

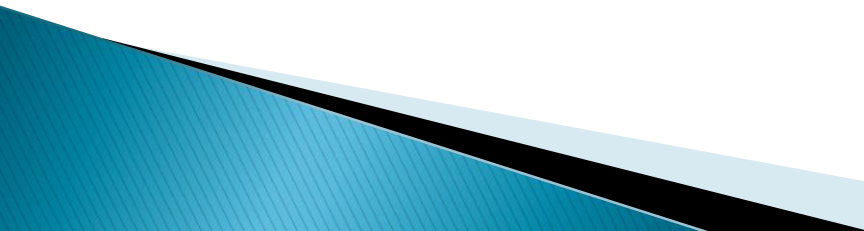
Gospel of Luke

Chapter 3

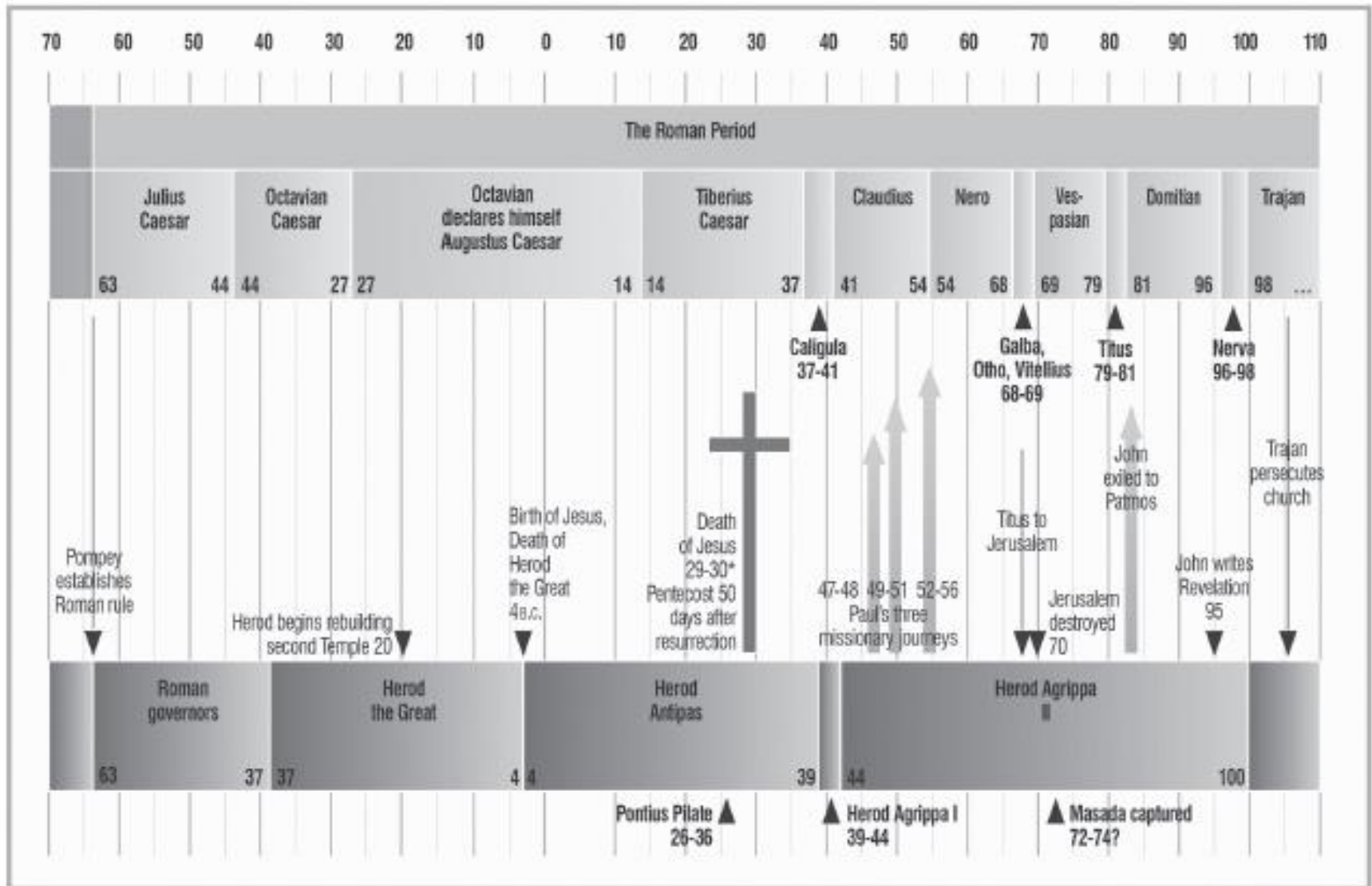
Gospel of Luke

Verses 1 – 7

1. How does this chapter begin? What was happening, when, and where?

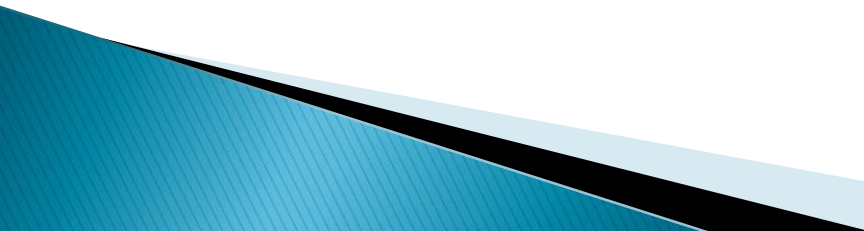
- ▶ “In those days” not “Once upon a time” – The biblical story is not a myth, but a record of divine activity in historical time.
 - ▶ Caesar Augustus decreed a census to be taken.
 - ▶ Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman Empire from 27 B.C. to A.D. 14
 - ▶ It was the first census / registration while Quirinius was governor of Syria.
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THE ROMAN PERIOD

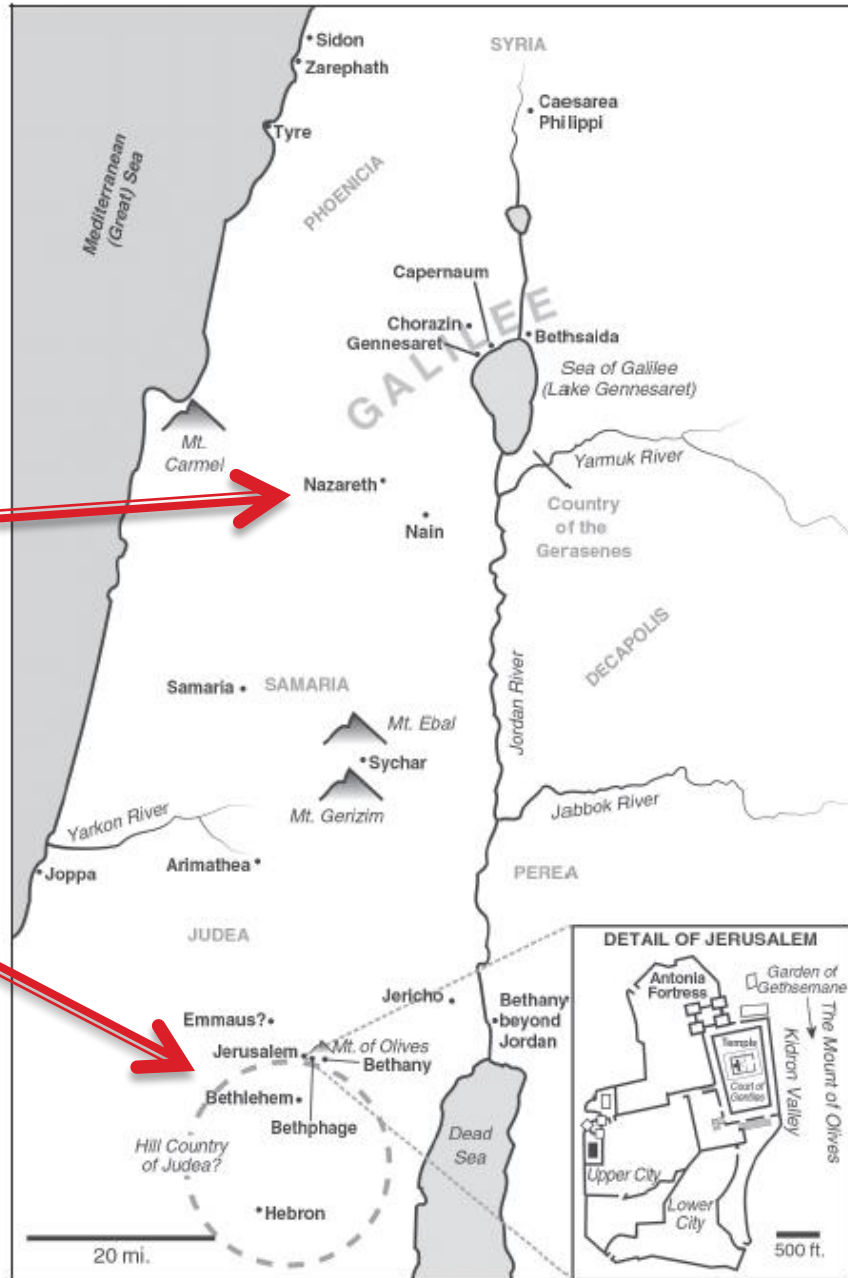


*Some scholars say A.D. 33

1. How does this chapter begin? What was happening, when, and where?

- ▶ Because Joseph was a descendant of David, he had to register for the census in the city of David.
 - ▶ He and Mary went from Nazareth in Galilee to Bethlehem in Judea.
 - ▶ Jesus was born in Bethlehem. God used Caesar to decree a census to send Joseph there to fulfill what He said in the prophets.
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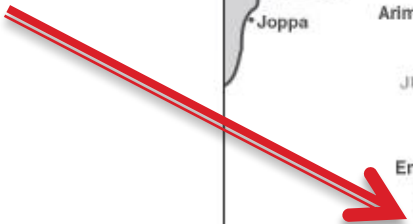
Israel in the Time of Christ



Nazareth



Jerusalem
Bethlehem



2. What does the name Bethlehem mean?

- ▶ “Bethlehem” means house of bread.



3. How do the cross-references in John 6:32–35 and Micah 5:2 relate to Bethlehem?

▶ John 6:32–35

- Jesus is the bread of life, the bread that came from heaven.

▶ Micah 5:2

- The ruler of Israel was to come from Bethlehem.

Gospel of Luke

Verses 8 – 21

4. Who and where are these verses about? What happened?

- ▶ Shepherds watching their flock at night.
- ▶ An angel appeared to them and the Lord's glory shone around them.
 - The angel said the same thing Gabriel had said to both Zacharias / Zechariah and Mary.
 - He told them not to be afraid because they were, and because his message was good news.
- ▶ He announced the birth of the Savior, Christ the Lord.

5. Why did the Angel say, “This will be a sign for you” in verse 12?

- ▶ Perhaps, other children born in the Bethlehem that night? Certainly the shepherds would find no other newly born infant cradled in a manger.
- ▶ Apart from the angelic announcement, this sign could easily be overlooked or mistaken for something other than it is. Without the divine word, who would imagine that in this humble person and place, Immanuel, “God is with us”?

6. Why is it called a sign?

- ▶ A sign: Is an object that points to a spiritual reality.
 - Contrary to imperial Roman propaganda, the true Son of God and Savior of the world—and thus the ultimate good news for the world—are not contained in a decree of Caesar but in the divine proclamation from heaven. The Savior is not mighty Augustus in Rome, but an infant lying in a feed trough in the city of David.
- ▶ Then a multitude of the heavenly host appeared with the angel and praised God.