



Jesus Is Born

Luke 2:1-20; Hebrews 1:1-4

BIBLE BACKGROUND
FOR LEADERS

Toward Bethlehem

These two passages describe the incarnation of Christ in different ways. Luke presents the concrete historical facts, while the writer of Hebrews explains how the appearance of Jesus fits into the big picture of God's working in and through human history.

Luke 2:1-20 describes Joseph and Mary's continuing hardships. Near the end of Mary's pregnancy, she and Joseph had to travel 70 miles from Nazareth to his ancestral home of Bethlehem—probably on foot.

The Savior Is Born

The exact date of Jesus' birth is impossible to calculate. Based on historical evidence regarding the reign of Herod the Great (as mentioned in Matthew 2) and the census, most Biblical scholars set Jesus' birth somewhere between 6 to 4 B.C. Unfortunately, the date of Jesus' birth was miscalculated when the Christian calendar was created.

Birth Announcement

It is significant that Jesus' birth was announced first to shepherds. In those days shepherds were not highly regarded. They were considered so unreliable that their testimony was not accepted in the courts, and they were deemed unclean by the orthodox religious establishment. The fact that Jesus' birth was announced first to them indicates that Jesus came to earth for those in need of a Savior. It also foreshadows the common people's acceptance of Christ and the religious leaders' rejection of him.

The Messiah Revealed

The significance of Jesus' coming is described in Hebrews 1:1-4. Prior to Jesus' incarnation, God

spoke through the Old Testament writers. Their writings pointed to the advent of the Messiah. With the coming of Jesus, a new era was ushered in as God revealed himself in a new way. In the past he had spoken through faithful people. Now he would speak through the life, actions, and words of his own Son.

Jesus is the very Son of God, not just a servant. He is the Creator of our universe. He shows us the radiance of God's glory. He is God himself! He continues to hold together all that exists. He brought salvation for us through his death on the cross. And he is now sitting in heaven with God! Jesus is the living Word of God, who came to show us who God is and to make it possible for us to live in relationship with God himself. Even the angels, as exalted as they were in Jewish culture, were a distant second to God's supreme revelation of himself in Jesus!

The Jesus Connection

Jesus was and always will be the best Christmas gift ever! Share the truth of Jesus with someone else today. Jesus is the gift that keeps on giving!

Reread Hebrews 1:1-4 as a way to celebrate the truth of Christmas. Regardless of your thoughts about Christmas, when you make Jesus the focus, it becomes the best holiday ever. Jesus can fill any void you may feel at this time of year. Make Hebrews 1:1-4 into a prayer for your Christmas. You can write your prayer here.





DIGGING
DEEPER

Luke 2:1-20; Hebrews 1:1-4

► Bible Point—Jesus was born to be our Savior.

Key Verse—“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me’ ” (John 14:6).

Daily Challenges

Choose one or more of these activities to do this week.

- In a quiet time this week, write about where your own faith commitment to Jesus is right now. Write about where you stand in trusting Jesus Christ as your Savior.
- Give a present to someone you don't know very well. Then take some time to explain God's greatest gift—Jesus—to him or her, and what that gift has meant in your own life.
- Think of one person this week you'll tell about Jesus and why he was born for us. Then share the wonderful love of Jesus with him or her.

Through the Week

Use the following passages to explore additional biblical insights into the impact of Jesus' birth.

Monday—Romans 6:23

- What do you want to say to thank Jesus for this gift?

Tuesday—Isaiah 9:6

- What are other names that describe Jesus?

Wednesday—Mark 10:45

- How can you serve someone today to be like Jesus?

Thursday—Isaiah 7:14

- How was this promise fulfilled when Jesus was born?

Friday—1 John 4:14-16

- Does God live in you? How does it show?

Saturday—Titus 3:4-5

- How has God shown his mercy to you?

Talk Topics

- Discuss ways that you can begin to share the exciting news of Jesus' birth and the salvation he brings with people in your neighborhood.
- Why is it important to understand why Jesus was born?
- Tell about the ways people you know are trying to find God but aren't finding him.
- How does our culture try to refute the fact that Jesus is the only way to God?

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