

LESSON I.—BIRTH OF CHRIST.

January 2 - 8, 2022

Nazareth and Bethlehem, B. C. 5.

(Matt. 1:1-25; Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-7.)

1. How is Christ introduced to the student of the New Testament? Matt. 1:1. See note 1.

2. How did the birth of Christ come about? Verse 18.

3. Who had previously visited Mary? Luke 1:26, 27.

4. By what name was she then instructed to call this promised Son? Verse 31.

5. As the descendant of David, what was Jesus to receive? Verse 32.

6. By what other name was Jesus to be called? What is its meaning? Matt. 1:23.

7. Learning the apparent state of affairs, what did Joseph think of doing? Verse 19. See note 2.

8. While in this state of mind, who appeared to Joseph? and how? Verse 20.

9. By what words did the angel assure Joseph?

10. Why was the child's name to be Jesus? Verse 21.

11. In all this, what prophecy was fulfilled? Verses 22, 23.

12. What effect did this word from God have upon Joseph's mind? Verse 24.

13. Shortly after these things, what decree was issued by the Roman emperor? Luke 2:1. See note 3.

14. Where did Joseph and Mary therefore go to be registered? Verses 3, 4.

Side texts to be studied with questions.

Rom. 9:4, 5;
1:3, 4; Gal. 4:4.

Isa. 7:14.

Dan. 8:16; 9:21.

Luke 2:21;
Acts 4:27.

2 Sam. 7:12;
Jer. 23:5, 6;
Ps. 132:11;
Rev. 3:7.

Deut. 24:1.

Acts 4:12.

John 1:14;
1 Tim. 3:16.

Luke 1:27;
1 Sam. 16:4-13;
John 7:42.

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| 15. What soon took place after their arrival in Bethlehem? Verses 6, 7. See note 4. | Micah 5 : 2 ;
Matt. 2 : 6. |
| 16. What humble resting-place was assigned to Jesus? Verse 7. Why was this? | 2 Cor. 8 : 9 ;
Matt. 8 : 20. |

READING.

“Desire of Ages,” pp. 43, 44.

NOTES.

1. Inasmuch as Christ was to be manifested to the world as the “promised Seed” of Abraham (Gal. 3 : 16), it was absolutely necessary, in giving an account of His life, for the evangelists first to trace His ancestry on the fleshly side, back to Abraham, and so establish His identity as the Messiah. Matthew, therefore, begins with Abraham, and follows the genealogy down through David to Joseph, the reputed father of Christ. Matt. 1 : 1-16. By this he attempts to prove that Jesus is the heir of the everlasting covenant made with Abraham, and renewed to David. Gen. 17 : 7 ; 2 Sam. 7 : 12-17 ; Isa. 9 : 6, 7. To this end he shows that Jesus stood in such family relations to Joseph as to have claim to all that belonged to him as the lineal descendant of Abraham. Luke, however, presents the ancestral line of Mary, inverting the order followed by Matthew, and tracing her lineage from Heli, her father, back through David and Abraham, to Adam, who was the son of God. Luke 3 : 23-38. This record says that Christ was the “supposed” son of Joseph, but He was, in reality, the son, that is, the maternal grandson, of Heli, the son of Matthat, etc. It will be noticed that both genealogies unite in Abraham, making it doubly sure that Christ was the promised “Seed” of that patriarch.

2. It seems that a divorce was easily obtained at that time. The form of such a bill among the Jews was called “Gett,” and was written upon parchment by a Jewish notary, in the presence of one or more of the rabbis, and was to contain no more than twelve lines. It was not supposed to state the reason or reasons why the separation was decreed, but simply to say that the woman was discharged from all obligation to her former connection, and was free to marry whomsoever she pleased.

3. The word "taxed" in the text comes from a word meaning to register or enrol. In such registrations it was necessary for each person to report for enrolment in the ancestral town. Joseph and Mary being both lineal descendants of David, they must repair to the "city of David" to be enrolled, according to the decree of the Roman emperor, whose subjects they were.

4. "And so it was" that Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in fulfilment of the prophecy, when His mother was a resident of Nazareth in Galilee. This is but one of many examples of how decrees of nations or kings have been steps to the fulfilment of prophetic utterances. Not that God made kings issue such decrees, but He, seeing the "end from the beginning," could fully state beforehand the results of these mandates.
