Jesus--Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20
Birth of Jesus

I. Additional Scriptures…

1. Isaiah 7:14.
2. Micah 5:2.
3. "**City of David**" is used in Scripture to refer to two different places. The term is found 46 times in 46 verses. Most of the time it has reference to the city of Jerusalem, where David reigned (e.g., 2 Kgs 9:28; 14:20), but in Luke 2:4, 11, it refers to Bethlehem, the place of David's birth.
4. Luke 2:11 is one of only two places in Matthew through John where Jesus is referred to as Savior. The other is John 4:42.

II. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: **The Period of the Christ.**

III. Summary.

The remarkable story of the birth of Jesus is given in this text. It was "before they came together" (i.e., before Joseph and Mary had sexual relations), that Mary was found to be expecting a child. Joseph was a just man and characterized by mercy. He concluded, as would have any man, that Mary had been unfaithful to her espousal to him and determined to put her away secretly. The description here helps us to see that espousal in Jewish culture meant more to them than modern-day engagement. As this matter was troubling Joseph, an angel appeared to him and told him that the child had been conceived "of the Holy Ghost." The name of the child was to be Jesus.

A reference is then made by Matthew back to Isaiah's prophecy found Isaiah 7:14. The RSV and other versions that translate the Hebrew ALMAH as "maiden" or "young woman," simply have it wrong! By inspiration Matthew shows that this VIRGIN birth of Jesus was the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. Joseph did as the angel had told him, taking Mary as his wife.

In Luke 2 we read of a world event relating to the Roman domination of the world at this time. Caesar Augustus had ruled that all the world would be enrolled or registered (the ultimate implication of this would be taxation and enrollment of men into the army). As a result of this, Joseph and Mary would need to go back to Bethlehem, Joseph's proper place to be registered. This Bethlehem would be the place where Mary would give birth to Jesus just as Micah had prophesied many years before (Micah 5:2). The baby was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn.

The good news of the birth was presented to shepherds in the field. The angel said to the shepherds: "I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people." Surely this significant statement has been proven to be exactly true. Not only the angel, but "a multitude of the heavenly host" praised God saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The shepherds quickly went into Bethlehem to see with their own eyes what had been announced to them. When they had seen the child, they announced it abroad. Mary kept in her heart all of the things that happened regarding the birth of this Special Child. The shepherds returned to their sheep glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen.

IV. Outline.

1. Mary is found to be with child (Mt 1:18).
2. Joseph was ready to put her away secretly, but the angel explained the circumstances (Mt 1:19-21).
3. This birth would be the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14 (Mt 1:22-23).
4. Joseph did as the angel told him and Mary brought forth her firstborn Son (Mt 1:23-25).
5. An enrollment caused Joseph and Mary to travel back to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-5).
6. While in Bethlehem Mary brought forth her firstborn Son (Luke 2:6-7).
7. A spectacular birth announcement was made to shepherds by angels (Luke 2:8-14).
8. The shepherds came to see Baby Jesus (Luke 2:15-16).
9. These shepherds were the first to proclaim the good news (Luke 2:17-18).
10. Mary pondered in her heart about the birth of this Child (Luke 2:19).
11. The shepherds glorified and praised God because of the birth (Luke 2:20).

V. Questions.

True or False

01. _____ Joseph thought Mary had been unfaithful to him.
02. _____ Shepherds in the field were some of the first to know about the birth of Jesus.
03. _____ We read here about how a decree of Caesar was used to bring about fulfilled prophecy.
04. _____ The name JESUS means "God is with us."
05. _____ According to this reading, "the city of David," was called Bethlehem.

Who AM I? Who Said It? Who Did It?

06. _____ Decreed a taxation or enrollment.
07. _____ Pondered things in the heart.
08. _____ Said, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."
09. _____ Shall save his people from their sins.
10. _____ Went to Bethlehem because he was of the house and lineage of David.

Fill in the Blanks

11. Isaiah ___:14 "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a _____ shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name _____."
12. The shepherds found Joseph and Mary with the babe lying in a _____.
13. Micah 5:___ "But thou, _____ Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be _____ in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."
14. John ___:42 "And said unto the woman, Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the _____ of the _____."
15. It was with _____ that the shepherds came into Bethlehem.

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be given on next week's handout

ANSWERS for Lesson 01-22… [01--True, 38; 02--True, 5; 03--True, 36; 04--True, 21; 05--True, 15; 06--b, 9; 07--c, 5; 08--b, 15; 09--c, 20; 10--d, 28, 30; 11--24, eighth; 12--5, Elijah; 13--27, messenger, prepare; 14--Mary, know, 34; 15--Elijah, turn, disobedient, ready, 17.]

VI. Lessons & Applications.

1. *When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph*, … (Mt 1:18). As noted above in the "Additional Scriptures Section," espousal was more involved in Jewish culture than a mere engagement to be married. A divorce procedure had to be used to end it (Mt 1:19).
2. … *that it might be fulfilled*… (Mt 1:22). Matthew connects the VIRGIN BIRTH of Jesus with the prophet Isaiah's words found in Isaiah 7:14.
3. … *and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us* (Mt 1:23). The Great God of the universe, **through Jesus**, has identified and will identify with man by--
   1) His work of SUSTAINING THE WORLD.
      1- Christ sustains the very universe in which we live.
      2- The word CONSIST of Colossians 1:17 indicates that the things of the universe are actually held together by the power of Christ.
      3- Cf., Hebrews 1:3--"*upholding all things by the word of His power*."
   2) His becoming HUMAN.
      1- cf., Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4.
      2- Jesus came IN THE LIKENESS OF SINFUL FLESH (Rom 8:3).
      3- Jesus was tempted in all points, yet without sin (Heb 4:15).
      4- Thus, He is able to deal compassionately and justly with man (Heb 4:15).
      5- It was essential that He become human in order to DIE (Heb 2:14).
   3) His VICARIOUS DEATH.
      1- The RAM of Genesis 22:14 was offered IN THE STEAD OF Abraham's son--A picture of Christ, who went to the cross IN THE STEAD OF sinful man.
      2- Cf., Isaiah 53; 2 Cor 5:21; 1 Pt 2:24; 3:18; Rom 5:8.
      3- The death of Christ has a PROMINENT place in the Bible.
         1] The last 3 days of our Lord's earthly life occupy about 20% of Matthew through John.
         2] If all three years of His life had been recorded so fully, the "life of Christ" would have taken 8400 pages.
   4) His DAILY WATCHFULNESS over His people.
      1- Read Matthew 28:20.
      2- Cf., Acts 18:9-10; 2 Tm 4:16-17.
      3- Mt 10:29-30.
   5) His SUPPORTING our obedience.
      1- Read Matthew 18:20.
      2- The context (18:15-20) of this text indicates that even when saints are dealing with such heart-rending matters as the withdrawal of fellowship, JESUS IS THERE WITH US.
   6) His ETERNAL PRESENCE (1 Th 4:16-17).
      [Material in this outline is mostly from an article written by Wayne Jackson in *The Christian Courier*, 8/81.]
4. … *because there was no room for them in the inn* (Lk 2:7). Neither is there room in the lives of most people today for Jesus.
5. … *let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see* (Lk 2:15). The inquiring minds of the shepherds brought blessings to themselves and to others (cf., 1 Jn 4:1).
6. Names and titles of Jesus (Lk 2:21, 25, 26, 32, 32).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.

M	N	A	F	R	A	I	D	B	V	C	X	Z	L	K	J	H	G	F	T
F	D	S	A	P	O	I	U	M	Y	T	R	E	W	Q	M	N	B	V	I
T	G	B	Y	H	N	U	J	A	M	S	I	K	O	L	P	G	O	O	D
Q	W	S	X	Z	A	E	D	N	C	V	H	R	F	V	T	G	B	Y	I
Y	H	N	U	J	M	I	K	G	K	L	O	E	P	O	I	U	Y	T	N
G	R	E	A	T	J	C	T	E	R	E	W	Q	P	M	N	B	V	C	G
Z	W	S	X	C	O	E	R	R	N	F	V	B	T	H	G	N	H	Y	S
L	P	O	I	L	Y	K	U	J	I	C	M	Y	H	N	E	N	H	Y	U
J	M	T	F	G	B	V	F	R	G	E	H	D	C	X	S	R	W	Q	A
Z	X	C	V	B	W	A	T	C	H	L	O	R	D	T	Y	H	D	N	U
J	M	L	I	K	M	J	U	Y	T	H	N	T	I	G	B	R	F	S	V
E	G	D	C	V	S	A	V	I	O	R	F	R	T	S	G	B	N	A	Y
U	L	J	A	M	K	I	O	L	P	Q	A	Z	W	S	T	X	B	C	D
R	O	T	G	N	B	N	Y	H	U	J	M	K	I	O	L	I	P	L	O
I	R	J	U	Y	G	H	N	T	G	B	R	F	V	E	D	D	C	W	S
B	Y	V	C	X	Z	E	L	J	H	G	F	T	F	I	E	L	D	R	E
A	Z	S	W	X	C	E	L	R	F	V	B	T	N	Y	H	N	M	U	I
K	S	H	O	N	E	L	O	U	J	M	T	G	R	F	V	E	D	C	V
B	M	J	U	Y	H	N	T	G	B	B	V	F	R	E	D	C	C	D	E
W	S	X	C	D	E	R	F	V	T	G	B	N	H	Y	B	G	T	U	M

[The words below are from the words Luke records regarding the announcement of the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. See if you can find them all above.]

01. shepherds
02. abiding
03. field
04. watch
05. flock
06. night
07. angel
08. glory
09. shone
10. afraid
11. good
12. tidings
13. great
14. joy
15. Savior
16. Christ
17. Lord
18. manger