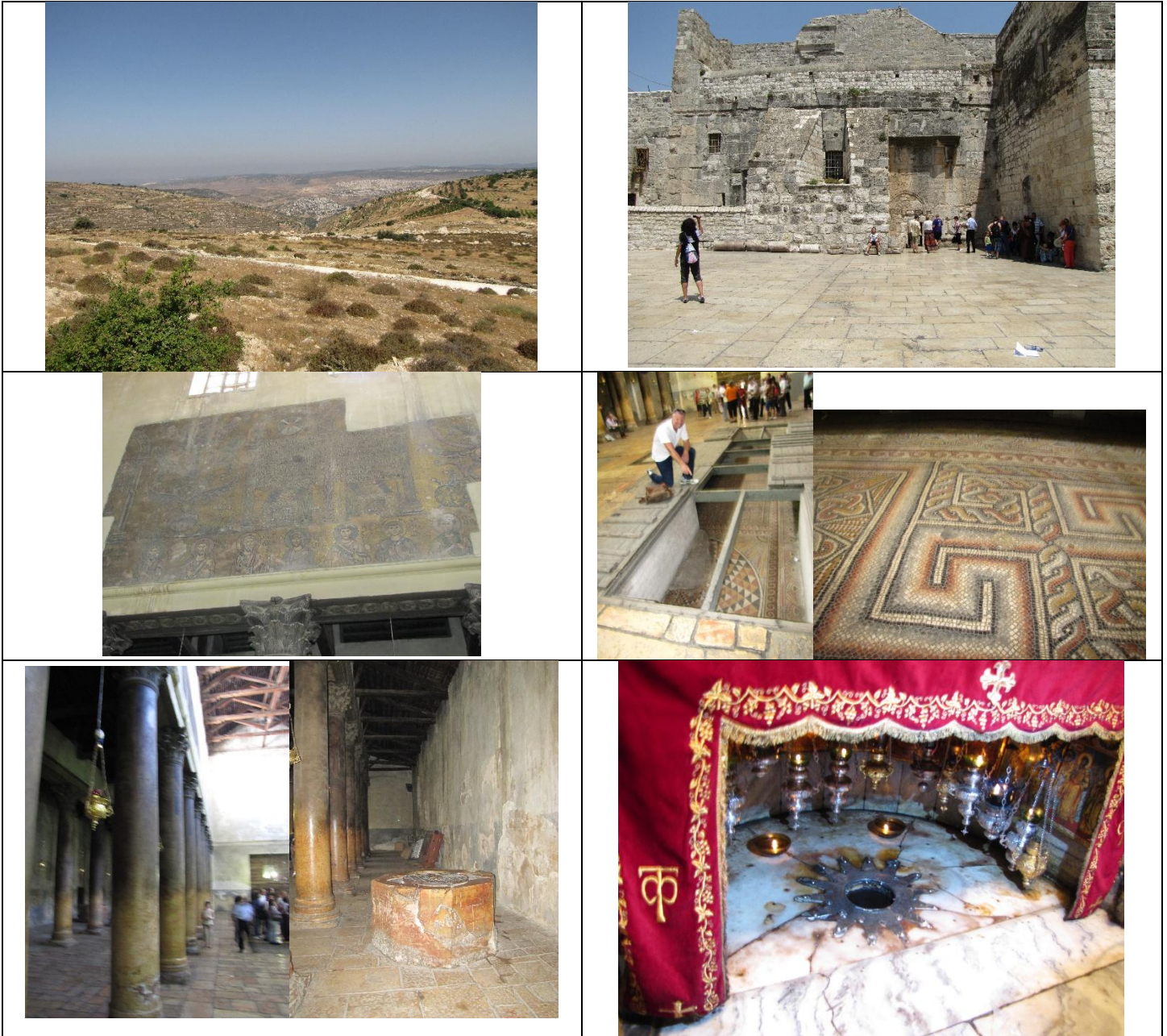
The remaining Byzantine door is also blocked, but the original outline of 326 is still visible with only a small entrance that prevents looters on horseback.

Emperor Justinian rebuilt the church of Constantinian after it was destroyed during the Samaritan revolt in **529 AD**.

In **614 AD** the Persians destroyed many churches during their wars with Byzantium, but spared the Church of the Nativity because of the large wall mosaic of the Magi shown wearing Persian attire. Inside is a long corridor with 4 rows of 10 pink limestone columns 19.5 feet tall under 11 arched windows with Crusader mosaics from **1100's AD**.

The cave of Jesus' birth can be accessed under the altar down stairs on either side.

A recess in the wall of the cave has a silver star on the floor marking the place of Jesus' birth.



1. Hill country; 2. Front of Church; 3. Inside wall; 4. 326 AD mosaic floor; 5. 1100's pillars; 6. Cave