

**Jesus' Life Prior to His Ministry:
The Introduction of Christ, Part 3
The Births of Jesus and John the Baptist**
Looking into the Face of Jesus
The Life of Christ, 1: Pages 60-67
Outline: Lesson Plan 6

Introduction

- A. Texts for this study: Luke 1:57–80, 2:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25
- B. As we come to the births of John and Jesus, let us especially notice the divine evidence that surrounded those births.
- C. The Gospels have evidence as their primary purpose (John 20:30, 31).
- D. The birth of a baby is a common event in our people-packed world. One baby seems just like another, yet there are undreamed-of possibilities within each little life. That was true, one winter morning in 1809, when residents of Elizabethtown, Kentucky discussed the local frontier news. One person mentioned that a new baby had been born at Tom Lincoln's farmhouse, but nothing of significance was happening. That baby was Abraham Lincoln, who later would do more than any man to keep America "one nation, indivisible, under God." Not even Abe's loving parents imagined such greatness for their son.¹

I. The Birth of John the Baptist

- A. Read Malachi 3:1—prophecy concerning John the Baptist
- B. Read Luke 1:57–79.
- C. Significant events of the birth of John the Baptist
 - 1. Friends and family arrived.
 - 2. The eighth day was the time for the circumcision.
 - 3. Family suggested his name be Zacharias.
 - 4. Elizabeth must have known what the angel had said because she said his name would be John.
 - 5. Zacharias confirmed—then he was able to speak.
 - 6. Luke 1:68–79 gives the words of Zacharias:
 - a. Luke 1:68–75—praise to God for His promises
 - b. Luke 1:76–79—directed to his son (Luke 1:76—Zacharias quotes Malachi)
- D. Read Luke 1:80—Luke describes the first 30 years of John the Baptist.
 - 1. He became strong in the spirit
 - 2. He lived in the wilderness; some versions say "deserts." This was the area west of the Dead Sea in Judea.

¹Jerry Vines, *Great Events in the Life of Christ* (Wheaton, Ill.: SP Publications, 1979), 5.

II. The Announcement of Jesus to Joseph

- A. Read Isaiah 9:6.
 - 1. The Jews were looking for a man of war.
 - 2. They were looking for an earthly rule.
- B. Read Matthew 1:18–25.
- C. Significant events of this announcement
 - 1. When Mary returned from her three-month visit with Elizabeth, it must have been obvious she was pregnant.
 - 2. Joseph must have been devastated.
 - 3. What was Joseph to do? He could have done the following:
 - a. Ignored it
 - b. Stoned her
 - c. Divorced her
 - 4. Apparently, he was going to divorce her, but notice he was “not wanting to disgrace her” (Matthew 1:19).
 - 5. God sent an angel (Matthew 1:20, 21).
 - 6. Joseph must have had a lot of mixed feelings.
 - a. Proud that Mary was faithful
 - b. Proud to be the father of the Messiah
 - c. Worried about what everyone would say
 - 7. But notice what the Bible says in Matthew 1:24, 25a—He “awoke . . . and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him . . .”
 - 8. Note Matthew 1:22, 23—Matthew was establishing that Jesus was the promised Messiah, which means “God with us.”

III. The Birth of Jesus

- A. Read Micah 5:2—Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.
 - 1. However, where did Joseph and Mary live? Nazareth
 - 2. Show on a map—Galilee, Samaria, and Judah
- B. Read Luke 2:1–7.
- C. Significant events from the birth of Christ
 - 1. God used an angel with Joseph, but He used an unlikely source to fulfill His prophecy now—the emperor of Rome (see Luke 2:1).
 - 2. Everyone in the Roman Empire was required to return to his or her ancestral city.
 - a. Bethlehem was the home of David (1 Samuel 16:1; 17:12; 20:6)
 - b. Bethlehem is a village five miles south of Jerusalem.
 - 3. Joseph was a descendant of David.
 - 4. It appears that God did not tell Joseph and Mary that their son needed to be born in Bethlehem.
 - a. Why did Mary go?
 - b. She did not have to; it was close to the birth, so she probably did not want to be away from Joseph during that time.
 - 5. The trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem was not recorded. Their disappointment in having to lay their baby in a

manger was not talked about. All of this is left to our imagination.

6. But this momentous event is revealed in just a few words (Luke 2:6, 7).
- D. The Messiah was born! God became flesh!
1. The Bible says it was Mary's "first-born."
 2. She and Joseph obviously had more children (see Matthew 13:54b-57a; Mark 6:3).

Conclusion

- A. The Bible is true and factual as the prophecies prove. How amazing it is to see how prophecies written hundreds of years before the event are found to be true and accurate.
- B. God's purposes will be accomplished.
 1. God uses many methods and ways to accomplish His purposes.
 2. Zacharias and Joseph's faithfulness is something we should follow today; God told them things through the angels, and they listened and followed.
 3. God tells us things through the Bible, and we should listen and follow.
- C. We should have the attitude of Joseph when he did not want to "disgrace" Mary. That is the attitude we should all have with anyone.
- D. What lessons did you learn from the birth of Jesus?