

PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

BIBLE TEXT : Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 7:14; 9:1-7; 11:1-5; Micah 5:2; Jeremiah 31:15

LESSON 103 Junior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "And thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Numbers 24:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

Isaiah 7:14 (KJV)

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 9:1 (KJV)

¹ Nevertheless the dimness *shall* not *be* such as *was* in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict *her by* the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

Isaiah 9:7 (KJV)

⁷ Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 11:1-5 (KJV)

¹ And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:
² And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of

BIBLE REFERENCES:

NOTES:

Star in the East

Many years ago a beautiful, bright star appeared in the sky. The wise men of the East saw the star and believed that it meant the birth of the King of the Jews (**Matthew 2:1-2 (KJV)**) ¹ Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, ² Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. Numbers 24:17). Perhaps they had studied the Scriptures and found that the prophets had foretold of a coming King. No doubt they had read that a child would be born who would be in charge of the government (Isaiah 9:6; 7:14). It was time for the King to be born (**Daniel 9:25 (KJV)**) ²⁵ Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times), and no doubt the star was bigger and brighter than any of the others that they had ever seen, so they journeyed to Jerusalem where Herod the king lived (**Matthew 2:1 (KJV)**) ¹ Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem). Imagine their disappointment when they found no baby in the palace. But Herod called the scribes and priests, and asked them what they knew about the birth of a king. They told him that the prophet had said that Christ would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; **Matthew 2:4-6 (KJV)**) ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. ⁵ And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, ⁶ And thou Bethlehem, *in* the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel).

Gifts for Jesus

The wise men hurried to find the Baby. As they left the palace, there was that beautiful star, and it was moving toward Bethlehem. How happy they were, for it guided them to the young Child. As they drew near and saw the Baby and His mother Mary, they worshiped Him.

They had brought gifts, so they opened their treasures of gold, incense, and myrrh. These were expensive gifts but they wanted to give the best they had to Jesus.

That first Christmas morning God gave to the world (that includes us) the richest treasure in Heaven, His Son (John

knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

³ And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

⁴ But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

⁵ And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.

Micah 5:2 (KJV)

² But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting.

Jeremiah 31:15 (KJV)

¹⁵ Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, *and* bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they *were* not.

3:16). As the wise men worshiped and gave Him gifts, so we should do the same. Our gifts are not silver and gold nor costly jewels, but the very best that we have our lives and our love.

No Room for Jesus

Jesus' parents, Mary and Joseph, had left their home in Nazareth, and had gone to Bethlehem to be taxed. Since they were of the family of David (**Luke 2:4 (KJV)**) ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) they went to the city of David (Bethlehem). Many years before, the prophets had said that Christ would not only be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), but that He would come as a Branch of the family of Jesse (Isaiah 11:1). Jesse was the father of David (**1 Samuel 16:11-13 (KJV)**) ¹¹ And Samuel said unto Jesse, Are here all *thy* children? And he said, There remaineth yet the youngest, and, behold, he keepeth the sheep. And Samuel said unto Jesse, Send and fetch him: for we will not sit down till he come hither. ¹² And he sent, and brought him in. Now he *was* ruddy, *and* withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to. And the LORD said, Arise, anoint him: for this *is* he. ¹³ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah). Jesus Himself later stated that He was from the house of David (**Revelation 22:16 (KJV)**) ¹⁶ I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, *and* the bright and morning star).

There must have been many people there, for all the rooms in the inn were taken, but Mary and Joseph found shelter in a shed where the animals were kept. When Jesus was born He was laid on the hay in a manger. Of all those people, not one offered his bed to Jesus. What a shame that the Prince of Peace had no bed but the hay! But some people today have no room for Jesus in their hearts and lives. They have sent Him away as the innkeeper did, saying, "No room." Have you made room in your heart for Jesus?

One day, soon, Jesus is coming to earth again. Some people will see and worship Him. They are ready and expecting Him. Not many saw Jesus when He was born in a manger. They were not looking for the King as the wise men were. They were not expecting Him, so they missed Him. Those who are not expecting Him this time will miss Him, too. May we be like the wise men - looking for Jesus! If Jesus came today, would you be ready to meet Him?

Shepherds

The wise men were not the only ones who saw the Christ Child, for some shepherds had already gone to worship Him. As they were watching their sheep, the hillsides were lighted with the glory of God, and an angel gave them the good tidings of the Savior's birth. The heavens seemed filled with angels, praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:13, 14).

When the angels left, the shepherds realized that God had

sent the message to them. They hurried to Bethlehem to see the newborn Babe, whom they found lying in the manger. The shepherds believed the angel and found the Christ Child just as the angel had said. They stood in reverence, and no doubt bowed to worship the Holy Child. They went away giving glory and praise to God. They told others what they had been told, and what they had seen and experienced. They were just like those today who meet Jesus. They wanted to give the good news to others.

Baby Named

The Baby was given many names. Before He was born, God said that they should call Him "JESUS," for He would save His people from their sins (Matthew 1:21). When God talked to Joseph, Mary's husband, He told him that Jesus would also be known as "Emmanuel" which means "God with us" (**Matthew 1:23 (KJV)** ²³ Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. **Isaiah 7:14 (KJV)** ¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel).

In Isaiah 9:6, we read that He would also be called "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Some songs we sing refer to Jesus as the "Lily of the Valley," "Rose of Sharon," (**Song of Songs 2:1 (KJV)** ¹ I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys), "Rock of Ages" (**1 Corinthians 10:4 (KJV)** ⁴ And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ), and the "Good Shepherd" (**John 10:11 (KJV)** ¹¹ I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep). Do you know of any other names that He is called?

A Scheme that Failed

Herod had asked the wise men to let him know when they found the Christ Child. Deceitfully he said that he wanted to worship Him, too. But God knew what was in Herod's jealous and wicked heart, so He warned the wise men. They did not return to Herod but went home another way. When Herod found out that he had not fooled them he was angry, for he was a sinful man and very wicked. He planned to kill Jesus, so he sent forth a law to kill all the children under two years old. He thought that in that way he would surely destroy Jesus, the King of the Jews. Herod was afraid that he would lose his position so he planned to do away with Jesus. The people were filled with sorrow and sadness all because of one wicked and jealous man. Just think how we would weep if all the children under two years old were destroyed today!

This was the time of which the Prophet Jeremiah spoke when he said that there would be much sorrow and weeping for the children who were not (Jeremiah 31:15; **Matthew 2:16-18 (KJV)** ¹⁶ Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. ¹⁷ Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, ¹⁸ In Rama was there a voice

heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not). One cannot scheme against God and win. The plan of Herod's hard and murderous heart to destroy Jesus had failed. God had warned Joseph to take the Baby and Mary into Egypt, where they lived until the death of Herod. In that manner the Scriptures were fulfilled, for we read that God called His Son out of Egypt (**Hosea 11:1 (KJV)**
¹ When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt).

QUESTIONS

- 1 In what city was Jesus born?
- 2 How did the wise men know where to find Him?
- 3 How did the shepherds know that Jesus was born?
- 4 Why was He born in a manger?
- 5 What kind of man was Herod?
- 6 Name some things that the prophets foretold concerning Jesus' birth.
- 7 What gifts are you giving to Jesus this Christmas?