

The Word Announced

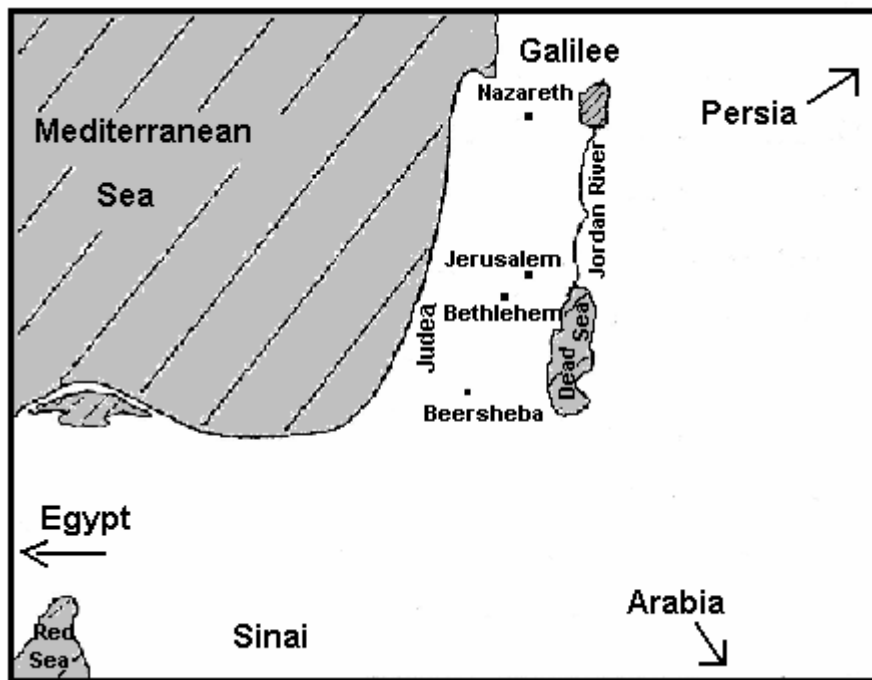
Lesson Sixteen

Luke 2; Matthew 2,3 Mark 1; John 1

This lesson will cover the childhood of Jesus. Several unusual things occur in His childhood that indicate the role He will have in the salvation of mankind. Two people of devout faith, Simeon and Anna, recognize who Jesus is in his infancy. The wise men travel from far distances to worship the baby as a king. Jesus himself gives an indication of His identity when He stays behind in Jerusalem at the temple when he is twelve. Each of these episodes is covered in this lesson.

The ministry of John the Baptist is also included in this lesson. Remember that he is to go before the Lord preparing the people for Him. This must happen before the public ministry of the Lord can begin.

The various places that were important in the childhood of Jesus can be found on the map below. Refer to it throughout the lesson.



THE CIRCUMCISION AND THE PRESENTATION

Luke 2:21-40

The circumcision and the presentation are two different events. Jesus is named at the time of the circumcision. The presentation occurred forty days after the birth. This is the amount of time Mary had to wait after the birth of her son in order to go to the temple. She was to offer a sacrifice for her purification. Her sacrifice was probably two pigeons or doves. At this time it was proper for Jesus to be presented as the firstborn child. The

firstborn of both man and animal was to be dedicated to the Lord. Animals were sacrificed and firstborn children were to serve the Lord. The Levites took on the responsibility of service to the Lord in place of the firstborn males of Israel.

Read Luke 2:21-24 for the details of these events.

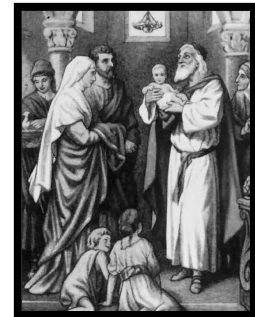
What two things occur on the eighth day after the birth of Christ?

1) _____ 2) _____

Why must Jesus be presented to the Lord? _____

What is the appropriate sacrifice? _____

And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout waiting for the consolation of Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him. It was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. He came by the Spirit into the temple. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for Him after the custom of the Law, then he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said, "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all people; a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel." Joseph and His mother marveled at those things that were spoken of Him. Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, His mother, "Behold, this Child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel and for a sign which shall be spoken against so that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed. And a sword will pierce through your own soul also."



Simeon proclaims that Jesus is whom? _____

Who are the Gentiles? _____

Will Jesus' life be easy or painful and difficult? _____

What does Simeon tell Mary about herself? _____

Simeon is not the only devout person who recognizes who this baby is. **Read Luke 2:36-38** to find out about another person to whom His identity is revealed.

What is the name of the prophetess? _____

Which tribe is she from? _____

For how long was she married? _____

What does she do day and night? _____

Does she speak of Jesus to others? _____

THE VISIT OF THE WISE MEN THE FLIGHT TO EGYPT

Matthew 2

Nativity scenes often picture the wise men as being present the very night of the birth of Jesus. Actually they came some months later and visited Jesus at the house where He lived. The number of wise men is also not known. Because there were three gifts presented, the assumption has been made that there were three wise men. The Bible does not specify the number. The wise men were probably astrologers from Persia or Arabia.

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, wise men came from the East to Jerusalem saying, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard these things, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. When he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea. For thus it is written by the prophet, 'And you Bethlehem in the land of Judea are not the least among the princes of



Judah; for out of you shall come a Governor that shall rule My people Israel.'" Then Herod, when he had privately talked to the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young Child. When you have found Him, bring me word again that I may come and worship Him also."

What news do the wise men bring to Herod? _____

According to the priests and scribes, where is the Christ to be born? _____

Does Herod really want to worship Jesus? _____

The wise men do find Jesus. **Read Matthew 2:9-12** for the details.

What three gifts do they give Jesus? 1) _____

2) _____ 3) _____

Why do the wise men not go back to Herod? _____

Herod cannot stand the fact that the wise men do not return to him. He is furious. He cannot stand the thought of a rival for his power. He does not want any king in his land

except himself. He knows where to look for the King, and he will go to great lengths to destroy Him.

When they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream saying, "Arise, and take the young Child and His mother and flee into Egypt. Stay there until I bring you word, for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed into Egypt. They remained there until the death of Herod that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet saying, "Out of Egypt have I called My Son."

Why do they flee? _____

To where do they flee? _____

When will they be able to return? _____

Read Matthew 2:16-18 to see what Herod does in order to destroy the rival King.

Who were to be killed? _____

Where was this killing to take place? _____

But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt saying, "Arise, and take the young Child and His mother and go into the land of Israel; for they are dead which sought the young Child's life." He arose and took the young Child and His mother and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus reigned in Judea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there; notwithstanding, being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee and came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

Note that Herod died when Jesus was about four years old.

Who is the new king? _____

Will they be safe in Judea? _____

Where do they go? _____

THE CHILD JESUS IN THE TEMPLE

Luke 2:41-52

Jewish males were supposed to attend three festivals each year. The three festivals were Passover, Pentecost, and Tabernacles. Since many Jewish people lived at great distances from Jerusalem, few attended all three. Most tried to attend one, and the one most

often chosen was the Feast of the Passover. The men were allowed to take their families with them. Jesus' family in this episode is attending the Feast of the Passover.

Jewish boys took on responsibility in the religious community at the age of thirteen. At the age of twelve they began to prepare for that upcoming event. Jesus takes that preparation very seriously. **Read Luke 2:41-45.**

Where do Jesus' parents go each year? _____

Why? _____

How old is Jesus at this time? _____

What does Jesus do at the end of the festival? _____

How much time passes before His parents miss him? _____

Where do Jesus' parents then go? _____

It may seem strange that Jesus' parents took such a long time to notice that He was not with them. With so many people going to Jerusalem at the same time, many friends from the same towns probably traveled together. Jesus' parents probably assumed He was with some friends somewhere in the larger group.

It came to pass that after three days they found Him in the Temple sitting in the midst of the teachers both hearing them and asking them questions. All that heard Him



were astonished at His understanding and answers. When His parents saw Him, they were amazed. His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You thus dealt with us? Behold, Your father and I have sought You sorrowing." He said to them, "How is it that you sought Me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" They did not understand what He said to them.

Has Jesus willfully sought to upset His parents? _____

With whom does Jesus know He must relate? _____

Read Luke 2:51-52 to see what Jesus does at this point.

Even though Jesus knows His relationship with His Father is paramount in

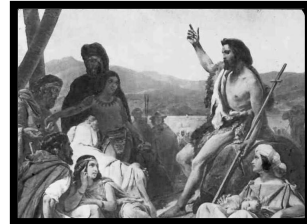
importance, how does He treat His parents? _____

JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-8,
Luke 3:1-18, John 1:19-28

In last week's lesson, John the Baptist was shown to be the one who would prepare the way for Jesus. Exactly how he did this is the topic for this section of this lesson.

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, the word of God came to John the Baptist in the wilderness of Judea. He came into all the country about Jordan preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt about his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and Judea and all the region round about the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan confessing their sins. When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "O generation of vipers! Who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance. Think not to say within yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father'; for I say to you God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Now also the ax is laid to the root of the trees; therefore, every tree which does not bring forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire."



The people asked him saying, "What shall we do, then?" He answered and said to them, "He that has two coats, let him give one to him that has none. He that has meat, let him do likewise."

Then came also publicans (tax collectors) to be baptized and said, "Master, what shall we do?" He said to them, "Exact no more than that which is appointed you." The soldiers likewise demanded of him saying, "And what shall we do?" He said to them, "Do violence to no man, neither accuse falsely, and be content with your wages."

Do many people come to hear John the Baptist? _____

What is John's message? _____

Does John believe the repentance of the Pharisees and Sadducees is sincere? _____

How can they prove their repentance? _____

Since John has gotten the attention of so many people, rumors begin as to whom he really is. **Read Luke 3:15, John 1:19-28, and Luke 3:16.**

Who do the people think John the Baptist could be? 1) _____

2) _____ 3) _____

Who does John say he is? _____

Of whom does he speak? (Use John's words.) _____

What will this person do? _____

REVIEW

1. Who took the place of the firstborn children in lives of service to the Lord? _____
2. Who would not see death until he had seen the Christ? _____
3. What prophetess also knows the identity of the Christ child? _____
4. How many wise men come to see Jesus? _____
5. Do the wise men visit Jesus at the stable where he was born? _____
6. Whom do the wise men ask for directions to Jesus? _____
7. Do the wise men return to Herod? _____
8. To where do Jesus and His family flee? _____
9. What happens to the babies of Bethlehem? _____
10. When Jesus and His family return, where do they settle? _____
11. What feast do Jesus and His family attend in Jerusalem? _____
12. How old is Jesus at this time? _____
13. Where does Jesus stay? _____
14. What does He do there? _____
15. Does Jesus obey His parents? _____
16. What is the message of John the Baptist? _____
17. What are three unusual aspects of John's lifestyle? _____

18. For whom is John preparing people? _____

