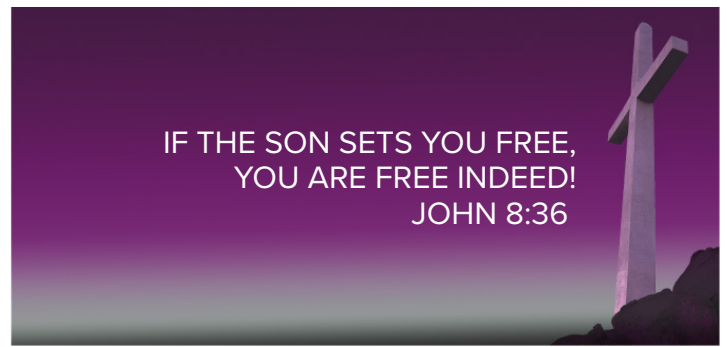


# Jesus IOI

## “Grace Thoughts”



A short devotional to help get you excited about Jesus!

*“While they were there [Bethlehem], the days were completed for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son.” –Luke 2:6,7*

When my parents passed away, Ana, a wonderful, godly woman who used to work for our ministry, asked me to send her my favorite photo of my parents and me. I didn't know why she was requesting it, but I soon found out, because I received from her a thoughtful and meaningful gift. She had my favorite picture made into a puzzle; the pieces of the puzzle were placed inside a beautiful box that has the complete photo of the three of us on it. I like puzzles, but I love this particular puzzle because every piece reminds me of my beloved parents.

Luke is the only Gospel writer who gives us the last piece of the puzzle about Jesus' birth. Many prophecies in the Old Testament had foretold His birth: A Savior would come to crush Satan's head (Genesis 3:15); the blessings of salvation would be for all the nations of the earth (Genesis 12:3); the Savior would come through the Davidic line (2 Samuel 7:12-16); et cetera. But there was one piece of the puzzle that was missing: the prophecy about the place where the Messiah would be born pointed to Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), but Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth! Luke unveils the mysterious last piece by telling us that “a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. . . . Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David.” (Luke 2:1-4). God had orchestrated this last piece of the puzzle hundreds of years before and revealed it to His prophet. God was behind every detail. It looked like it was Caesar Augustus who was calling for a census (verses 1-5), but in reality there was a whole divine plan behind it. David had been born in Bethlehem one thousand years earlier, and now His awaited descendant was to be born there as well, as part of the master plan. God has orchestrated our lives in detail as well. There is much that we don't understand, but one day Jesus will show us the view from above. Until then, let's trust that He has orchestrated our lives for salvation.

Talbot, Elizabeth *Jesus Wins!*, p. 373.