

## Virgin Birth Of Christ

### Lesson 6

#### The Place Of His Virgin Birth

1. Matthew tells us Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea. (Matt. 2:1; Lk. 2:4). See Jn. 7:42

MAT 2:1 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,

LUK 2:4 And 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,

JOH 7:42 "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

- a. The chief priests and scribes informed Herod the Great that "the Christ" would be born in "Bethlehem of Judea." (Matt. 2:5,6; Mic. 5:2).

MAT 2:5 And they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it has been written by the prophet,

MAT 2:6 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler, Who will shepherd My people Israel.' "

MIC 5:2 "But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

- b. Bethlehem was a town about 6 miles south of Jerusalem.
- c. Bethlehem of Judea is to be distinguished from a northern Bethlehem in Zubulun about 7 miles from Nazareth.
- d. "Bethlehem" means "house of bread."
  - 1) It is not known why this little town was given a name meaning "house of bread."
  - 2) Some think because of the fertility of the area.
- e. Bethlehem was a small town in Judea.
  - 1) It likely did not have more than a few hundred people at the time of Christ's birth.
  - 2) This was the place of David's birth and place where he was anointed king. (1 Sam. 16:1; Lk. 2:11).

1SA 16:1 Now the Lord said to Samuel, "How long will you grieve over Saul, since I have rejected him from being king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil, and go; I will send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have selected a king for Myself among his sons."

LUK 2:11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

3) It was originally called "Ephrath." (Gen. 35:16,19).

GEN 35:16 Then they journeyed from Bethel; and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath, Rachel began to give birth and she suffered severe labor.

GEN 35:19 So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).

2. Luke affirms Mary and Joseph returned to their ancestral home of Bethlehem. (Lk. 2:4).

a. The events of Matthew 1:18-25 had already occurred. Joseph had been assured that Mary had not been unfaithful and her children was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. (Isa. 7:14).

b. Joseph was one of David's descendants. (Lk. 1:27).

c. Mary was also a descendant of David.

3. Luke traced Jesus through the genealogy of Mary. (Lk. 3:23-38).

4. Luke also informs us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. (Lk. 2:1-7).

LUK 2:1 Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.

LUK 2:2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

LUK 2:3 And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city.

LUK 2:4 And 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,

LUK 2:5 in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

LUK 2:6 And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

LUK 2:7 And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

a. Luke reveals Jesus was born "in a manger" which was a crib or place where the cattle were fed (a feeding trough). "phatne" [**faht** nay] means "manger, stall, stable, feeding place."

1) What humility Christ manifested!

2) Jesus was humble throughout life, serving others and finally humbly died on the cross for the sins of man.

b. Imagine the King of kings being born in a stable because there was no room for Him in the inn!

c. It is sad many still do not have room for Jesus.

1) Many are too busy to come to Him..

2) They are too busy and too arrogant to serve Him.

3) Many refuse to follow one who could not save himself.

4) Others refuse to follow one who demands total allegiance.

5. The text does not specify how long they stayed in Bethlehem before or after the birth of Jesus.

a. The wise men found Jesus living in a "house" in Bethlehem and Jesus is called "the young child." (Matt. 2:11).

MAT 2:11 And they came into the house and saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshiped Him; and opening their treasures they presented to Him gifts of gold and frankincense and myrrh.

- b. This implies some time had elapsed from His birth in the stable.
- c. Jesus is called “the Child” and may have been as much as two years of age. (Matt. 2:16).

### **The Date Of The Virgin Birth**

1. The exact date of Christ's birth is not given.
2. There are some facts that help us appropriately date the year of the birth of Christ.
  - a. Caesar Augustus was the Roman emperor. (Lk. 2:1).

LUK 2:1 Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.

- 1) He was born in 63 B.C. and died A.D. 14.
  - 2) He reigned 41 years 27 B.C. - 14 A.D..
  - b. This means Jesus was born before 14 A.D..
3. Luke tells us that Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to be enrolled when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (Lk. 2:2).

LUK 2:2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

- a. Quirinius was twice governor of Syria.
- b. Syria was a Roman province including all Palestine and a tract of land 4 or 5 times as large lying to the northeast of Palestine.
- c. He was governor the first time about 8 B.C..
  - 1) The census of Augustus began in 8 B.C., but it is not known exactly when it began in Palestine.
  - 2) It is known the governors of Syria from 9 B.C. til 4 B.C. were Saturnius and Varus.
  - 3) The term “governor” was a general term and might refer to any office of rulership.
  - 4) A damaged inscription, now in the Lateren museum and thought to refer to Quirinius indicates he served two terms.
  - 5) Quirinius may have had another office when Jesus was born with special concern for the enrollment.
  - 6) There were times when two men were appointed to one province because one of them was expected to be fully occupied with the command of the army.
  - 7) Such might have been the case here.

d. He took a census.

- 1) The enrollment or census was the first step in the process of taxation.
- 2) It may have also been for the purpose of numbering of the population for military purposes.

e. He was governor of Syria a second time, A.D. 6 -11.

- 1) He took a census. (Acts 5:37).

ACT 5:37 "After this man Judas of Galilee rose up in the days of the census, and drew away some people after him, he too perished, and all those who followed him were scattered.

- 2) Luke's knowledge of the censuses is revealed in Acts 5:37.

- 3) He indicates the census in his first book (Luke) was before the one in Acts which was about 6 A.D..

f. The birth of Christ was at the time of "the first enrollment" when Quirinius was governor of Syria.

- 1) Since Augustus died in 14 A.D., this means Christ was born before 14 A.D..
- 2) Since Herod died in 4 B.C.(and Jesus was born before his death), this means Christ was born before 4 B.C..

g. Dionysius, a 6th century monk, introduced the present method of reckoning the Christian era.

- 1) It was later discovered he made at least a 4 year mistake.
- 2) Christ was born before Herod's death in 4 B.C..
- 3) Christ was a young child when God warned the wise men not to return to Herod. (Matt. 2:13).
- 4) He was called a "young child" at the time of the Exodus to Egypt. (Matt. 2:14).
  - a) The Greek "paidion" [pi dee ahn] denotes "a child, a young child."
  - b) The plural of this word is translated "little children" in 1 John 2:1.

MAT 2:14 And he arose and took the Child and His mother by night, and departed for Egypt;

- 5) Herod had the male children two years old and younger killed. (Matt. 2:16).

MAT 2:16 Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its environs, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had ascertained from the magi.

- a) We do not know how many infant males were killed.
- b) The male children killed included those in Bethlehem and "in all it environs."
- c) NIV has "and its vicinity."

d) The Greek has “horion” [**hah** ree ahn] meaning “boundary” and in the plural “region, district.”

6) Christ was likely born near 6 B.C..

4. The exact day of Christ's birth is not known.

a. Several days for Christ's birth were set forth in centuries past.

b. The traditional date is December 25.

c. There is no mention of December 25 earlier than the 4th century.

d. The fact the shepherds were sleeping in the field does not indicate a December date. (Lk. 2:8).

LUK 2:8 And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night.

e. The fact is that we do not know the exact year or day of Christ's birth.

1) He was born before 4 B.C..

2) Many dates have been set forth as to the actual day Christ was born.

3) Only God knows the year and day Christ was born.

f. We can be joyful and grateful for His birth without knowing the exact date of it.

### **The Importance Of The Virgin Birth Of Christ**

1. The virgin birth of Christ is important because it was a fulfillment of prophecy. (Isa. 7:14).

2. The virgin birth of Christ is important because it made Him the Son of God in the flesh. (Jn. 1:14; Lk. 1:34, 35).

3. The virgin birth of Christ is important because by it the Savior of the world came into the world. (Matt. 1:21).

4. The virgin birth of Christ is a foundational doctrine like the resurrection and without it we are lost and have no hope.

### **Closing Remarks**

1. This series of lessons has been to strengthen our faith in the virgin birth of Christ.

a. Mary was a virgin at the time of Christ's birth, but she did not remain a virgin. (Matt. 1:25).

1) Remaining a virgin would violate Genesis 2:24.

GEN 2:24 For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

2) Remaining a virgin would violate 1 Corinthians 7:1-5).

1CO 7:1 Now concerning the things about which you wrote, it is good for a man not to touch a woman.

1CO 7:2 But because of immoralities, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

1CO 7:3 Let the husband fulfill his duty to his wife, and likewise also the wife to her husband.

1CO 7:4 The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does; and likewise also the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does.

1CO 7:5 Stop depriving one another, except by agreement for a time that you may devote yourselves to prayer, and come together again lest Satan tempt you because of your lack of self-control.

b. There was no reason for her to remain a virgin.

c. Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit and was and is the Son of God. (Lk. 1:34,35).

2. May we always express our thanks for the virgin birth of Christ and the immense blessings He brings to our lives.

3. May the words of the angel always be on our hearts. (Lk. 2:10, 11).

LUK 2:10 And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people;

LUK 2:11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

4. Remember wise men seek Jesus. (Matt. 2:1-12).

a. Only those who come to Christ and trust in Him for salvation will be saved. (Jn. 3:16, 36; 14:6; Acts 4:12).

b. Only those who obey Him will be saved. (Lk. 6:46; Jn. 15:14; Heb. 5:9).

5. The One born of the virgin Mary, in the manger, is now exalted at the right hand of God and one day every knee will bow before Him. (Acts 2:32, 33; Phil. 2:9-11).

ACT 2:32 "This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses.

ACT 2:33 "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.

PHI 2:9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

PHI 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth,

PHI 2:11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

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