

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

Int.

1. Aim: To explain the facts about the Birth of Jesus and lessons we can learn from it.
2. Lk. 2:1-20
 - a. V. 7 "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."
 - b. Supreme event in the history of the world is the birth of Jesus.
 - c. It will remain the supreme event until he comes at last in glory.
 - d. This event took place in Bethlehem of Judea in fulfillment of O.T. prophecy.
3. The gospel is about Christ and his life. It is His ~ Story and it all begins with His Birth.
4. The inspired writers, Matt., Mark, Luke and John wrote of his life from his birth to his ascension into heaven.

Discussion

I. TIME OF HIS BIRTH

- A. Lk. 2:1-2 "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. 2. [And] this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)"
 1. His birth is so important that men reckon time from the time of His birth.
 2. A.D. = Anno Domini - in the year of our Lord - from the time of his birth B.C. = Before Christ
 3. B.C.E. = Before Christian Era C.E. = Christian Era - [Common Era]
 4. Dionysius Exiguus - Monk and scholar who introduced the idea of the birth of Christ as the starting point of modern chronology. Lived in Rome in the 5th and 6th centuries. He made a mistake on his calculation of 4 to 6 years. So Jesus Birth was really about 4 B.C. according to the present calendar. That would be 2,010 years ago.
 5. The exact date of his birth is unknown -
 - a. The exact year/month/day is disputed
 - b. Dec. 25 Early records suggest April 21, 22 or May 20
 - c. Eastern Orthodox Church says Jan. 6th
 - (1) Adam was Created on the 6th day
 - (2) Christ is the second Adam - 1 Cor. 15:4-5
 - d. Dec. 25th was started in the 4th century as the birth date for Jesus
 6. If it had been important then God would have revealed it.

- B. Gal.4:4 "Fullness of time" "But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,"
1. Paul says he came in the fullness of time
 - a. The world was in preparation for 4,000 years before the coming of Christ
 - b. Everything done before Christ was for his coming
 - c. He could not come before or after
 2. Fullness of prophecy -- when the prophets said he would come
 3. Fullness of expectancy - when the whole world was looking for the advent of a wonderful personality.
 4. Fullness of necessity - when the world was tired, weary, under a cloud of gloom.¹
 - a. World-wide use of common language = Greek
 - b. Roman roads and freedom of travel
 - c. Universal peace - law and order
 - d. Breakdown of heathen religions

II. PLACE OF HIS BIRTH

- A. Luke 2:3-7 "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. 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;) 5. To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. 6. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."
- B. City of David - Bethlehem
1. This identifies him with the Messiah of prophecy
 2. I sa. 11:1-2
 3. Jer. 23:6 "In his days Judah shall be saved, and I srael shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."
 4. Micah 5:2 "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 I srael; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

¹ Minister's Monthly "Lessons on The Life of Christ" Frank L. Cox

5. Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth [70 to 80 miles away] - but they had to come to the home town of their ancestors for the census and taxation purposes.

C. In a stable

1. Not born in a palace, or a court, or an inn, or in a hospital.
2. But in a stable, barn or shed or lean-to where animals stay.
3. And he was laid in a manger = feeding trough for animals.
4. The mother was unattended because it says "She wrapped him,"...
5. Swaddling Clothes.
6. The Savior of the World was born in a smelly barn.

III. ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS BIRTH

- A. Luke 2:8-12 "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. 10. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. 12. And this [shall be] a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."

B. To whom:

1. Not to the rich, or Caesar, or the Roman Senate
2. But to the lowly shepherds of the hills, to men in honest occupation - to representatives of common humanity.

C. By Whom:

1. An Angel.- v. 9
2. Many times Angels played an important part in the Life of Jesus:
 - a. An Angel prophesied the conception and birth of Christ
 - b. An angel named Him, Jesus
 - c. Angels heralded His birth to shepherds
 - d. Angels directed Joseph about the Child's safety
 - e. Angels ministered to Christ after his temptation
 - f. An angel strengthened Christ after His agony in Gethsemane

- g. Angels were witnesses and messengers of His resurrection
 - h. Angels attended Him at His ascension
 - i. And Angels will attend Him at His Second Coming!
3. God does not speak to us today through Angels but only through His Word!!

D. Glory that attended: v. 9

- 1. "The Glory of the Lord"
- 2. The light of God's glory is the only element in which angels dwell.

E. Nature of announcement:

- 1. V. 10-11 "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."
- 2. Joyful: "Tidings of great joy"
- 3. Universal: "To all"
- 4. Personal: "Born to you."

F. Confirming sign: Royalty in a manger! - v. 12

IV. THE ANGELIC SONG

- A. Luke 2:13,14 "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, 14. Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
- B. To whom they sang:
 - 1. One stanza to the Almighty
 - 2. The other to men
- C. When they sang:
 - 1. In the stillness of the night - the night of sorrow
 - 2. The Lord enables men to sing in the night
 - a. Job. 35:10 "But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night;"
 - b. Acts 16:25 "And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them."

D. Why they sang:

1. They adored the child - Heb. 1:6 "And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."
2. They loved mankind
 - a. The darkness of the old era was passing.
 - b. A new day was dawning - a day of peace, of joy, of newness of life.
 - c. Like the birds, they sang at the break of day.

V. THE SHEPHERDS AND THE BABE

A. Luke 2:15-20 "And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. 16. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. 17. And when they had seen [it], they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. 18. And all they that heard [it] wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. 19. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered [them] in her heart. 20. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them."

1. The angels withdrew.
2. Stillness on the Judean hills in the darkness of the night.
3. Shepherds went to Bethlehem

B. Note the reaction

1. An investigation - v. 15-16 They found the "sign", confirming their faith
2. Found the baby in a manger
3. Wonder - v. 17-18 - The whole world has wondered ever since, and the wonder and praise increase as the centuries go by.
4. Meditation - v. 19 - Mary meditated on these things
5. Adoring Praise - v. 20
6. Shepherds praised God

VI. UNIQUENESS OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

A. Virgin Birth

1. Isa. 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."
2. Matt. 1:22-23 "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 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."

B. Divine

1. If God was the Father of Jesus Christ, and He was, then it means that God was here, in the flesh, in our world.
2. One of the names given to Jesus was "Immanuel" which means God with us.

C. What does it mean? "God with us?"

1. God is not going to let us alone. Sending Jesus to the earth was His move. He came to us! John 3:16
2. Now it is our move. Because we can know God and His will. John 14:7, 9-11
3. God is within our reach

D. Miraculous - virgin birth

1. There was none other like it, and it will never be reenacted.
2. He was the only Child ever born into the human family whose life was pre-existent.
3. He came from Heaven, he came from the Father, and He returned to the Father.
4. He was the creator, the Second person of the Godhead, the Word of God, The self-existent One, whose going forth was from the days of eternity.
5. John 1:1-3 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2. The same was in the beginning with God. 3. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

E. Human

1. His birth was unique because His human nature was conceived by the miraculous operation of the Holy Spirit.
2. His conception was supernatural. He had no earthly father.

3. His birth was different in that he was born of woman just like any other human being.
4. A human body was prepared for Him by God the Father so He could die on the Cross to pay the penalty for the sins of mankind.²

VII. THE CHILD JESUS

- A. Luke 2:21-40
- B. Circumcised and named - v. 21
 1. On the 8th day he was circumcised
 - a. He was born under the law and they followed the laws
 - b. The law required circumcision on the 8th day
 2. Named - Mt. 1:21 "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins."
- C. Child presented - Luke 2:22-24
 1. Forty days of purification required by the Law of Moses
 2. Joseph and Mary brought the child to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.
 3. He was the first born
 4. In the case when families were poor they brought turtle doves or pigeons instead of a lamb.
- D. Child in the arms of Simeon - Luke 2:23-35
 1. A picture of tenderness and compassion
 2. Simeon was righteous - devout
 3. His Hope -- the consolation of Israel - the coming of the Messiah - This hope was founded upon the promise of the Holy Spirit
 4. Should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ
 5. Blessed the child
 6. Joseph and Mary were amazed at the things he said.

² Palmetto Messenger June 1996 Num. six Vol. three p. 3

- E. Anna's thanksgiving for the child - Luke 2:36-38
 - 1. An aged woman -- Widow -- served God
 - 2. Expressed her gratitude for the gift of Jesus

- F. The Child's Growth was normal - Luke 2:39-40
 - 1. Returned to Jerusalem
 - 2. His growth:
 - a. Physical - grew and waxed strong
 - b. Intellectual - filled with wisdom
 - c. Spiritual - And the grace of God was upon him

VIII. THE BOY JESUS - Luke 2:41-52

- A. The Boy Lost - Luke 2:41-44a
 - 1. Journey with the boy
 - 2. Return without the boy
 - a. He tarried behind in Jerusalem. He had become aware of a higher relationship. His duty to God had begun to dawn upon him.
 - b. They went a day's journey [about 20 miles] before they missed him.

- B. The Boy Sought - Luke 2:44b-45
 - 1. Searched among all the people traveling with them
 - 2. They were very anxious and sorrowful at the lose of their child

- C. The Boy Found - Luke 2:46-50
 - 1. Found after 3 days
 - 2. Where was he found?
 - a. In the temple - place where God and his people met
 - b. Sitting in the midst of the teachers
 - c. As a student - both hearing them, and asking them questions
 - 3. His mother's complaint - mild rebuke by his mother
 - 4. His reply: v.49
 - a. "And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"
 - b. First recorded words of Jesus.

D. The Boy at Home - Luke 2:51-52

1. He was an obedient boy -- he was courteous,, industrious, reverent, gentle, pure in life
2. Growing boy -- fourfold growth:
 - a. Intellectual - advanced in wisdom
 - b. Physical - and stature
 - c. Spiritual - in favor with God
 - d. And Social - and man

Conclusion

1. The Birth of Jesus:
2. Time - ? Do not know the exact year or the exact day of what month!!!!!!
3. We are not commanded to celebrate his birth, but we are commanded to celebrate his Death. This is not to be done annually but weekly "until he comes" by partaking the Lord's Supper
4. He was born - He lived a sinless life - He died for Our Sins - He was resurrected and is now ascended back to heaven to be with God.
5. He was born so that we could be born again and never die!
 - a. John 3:1-5 "There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:
 2. The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. 3. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and [of] the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."
 - b. Born again = New birth = Become a Christian
 - c. H.B.R.C.B. = SALVATION
 - d. Our birth is not miraculous but it brings Salvation for the soul.