

Part 2

Lesson #2

PREPARATION FOR LESSON: Read Matthew 2:1 - 3:12; Mark 1:1-8; Luke 2:21 - 3:18
or Harmony of the 4 Gospels, Orville E. Daniel SECTIONS 22-30

EXPLANATIONS

Jewish birth laws When Jesus is 40 days old, Mary and Joseph take him to Jerusalem. Luke 2:22-24
Because He is the first-born male, He belongs to God, so He must be presented to God in the temple courtyard.
Because Mary gave birth, she must sacrifice a lamb and a bird. If she is poor, she can offer 2 birds.

Believing Remnant are a Jewish minority who have remained faithful to God, generation after generation.

They are the ones who will respond to Jesus and be used by Him thruout the Gospels.

They have been expecting the Messiah and praying for Him to come.

They are the ones being told about the birth of Jesus.

Examples: Mary, Joseph, Elizabeth, Zechariah, shepherds, Anna, Simeon.

None of the Jewish religious leaders (Sanhedrin) are told about Jesus' birth in the first days and months,
because they are not praying for His coming. They are *not* part of the believing remnant.

Even when they are told 1½ years later, they never go to worship Him.

Magi - special group of men in Babylon who have university training and after graduation are known as men of wisdom.

Their university has existed for hundreds of years.

Their responsibilities after graduation: advisors to Babylonian rulers; advisors to other nations and kings.

Their most famous graduates.

Balaam was hired by a pagan king in the 1400's BC to curse the Jews. But when God took control of his mouth, he said a *star* would signal the coming of the Jewish Messiah. Num. 24:17

Daniel was made head of the university after he explained Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

He said that from the command to rebuild Jerusalem to the *death* of the Messiah would be 483 years.

Because of his wisdom, thru the years many from this school followed and worshipped the Jewish God.

Their situation in 6 BC.

Babylonian advisors who are believers, know the coming of the Jewish Messiah has to be soon.

When they see an unusual brilliance in the sky, they believe it signals His coming and they want to worship Him.

After a long time of planning, some 25-30 of them travel 600 miles to Jerusalem, over a period of 5-6 months.

They logically go to the residence of Herod, the present "king of the Jews".

They find and worship Jesus in a Bethlehem house in 5 BC. It is 1½ years since the shepherds had worshipped Him.

Their gifts...

...are God's picture language to show the character of Jesus.

Gold is connected with kings - it shows His royalty; Jesus is King.

Incense is connected with worship - it shows His deity; Jesus is to be worshipped.

Myrrh is connected with death and embalming - it shows His humanity; Jesus came to die.

...are God's provision to finance their trip and to get established in Egypt.

Shechinah - means *to dwell or live with*; a special Jewish term for the visible presence of God; *the glory of the Lord*.

- It was in the inner part of the **tabernacle** and Solomon's **temple** in the form of a cloud, light and fire.
- It left the **temple** in the 500's BC because of evil at the temple and in the nation. Ezek. 8-10
- It has not been seen in Israel for 500 years.
- Now with the birth of Jesus, the Shechinah glory returns.

It is the **light** and **glory** of the Lord that appears to the shepherds.

It is the **brilliance** the wise men see and follow; they refer to it as "His star". Matt. 2:2

- the greatest form of this glory is **Jesus** Himself, who comes as the visible presence of God.

It is why He is called "light" - Isa. 9:2; Luke 1:79; 2:32; John 1:4; 9:5 are just a few examples.

John 1:1-14 is to show that Jesus **is** the Shechinah glory. Verse 14 sums it up.

The Word was made flesh and lived or "shechined" for a while among us.

We have seen His glory - the glory of the uniquely born Son who came from the Father.



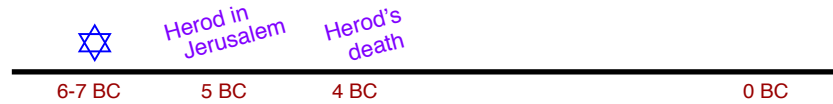
Date of Jesus birth - around 6 BC

Herod died in 4 BC. He left Jerusalem for the last time in 5 BC.

He talked with the Magi in Jerusalem in 5 BC and concluded the birth of Jesus had been about 1½ years earlier.

This is why he killed all baby boys 2 years and under - probably some 20-25 babies in the area.

This would make Jesus' birth around 6 BC.



Calendars

The Roman calendar becomes known as the Julian calendar.

It started counting time from the beginning of the Roman republic, 500 years before the New Testament begins.

It was used for hundreds of years but had so many errors that c. 50 BC Julius Caesar tried to fix it.

His additions and corrections became known as the Julian calendar; everyone used it during the New Testament days.

Jesus was born in Roman year 511.

Our calendar becomes known as the Gregorian calendar.

500 years after Jesus, monk Dionysius developed a calendar, starting all dates with the birth of Jesus.

He decided Jesus had been born in Roman year 517, an error of 6 years.

After all his studies and work, no one wanted to use his calendar.

900 years later, (c. 1400 AD), the Western world started using it.

However, people kept adding or subtracting days or weeks, creating major errors.

In 1582, Pope Gregory made adjustments; it became known as the Gregorian calendar.

In the changes thruout the centuries, there is still an error of 6 years in our calendar.

Jesus was not born in the Roman year the monk started counting with, in 517, but 6 years earlier, in 511

So using our calendar, Jesus was born in 6 BC.

Training of Jesus in His humanity.

At 5-6, He studied and memorized Leviticus and Deuteronomy; at 10, He studied Jewish oral laws.

At 12, He is apprenticed to His "father's" work as carpenter; at 13, He becomes responsible for keeping God's laws.

From birth to at least 12, He was specially taught by God the Father every morning. Isa. 50:4

APPLICATION

- ◆ Jesus had 33 years of preparation and only 3½ years of public ministry.
- ◆ Sometimes God delays our ministries; other times He ends our ministries.
 - Too often we think we have to be *doing* something for God in order to please Him.
 - God is more interested in what we are becoming.
- ◆ The life of Jesus shows us that our time of preparation is far more important than our time of ministry.
 - When we are becoming the person God created us to be, that **is** our ministry for the present time.
 - Until we are changed **by** God, we can never be effective **for** God.
 - How much are we letting Him change and develop our lives?

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