Mary, the Loyal Mother

Luke 2:15-19; John 2:1-5, 19:25-27
SS Lesson for 07/26/2026

Devotional Scripture: Phil 4:8

OUTLINE

LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary
Key Verse: Luke 2:19

MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

MOTHER'S AMAZEMENT (LUKE 2:15-19)
Amazement at visitors (15-17)
Visitors seeking the king of the Jews (Matt 2:1-2)
Visitors following a star (Matt 2:9-11)
Visitors that were led by angels (Luke 2:11-12)
Amazement at responses (18)
Response of promises fulfilled (Luke 2:27-32)
Response at the greatness of God (Luke 9:43)
Response at how much God loves (John 5:20)
Response that should lead to faith in God (John 12:9-11)
Amazement to ponder (19)
Pondering about the ways of God (Hos 14:9)
Pondering about what the child would become (Luke 1:66)
Pondering in the heart (Luke 2:51-52)
Pondering about the things being said (Luke 1:29)
MOTHER'S REQUEST (JOHN 2:1-5)
Request at a wedding (1-2)
A wedding where Jesus was invited (Luke 7:36)
A wedding where everything should have been for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)
A wedding where many fellowshipping with Jesus (Rev 3:20)
A wedding where opposition was seeking a way to judge Jesus (Matt 11:19)
Request for wine (3)
Wine that gladdens the heart Ps 104:15
Wine that makes life merry Eccl 10:19
Wine that also represented the New Covenant of Jesus Matt 26:27-28
Request questioned (4)
Questioned about Jesus' purposes (Luke 2:49)
Questioned about the right time (John 7:6)
Questioned about timing (John 12:23)
Request for action (5)
Actions based on Jesus' words (Luke 5:4-6)
Actions that proves obedience (Luke 6:46)
Actions that are for Jesus' friends (John 15:14)
MOTHER'S FUTURE (JOHN 19:25-27)
Future of care assignment (25-26)
Care through God using others (2 Cor 8:14)
Care through God's supplying directly (2 Cor 9:10)
Care that should evoke thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 9:12)
Care through God's glorious riches (Phil 4:19)
Future protection (27)
Protection in times of trouble (Nahum 1:7)
Protection that is eternal (John 10:28-29)
Protection through the faithful Father (2 Thes. 3:3)
Protection from evildoers (Ps 14:6)

CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM BOB DEFFINBAUGH
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY

Lesson Background and Key Verse

Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Luke 2:1 sets Jesus' birth narrative during the reign of Caesar Augustus (27 BC-AD 14). Augustus was a powerful ruler, and his supporters heralded him as the "savior of the world" because he brought peace to the Roman Empire. Luke tells us that Caesar Augustus decreed a census. The purpose of such a decree was to determine who was subject to taxation and military service. The census required that people return to their familial hometowns. It also served as a reminder that Rome ruled the world, especially for those who lived in small, far-off provinces like Palestine. Thus, Mary and Joseph journeyed the 90 miles from Nazareth in north Galilee southward to Bethlehem. There, they had a baby! Luke's Gospel provides many details about Mary and her experience, more than any other Gospel. Luke records the angel Gabriel's visit and Mary's miraculous conception (Luke 1:26-38). He also describes Mary's visit to her relative Elizabeth's home and the special reception she received (1:39-45). Luke records Mary's worshipful song of praise to God (known as the Magnificat) and her example of faithful trust in God's plan (1:46-55).

Key Verse: Luke 2:19

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Mother's Amazement (Luke 2:15-19)

15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."
16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger.
17 Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child.
18 And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
19 But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Amazement at visitors (15-17)

Visitors seeking the king of the Jews (Matt 2:1-2)

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

Visitors following a star (Matt 2:9-11)

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Visitors that were led by angels (Luke 2:11-12)

11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

Amazement at responses (18)

Response of promises fulfilled (Luke 2:27-32)

> 27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do
> for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: 29
> "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. 30 For my eyes have seen
> your salvation, 31 which you have prepared in the sight of all people, 32 a light for revelation to the
> Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

Response at the greatness of God (Luke 9:43)

> 43 And they were all amazed at the greatness of God. While everyone was marveling at all that Jesus did,
> he said to his disciples,

Response at how much God loves (John 5:20)

> 20 For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even
> greater things than these.

Response that should lead to faith in God (John 12:9-11)

> 9 Meanwhile a large crowd of Jews found out that Jesus was there and came, not only because of him but
> also to see Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. 10 So the chief priests made plans to kill Lazarus as
> well, 11 for on account of him many of the Jews were going over to Jesus and putting their faith in him.

Amazement to ponder (19)

Pondering about the ways of God (Hos 14:9)

> 9 Who is wise? He will realize these things. Who is discerning? He will understand them. The ways of the
> Lord are right; the righteous walk in them, but the rebellious stumble in them.

Pondering about what the child would become (Luke 1:66)

> 66 Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, "What then is this child going to be?" For the Lord's
> hand was with him.

Pondering in the heart (Luke 2:51-52)

> 51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these
> things in her heart. 52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Pondering about the things being said (Luke 1:29)

> 29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

Mother's Request (John 2:1-5)

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.
2 Now both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.
3 And when they ran out of wine, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine."
4 Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come."
5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

Request at a wedding (1-2)

A wedding where Jesus was invited (Luke 7:36)

> 36 Now one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, so he went to the Pharisee's house and
> reclined at the table.

A wedding where everything should have been for the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

A wedding where many fellowshipping with Jesus (Rev 3:20)

20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.

A wedding where opposition was seeking a way to judge Jesus (Matt 11:19)

19 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and "sinners." ' But wisdom is proved right by her actions."

Request for wine (3)

Wine that gladdens the heart Ps 104:15

15 wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart.

Wine that makes life merry Eccl 10:19

19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but money is the answer for everything.

Wine that also represented the New Covenant of Jesus Matt 26:27-28

27 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Request questioned (4)

Questioned about Jesus' purposes (Luke 2:49)

49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"

Questioned about the right time (John 7:6)

6 Therefore Jesus told them, "The right time for me has not yet come; for you any time is right.

Questioned about timing (John 12:23)

23 Jesus replied, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified.

Request for action (5)

Actions based on Jesus' words (Luke 5:4-6)

4 When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." 5 Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." 6 When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break.

Actions that proves obedience (Luke 6:46)

46 "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

Actions that are for Jesus' friends (John 15:14)

14 You are my friends if you do what I command.

Mother's Future (John 19:25-27)

25 Now there stood by the cross of Jesus His mother, and His mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.
26 When Jesus therefore saw His mother, and the disciple whom He loved standing by, He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son!"
27 Then He said to the disciple, "Behold your mother!" And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.

Future of care assignment (25-26)

Care through God using others (2 Cor 8:14)

> 14 At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality,

Care through God's supplying directly (2 Cor 9:10)

> 10 Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness.

Care that should evoke thanksgiving to God (2 Cor 9:12)

> 12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God.

Care through God's glorious riches (Phil 4:19)

> 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Future protection (27)

Protection in times of trouble (Nahum 1:7)

> 7 The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him,

Protection that is eternal (John 10:28-29)

> 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand.

Protection through the faithful Father (2 Thes. 3:3)

> 3 But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

Protection from evildoers (Ps 14:6)

> 6 You evildoers frustrate the plans of the poor, but the Lord is their refuge.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Commentary Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

The Angelic Announcement and the Late Night Visit of the Shepherds (2:8-20)

So far as we have been informed by Luke, it would be difficult to see the hand of God in these events. Mary and Joseph appear only to be an unfortunate couple who are forced to make an undesired and unpleasant journey to Bethlehem, and it is there, tragically, that Mary gives birth, in the most miserable of circumstances. Our conclusion, if it must be made here, would likely be, "How sad!" "How pathetic!" "How unworthy of the Israel's Messiah, the King of the Jews!"

The two key descriptive statements of Luke in verse 7 are now taken up, and their spiritual significance is pointed out in the verses which follow. Mary and Joseph just "happen" to be nearby a field in which some shepherds are tending their flocks. It may very well be, as some have suggested,[31] that these flocks were the

animals which were raised to be sacrificed in Jerusalem. These shepherds would also be looked down upon by their countrymen. Shepherds, as you will recall, were "loathsome" to the Egyptians (Gen. 43:32; 46:34); they were also poorly thought of by their own brethren. Geldenhuys reminds us that,

"Shepherds were despised people. They were suspected of not being very careful to distinguish 'mine' and 'thine'; for this reason, too, they were debarred from giving evidence in court" (Strack-Billerbeck, in loc.)."[32]

In spite of their poor reputation as a class of people, these shepherds seem to have been godly men, men who were looking for the coming of Israel's Messiah. All the others of those who were directly informed of the birth of Messiah in Matthew and Luke were described as godly people, and so it would seem to be true of the shepherds as well. After all, news of His coming would not be "good news of a great joy" (v. 10) unless they were seeking Him. The haste of these shepherds to the place of Christ's birth (vv. 15-16) also testifies to their spiritual preparedness and eagerness for the coming of Messiah. This is in contrast to the response of the Jerusalemites to the news of Messiah's birth, as prophesied in their Scriptures and announced by the magi:

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east, and have come to worship Him." And when Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him (Matt. 2:1-3).

To these humble shepherds the angel of God appeared in a blaze of glory, which caused them to be greatly frightened. The angel assured them that he brought them good news, and told them of the birth of Messiah.[33] This was to be the cause for "great joy" for all the people. I take it that by this the angel meant that all people, all the nations, and not just Israel, would benefit from His birth. Suddenly, the angel was joined by a host, an army, of angels, singing a song of peace.[34] Here was divine confirmation of the angel's announcement.

The angel had promised a sign to the shepherds. The sign was that they would find the child wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a cattle feeding trough (v. 12). The sign was not designed to convince the shepherds of the truth of the angelic announcement. Surely the splendour of the angel, compounded by that of the heavenly host, was convincing enough. I believe that this "sign" was for the purpose of identification.

From Matthew's account of the Bethlehem slaughter (Matt. 2:16-18), it is apparent that there were a number of babies in Bethlehem at the time. The way that they would recognize God's Messiah was by His swaddling clothes and by His unusual "crib." No other child would be found in such a setting.

And so the two most pathetic factors in the birth of our Lord, His "swaddling clothes" and His "cattle feeding trough bed," prove to be the very things which set this child apart from all others, and which identify Him to the shepherds. But they do more than this; they also identify Messiah with the shepherds. One of the names of Messiah is "Emmanuel," which means "God with us." The circumstances of our Lord's birth uniquely identified the Lord Jesus with the shepherds. The Lord seemingly had no roof over His head, no house to dwell in. Neither did the shepherds, who, we are told, slept under the stars, as they cared for their flocks (v. 8). Jesus was poor and of no reputation, as were they. And Jesus, who was to be both the sacrificial "Lamb of God" (cf. Isa. 53:4-6; John 1:29) and the "Good Shepherd" (cf. Ps. 23:1; Ezek. 34:23; John 10:14), identified with these shepherds by being found in a cattle feeding trough. Were they considered unclean by virtue of their contact with animals? So was He. What a beautiful picture of our Lord's humiliation and identification with men, even the most humble of men, rejected and despised men.

Eagerly and with great haste (vv. 15-16) the shepherds went to Bethlehem, where they "found their way to Marry and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger." I think it is important to recognize that the angel announced the birth and the location of Messiah not only so that the shepherds could witness this historic occasion, and to worship their King, but also so that they could tell others—be witnesses—of Messiah's birth.

Think first of all of the impact of the shepherds arrival and announcement upon Mary and Joseph. Granted, they had both been told that the child, who was miraculously conceived in Mary's womb, was the Messiah, the promised Savior. But it took years for this to be understood, just as it took years for the disciples to grasp who Jesus was. They continued to wonder and marvel at the things Jesus said and did, not putting everything together until after His death, burial, resurrection, and the promised coming of the Holy Spirit (cf. John 1l6:12ff.). So, too, Mary and Joseph must have been greatly surprised by the shepherds' arrival and by the report they shared of the angelic announcement and choir. While all who heard this report wondered, Mary, in some special way, "treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart." In computer terms, her data base of information continued to increase in size and she persistently was processing this material, as to its meaning and implications. I personally feel that it was the arrival of the shepherds which finally brought all the inconvenience and unpleasant circumstances of the birth of Jesus into its true spiritual light. What had once

appeared to be only a sequence of unfortunate events, now is revealed to be the hand of God working through history to accomplish God's will.

The testimony of the shepherds also had a great impact on the people in that area who were looking for God's Messiah. Luke informs us that the shepherds "found their way" to Mary, Joseph, and the child, but how did this happen? We do not know exactly, but I can at least imagine how it might have occurred in such a way as to make Messiah's arrival known to a great many people.

To me, the shepherds' search for the baby Messiah in Bethlehem was like a scavenger hunt. The "clues" they were given were (1) that there was a newly born babe; (2) that the babe was a boy; and (3) that he was to be found in a cattle feeding trough, wrapped in strips of cloth. I can just imagine those shepherds, converging on the town of Bethlehem, in the middle of the night (vv. 8, 15-16), knocking on doors, seeking to find a child meeting these descriptions. One looking on the town from a distance could have seen the whole town progressively lit up, astir with the news which the shepherds brought. From every house where the baby was not found, there was probably another addition to the search party. Perhaps the entire town was awakened and engaged in the search before the babe was found. All of this served to make the news of the Christ-child's birth known, as well as to create of mood of expectation and curiosity. At some of the homes, at least, there may have been the request to come back with news of where Messiah was found.

After the shepherds found the child and shared with Mary and Joseph what had happened, they probably retracted their steps through the town of Bethlehem, brings all the people up to date on what they had seen. Luke therefore tells us that "all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds" (v. 18). These shepherds, who belonged to a class of society banned from bearing testimony in the courtroom, were the ones God chose to bear witness to the birth of His Son. Why? Because, I suppose, God had always chosen the "weak and foolish" things of this world to confound the wisdom of the wise, and because ultimately it is not the messenger that matters, but the message itself. If Jesus came to bring salvation and deliverance to the poor, the oppressed, and the despised of this world, why not announce it by means of the despised and rejected? The apostles of our Lord were just such men (cf. Acts 4:13).

(Adapted from URL:https://bible.org/seriespage/4-birth-messiah-luke-21-20)

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Mary's "yes" to God included cherishing her son's identity through tender, exciting, and excruciating circumstances. She trusted God to sustain her journey and Jesus as her son and divine Lord. Mary held Jesus as he took his first breaths, and she was there with him as he took his last. She was with him as much as possible in between, even witnessing his first miracle. Mary observed Jesus' earthly life in all its humble humanity and divine activity. She kept watch and cherished the glorious (albeit painful) unfolding of God's perfect plan: the salvation of the world through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Mary's consistent "yes" models a beautiful pathway through uncertainty for us. She believed so fiercely in God's provision that she submitted her whole life to obedience and wonder. From the beginning, Mary collected and purposefully remembered the signs God sent that proved his prophetic word was true. She didn't waiver in her belief. Mary's love and loyalty were rewarded by continued care and belonging in God's family.

Mary was a model disciple. She knew the significance of Jesus' life and trusted that he could make a difference in times of need. Jesus was a model son. He did all he could to provide care and support for his mother.