

## 27 Jesus Christ the Son of God – His Birth

We are a Christian church. This means that we follow Christ. The man Jesus Christ is the man we follow. We believe what Jesus Christ said. The name of our Christian group is "Christadelphian". This name means "brothers and sisters in Christ". So, who was Jesus Christ? Why is he so important to us? The story of Jesus is in the first four books in the New Testament of the Bible - Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Only Matthew and Luke tell us about Jesus' birth.

### **Mary - the mother of a future King**

Jesus was born about 2000 years ago. He only lived for 33 years, but his short life was so important that our years have been measured from his birth! Mary, the Jewish girl who was to be his mother, lived in Nazareth, a small town in Israel. Mary was about to marry a good man, called Joseph, whose family was descended from King David. However, Joseph was not a king. He was not even a rich man. He was a carpenter. Look at Luke 1:26-38 to see how God sent a special messenger, an angel, to tell Mary that she was to be the mother of God's Son. As you can see, the Bible tells us that Jesus was to be born of a human mother who was a virgin - she had never slept with a man. The baby was conceived by the power of God, without a human father. Joseph was not the father of Jesus. However, Jesus was born like every other human baby. Jesus was not God.

Mary must have been a very special person to be chosen by God to be the mother of His only Son. After she was told of the news, she spoke a beautiful prayer of thanks and praise to God in Luke 1:46-55. You might like to read all of Luke chapter 1 and see how Mary's older cousin, Elizabeth, was also having a baby boy. This boy grew up to be John the Baptist - he was sent by God to get the people ready to hear the message that Jesus would bring to them.

Verses 32 and 33 of Luke chapter 1 are very important, because it tells us what Jesus would be. Read the verse, and then answer the questions:

- Who do you think "the Most High" refers to?
- Jesus would have a throne. Who was the great King who owned this throne?

Jesus was to be a king, and his kingdom would never end. What an amazing promise! Have you ever heard of a king who would live for always? Jesus must be a very special person!

### **The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem**

Mary waited for the time when her son would be born. However, Mary lived in Nazareth, and the ancient books of the Jews had said that the Special King would be born in the city of Bethlehem. In those times there were no cars, buses, trains or airplanes. People had to walk everywhere. It was a long journey to make, especially for Mary about to have a baby. So it seemed that Jesus would be born in Nazareth.

However, the ancient history books had said that the King had to be born in Bethlehem. How would God do it? How could He get Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem?

God did an amazing thing to make this happen. Thousands of kilometres away, the King of Rome decided to count all the people in his kingdom. Every man had to return to his birthplace to be counted. Joseph had been born in Bethlehem, and so he and Mary had to make the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Mary was almost ready to have her baby.

If the King of the world was to be born, where should he be born? In a palace? Of course! Should he lie in a cradle lined with gold and decorated with diamonds? Of course he should! But what happened when Jesus was born?

### **The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem**

When Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem, they found the town was filled with people. There was nowhere for them to stay, and the birth was very near. Someone took pity on them, and allowed them to go into a stable and rest there. There Jesus was born. There must have been hundreds of people in Bethlehem that night. Only the animals in

that stable saw the birth of the Son of God. Where could Mary place her newborn baby? The only place was a feeding trough, called a manger. How could God make His Son be born in a stable surrounded by horses, cows and sheep? How could a newborn baby be placed in a feeding trough? However, this is what God did, to teach us a new way to live. A life of service - a life where we are no longer important, but that we should show the love of God to everyone we meet. We become the servants of God in heaven and His Son, Jesus.

When Jesus was born, the rulers of the Jews never knew. The king of Rome never knew. Anyone who was important was swept aside. Yet, it was one of the greatest events in history - the birth of the Son of God. Who would God tell of the birth? He told the shepherds in the fields around Bethlehem. Of all the people on earth, God announced the news to the simple men who kept the sheep. Look at Luke 2:8-20.



Some other people were watching for the birth of Jesus. These men lived many hundreds of kilometres east of Israel. They were astronomers, that is, they studied the stars in the sky. When Jesus was born, a brilliant star appeared in the sky. We are not certain what they saw - it may have been a comet. However, these astronomers, or "Magi" as the Bible calls them, made the long journey to Israel to see the new king Jesus.

By the time they reached there, Jesus may have been about a year old. The Magi brought gifts of gold, perfume and spices. You can read about the visit of the Magi in Matthew 2:1-12. If you read the rest of the chapter, you will see how Mary and Joseph had to take baby Jesus and go to Egypt. They had to escape the cruel king at the time who didn't want anyone to take his throne. See Matthew 2:13-23.

We know very little about Jesus as a child, except for what we read in Luke 2:40. Jesus was a special child. One day he will be King of the whole world. His names mean:

- Jesus = Saviour - someone who can save us.
- Christ = a person who will be king

### **Further Study**

You may like to look at the following verses to learn some more about Jesus:

- Simeon speaks about Jesus in the Temple at Jerusalem. Luke 2:25-35.
- Jesus visits the Temple when he was 12 years old. Luke 2:41-52.
- Many details of Jesus' life were written in the Old Testament, many years before he was born. Here are three of them:
  1. 1 Jesus' mother would be a virgin - Isaiah 7:14
  2. 2 Jesus to come from King David's family - Psalm 89:3-4
  3. 3 Jesus to be born in Bethlehem - Micah 5:2

### **Summary**

- The story of Jesus is in the New Testament of the Bible.
- Jesus was a special person because he was the Son of God - but he was the son of a human mother - Mary.
- Soon, Jesus will be King of the whole world.
- Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem.
- The Old Testament told about Jesus many years before he was born.