

# appnotes

## DAY READ LUKE 1:5-25

1

Have you ever been overlooked? Picked last in gym class? Skipped over for the promotion? Didn't get the party invite? We assume we're not good enough to get noticed. You might even expect the same treatment from God. Doesn't He have more important things to do than care about our little lives? I mean, He does have a universe to run! Zechariah and Elizabeth surely experienced some of the same feelings. They had asked God to give them a child for decades, and nothing happened. They knew the stories of how God had blessed barren couples with children in the past. But it wasn't happening for them. Until one day all of that changed. God was going to give them a child who would point others to Jesus. God notices you, knows your heart, and weaves your story into His great story.

## DAY READ LUKE 1:26-38

2

The best magicians leave you dumbfounded. You watch intently and ask, "How did they do that?!" Mary was a teenage girl when the angel told her she would be the mother of the Messiah. "How?" She wondered, "since I am a virgin?" But it was as God said. God became a man. His delivery, like all deliveries, was painful and messy. He took the first breath. He cried. He was tiny and fragile. He was God. Makes you wonder, "How did He do it?" I cannot tell you how He did it. But I can tell you why He did it. I can tell you why He endured the hardship, humiliation, hatred, and hanging on a cross because, Jesus told us He came, "...to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45). He did it for you.

## DAY READ MATTHEW 1:18-25

3

What's the hardest decision you've ever had to make? Joseph faced a doozy. His fiancé was pregnant. He could break off the engagement and bring Mary shame and possible punishment. But, she would wear a scarlet letter for life. Or, he could marry her and bear the sidelong glances, shame, and economic fallout. Mary was innocent, but not everyone would believe her. Joseph listened to God, chose the hard path and got married. Even though it was hard, Joseph did the right thing, and he didn't regret it. Do you know what decision was not hard for God? Sending Jesus to save you from your sins. "But because of His great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

## DAY READ LUKE 2:1-7

4

Caesar Augustus was the ruler of the world. When he commanded something, everyone obeyed. When Caesar called for a census of the people, Mary and Joseph packed some things and headed to Bethlehem to be counted. Caesar dwelled in palaces and had servants to wait on him. Jesus was born near smelly animals and took His first nap in a feeding trough. Millions responded to Caesar's every word. Not many were there to see the Living Word at His arrival. But don't miss this: "When the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman" (Galatians 4:4). Caesars, kings, and presidents come and go. Their power is limited, and their legacies are mixed. There was more power in that baby's pinky than in a thousand of Caesar's legions. And He surrendered every privilege His power deserved to rescue you.

## DAY READ LUKE 2:8-25

5

Normal people send birth announcements to nice people they know. But God did something better. While His Son was being born in obscurity and humility, the Father lets some outcasts in on the secret. Shepherds were close to the bottom of the social ladder. They were assumed to be dirty thieves. The rabbis went as far as to label them as "sinners" and said people were not obligated to rescue them in the event they fell into a pit. Ouch. But these stereotyped scoundrels were the first people God invited to meet His newborn Son. The shepherds are the first to arrive on the scene and spread the news. Isn't that amazing? With God, the outsiders become insiders, the written off are offered a new role, and the outcast is chosen to speak out for Jesus. Jesus is the gift meant for everyone, even you.

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