

Class: Teachers  
Text: Matthew 1:18-25; 2:1-18  
Luke 1:26-38; 2:1-38

Date: 2001  
Teacher: Keith Pierce

Lesson #: 01  
Memory Verse: Hebrews 1:1-2

## Concept development

Godhead - Recognizing Jesus as the Son of God

## Birth of Christ

Words to define: Betrothed [Matt 1:18]; Immanuel [Matt 1:23]

400 year silence since Natani.

Body: Mary's faith and character

Mary was greatly troubled with Gabriel's salutation (blessed among the women)  
She is told that she will conceive and bring forth a son

Call His name Jesus; He will be called the Son of the Most High; He will sit on David's throne (descendant of David)  
Mary said How shall this be I have known no man Mary was betrothed - going to be married  
The Holy Spirit would overshadow her and what is begotten shall be called the Son of God

Joseph's faith and character

After Mary conceives she goes to Elisabeth's house for about 3 months

On her return Joseph 'finds out' that she is with child (she didn't tell him) he was

The punishment in the Old Law is death by stoning [Romans would not allow it]

Joseph did not want to make her a public example

He was going to give her a bill of divorcement, not stoning the woman who was marked, not man  
It was to be done in private

Joseph's Evidence

The Lord appeared to him in a dream and said that this is of Him

Isaiah 7:14 - A virgin shall be with child - came to Joseph's mind, when remembering

Joseph took Mary, as his wife but knew her not - until Jesus was born

Took her into his home to be the "father" to Jesus

As they became family unit

The Shepherds [Jews]

An angel stood by them and the glory of the Lord shone about them

They were very afraid

This day a Savior is born who is the Anointed Lord

Suddenly a multitude of heavenly host were praising God, curtains of heaven were forced back

They understood this as a message from God and went with haste to find the Child - right away

They praised and glorified God

Pharaoh never submitted to God, by the miraculous things - plagues

Simeon said that the child would be a light for revelation to the Gentiles and the Glory of the people of Israel

Anna praised God and spoke of him to all those around

7 days considered unclean, 8th day he was circumcised, 33 more days he was considered unclean, couldn't touch anything holy, then go to Jerusalem to make sacrifice - turtle dove for poor 41 days after birth

The Wise men from the east [Gentiles]

Daniel 4:1-2 - Daniel understood the number of the years of captivity (Jeremiah 29:10)

Daniel 2:48 - He was placed over all of the Wise men

Isaiah 45:1-7 - Cyrus may know that God has called him by name

They came to worship the Christ child

They were going about the city asking where the King of the Jews was born

Word got to Herod what they were looking for so he inquired of the scribes [Micah 5:2]

Herod called the Wise men for a private meeting and asks them the exact time they saw the star

Probably about a 1 to 1 1/2 years ago time of Christ birth, until they saw Christ

Herod killed the babies 2 years and younger but he killed all children 2 years and younger

Although their mission was known to many none went with them to see the child

Upon seeing the Child they fell down worshipping Him and gave gifts [used to go to Egypt]

Stayed in Bethlehem for about 1 1/2 yrs.

\* Star appeared twice - once b4 birth, then for wise men, stayed as long as they could

none of Jews knew anything about, the only one who could say anything about it was Joseph

written in order  
of events - not  
clear in reading

Wise men  
didn't visit in  
visited at home

Greek - young  
child - infant

men from east  
were astrologers  
follow stars  
study stars

How wise  
men knew  
came to  
Jerusalem

Daniel was  
reading from  
scripture  
since captivity  
was for 70 yrs

writings of Israel  
were in the house  
in east, they  
studied them,  
then figure out  
where they were  
to go

## BETROTHAL

~~mutual promise or contract for a future marriage (Deut 20:7; Jer 2:2; Luke 1:27).~~

The selection of the bride was followed by the betrothal, not to be entirely equated with the modern concept of engagement. A betrothal was undertaken by a friend or agent representing the bridegroom and by the parents representing the bride. It was confirmed by oaths and was accompanied with presents to the bride and often to the bride's parents. The betrothal was celebrated by a feast. In some instances, it was customary for the bridegroom to place a ring, a token of love and fidelity, on the bride's finger. In Hebrew custom, betrothal was actually part of the marriage process. A change of intention by one of the partners after he or she was betrothed was a serious matter, subject in some instances to penalty by fine.

~~The most important instance of betrothal in the Bible is the one between Joseph and Mary (Matt 1:18-19). A Jewish betrothal could be dissolved only by the man's giving the woman a certificate of divorce. A betrothal usually lasted for one year. During that year the couple were known as husband and wife, although they did not have the right to be united sexually.~~

~~Betrothal was much more closely linked with marriage than our modern engagement. But the actual marriage took place only when the bridegroom took the bride to his home and the marriage was consummated in the sexual union.~~

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## HEROD

The name of several Roman rulers in the Palestine region during Jesus' earthly ministry and the periods shortly before His birth and after His resurrection.

The Herodian dynasty made its way into Palestine through Antipater, an Idumean by descent. The Idumeans were of Edomite stock as descendants of Esau. Antipater was installed as procurator of Judea by Julius Caesar, the emperor of Rome, in 47 B.C. He appointed two of his sons to ruling positions. One of these was Herod, known as "Herod the Great," who was appointed governor of Judea.

### **Herod the Great (37-4 B.C.)**

The title Herod the Great refers not so much to Herod's greatness as to the fact that he was the eldest son of Antipater. Nevertheless, Herod did show some unusual abilities. ~~He was a ruthless fighter, a cunning negotiator, and a subtle diplomat. The Romans appreciated the way he subdued opposition and maintained order among the Jewish people. These qualities, combined with an intense loyalty to the emperor, made him an important figure in the life of Rome and the Jews of Palestine.~~

After Herod became governor of Galilee, he quickly established himself in the entire region. For 33 years he remained a loyal friend and ally of Rome. Later, he was appointed as king of Judea, where he was in direct control of the Jewish people. This required careful diplomacy because he was always suspect by the Jews as an outsider (Idumean) and thus a threat to their national right to rule.

At first Herod was conscious of Jewish national and religious feelings. He moved slowly on such issues as taxation, HELLENISM, and religion. He did much to improve his relationship with the Jews when he prevented the Temple in Jerusalem from being raided and defiled by invading Romans.

Herod the Great established his authority and influence through a centralized bureaucracy, wellbuilt fortresses, and foreign soldiers. ~~To assure his continued rule, he slaughtered all male infants who could possibly be considered legal heirs to the throne.~~ His wife Mariamne also became a victim of his suspicion and brutality.

~~The territories under Herod's rule experienced economic and cultural growth. His business and organizational ability led to the erection of many important buildings. Hellenistic (Greek) ideas were introduced into Palestine through literature, art and athletic contests. His major building project was the Temple in Jerusalem, which, according to John 2:20, took 46 years to build. From the Jewish perspective, this was his greatest achievement. At times Herod implemented his policies with force and cruelty. His increasing fear of Jewish revolt led to suppression of any opposition. His personal problems also increased, and by 14 B.C. his kingdom began to decline. This decline was brought on mainly by his personal and domestic problems.~~

~~Herod's murder of his wife Mariamne I apparently haunted him. This was compounded when his two sons from that marriage, Alexander and Aristobulus, realized that their father was responsible for their mother's death. By 7 B.C., Herod had both of these sons put to death. Of Herod it was said, "It is better to be Herod's hog than to be his son."~~

As Herod became increasingly ill, an intense struggle for succession to his throne emerged within the family. His 10 marriages and 15 children virtually guaranteed such a struggle. One son, Antipater, poisoned Herod's mind against two other eligible sons, Archelaus and Philip. This resulted in his initial choice of a younger son, Antipas, as sole successor. However, he later changed his will and made Archelaus king. Antipas and Philip received lesser positions as TETRARCHS, or rulers, over small territories.

After Herod died, his will was contested in Rome. Finally Archelaus was made ethnarch over Idumea, Judea, and Samaria-with a promise to be appointed king if he proved himself as a leader. Antipas became tetrarch over Galilee and Perea. Philip was made tetrarch over Gaulanitis, Trachonitis, Batanea, and Paneas in the northern regions.

~~Jesus was born in Bethlehem during the reign of Herod the Great. The wise men came asking, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" This aroused Herod's jealous spirit. According to Matthew's account, Herod tried to eliminate Jesus by having all the male infants of the Bethlehem region put to death (Matt 2:13-16). But this despicable act failed. Joseph and Mary were warned by God in a dream to take their child and flee to Egypt. Here they hid safely until Herod died (Matt 2:13-15).~~

### **Herod Archelaus (4 B.C.-A.D. 6)**

Archelaus inherited his father Herod's vices without his abilities. He was responsible for much bloodshed in Judea and Samaria. Jewish revolts, particularly those led by the ZEALOTS, were brutally crushed. Antipas and Philip did not approve of Archelaus' methods; so they complained to Rome. Their complaints were followed by a Jewish delegation that finally succeeded in having Archelaus stripped of power and banished to Rome.

The only biblical reference to Archelaus occurs in Matt 2:22. Matthew recorded the fear that Mary and Joseph had about going through Judea on their way from Egypt to Galilee because Archelaus was the ruler.

Herod Philip the Tetrarch. Philip, who inherited the northern part of his father Herod the Great's kingdom (Luke 3:1), must have been the best of Herod's surviving sons. During his long and peaceful rule, he was responsible for a number of building projects, including the city of Caesarea Philippi. He also rebuilt Bethsaida into a Greek city and renamed it Julia in honor of Augustus Caesar's daughter, Julia.

#### **Herod Antipas (4 B.C. - A.D. 39)**

Antipas, another of Herod the Great's sons, began as tetrarch over Galilee and Perea. He was the ruling Herod during Jesus' life and ministry. Herod Antipas was first married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian king of Petra. But he became infatuated with Herodias, the wife of his half-brother, Philip I. The two eloped together, although both were married at the time. This scandalous affair was condemned severely by John the Baptist (Matt 14:4; Mark 6:17-18; Luke 3:19).

Although Antipas apparently had some respect for John the Baptist, he had John arrested and imprisoned for his outspokenness. Later, at a royal birthday party, Antipas granted Salome, the daughter of Herod Philip, a wish. Probably at the prodding of Herodias (Mark 6:19), Salome requested the head of John the Baptist (Matt 14:6-12; Mark 6:21-29). Since he was under oath and did not want to lose face before his guests, Herod ordered John's execution.

Antipas' contacts with Jesus occurred at the same time as the ministry of John the Baptist. Because of Jesus' popularity and miraculous powers, Antipas may have been haunted by the possibility that Jesus was John the Baptist come back to life.

The New Testament record shows that the relationship between Jesus and Antipas must have been strained. Jesus' popularity and teachings may have threatened Antipas who, according to the Pharisees, sought to kill Him (Luke 13:31). By calling Herod a "fox" (Luke 13:32), Jesus showed His disapproval of his cunning and deceitful ways.

The next encounter between Antipas and Jesus occurred at the trial of Jesus (Luke 23:6-12). Luke indicated that Herod could not find anything in the charges against Jesus that deserved death; so he sent Jesus back to Pilate for a final decision.

During this time of his rule, Antipas was experiencing political problems of his own. Aretas, the Nabatean king whose daughter had been Antipas' wife before he became involved with Herodias, returned to avenge this insult. Antipas' troops were defeated. This, together with some other problems, led to his political downfall. Antipas was finally banished by the Roman emperor to an obscure section of France.

#### **Herod Agrippa I (A.D. 37-44)**

Agrippa took over Antipas' territory after Antipas fell from favor. Agrippa's power and responsibilities extended far beyond his ability. As a young person growing up in the imperial court, he developed an undisciplined and extravagant life-style. But Agrippa had enough charm and intelligence to stay on the good side of Rome.

After the Roman Emperor Caligula was murdered, Agrippa helped Claudius gain the throne. His loyalty was rewarded. Claudius confirmed Agrippa in his present position and added the territories of Judea and Samaria. This made Agrippa ruler of a kingdom as large as that of his grandfather, Herod the Great.

Very little about Agrippa I is recorded in Scripture. From the comments in Acts 12:1-23, we know that Agrippa sought to win the favor of his Jewish subjects by opposing the early Christian church and its leaders. The record of his death as recorded in Acts 12:20-23 shows the humiliating way he died. After his death, Palestine struggled through a number of chaotic years before Rome was able to establish order.

#### **Herod Agrippa II (A.D. 50-100)**

Agrippa II was judged to be too young to assume leadership over all the territory of his father, Agrippa I. Thus, Emperor Claudius appointed Cuspius Fadus procurator of Palestine. But in A.D. 53, Agrippa II was appointed as the legitimate ruler over part of this territory.

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The only reference to Agrippa II in the New Testament occurs in Acts 25:13-26:32, which deals with Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea. Agrippa listened to Paul's defense, but the apostle appealed to Rome. Agrippa had no power to set him free.

Agrippa was caught in the Jewish revolts that preceded the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 under the Roman Emperor Titus. He continued to rule by appointment of Vespasian until his death in A.D. 100. His death marked the end to the Herodian dynasty in the affairs of the Jewish people in Palestine.

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**Introduction:**

Sometime after Jesus was born, some special visitors came to see him. These visitors were called ~~magi~~. However, ~~they were also known by other names, such as wise men, or kings.~~ Everyone has probably heard the Christmas carol that goes "We three kings of orient are..." Without a doubt they were wise, because they were searching for Jesus in order to worship him and give him gifts.

Before reading the Bible passage, have one or two volunteers look up the words magi and myrrh in a Bible dictionary, and share the definition with the class.

~~magi~~ (may-juy) ~~Men of Arabia and Persia who studied the stars. People thought they had the power to tell the meaning of dreams. Wise men from the east.~~

~~myrrh~~ (mur) ~~A plant used for spice, medicine or cosmetic purposes.~~

**Luke 2:1-20 (The Birth of Jesus)**

Frankincense - "to be white" vegetable resin, bitter and  
glittering, from an incense tree  
people say 3 wise men, because there was 3 gifts.

## Word definitions for lesson IX-01

### **Matt 2:11**

11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young **Child** with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

NKJV

NT: 3813

paidion (pahee-dee'-on); neuter dimin. of NT: 3816; a childling (of either sex), i.e. (properly,) an infant, or (by extension) a half-grown boy or girl; figuratively, an immature Christian:

KJV - (little, young) child, damsel.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

### **Luke 2:16**

16 And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the **Babe** lying in a manger.

NKJV'

NT: 1025

brephos (bref'-os); of uncertain affin.; an infant (properly, unborn) literally or figuratively:

KJV - babe, (young) child, infant.

(Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright (c) 1994, Biblesoft and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

Birth of Christ

Memory Verse: Hebrews 1:1-2

Reading: Matt 1:18-25, 2:1-8, Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-38

Words to Define:

Betrothed (Matt 1:18) \_\_\_\_\_

Immanuel (Matt 1:23) \_\_\_\_\_

Matt 1:18-25

1. Matthew is one of the gospels, meaning "good news". From our reading, what is the good news?
2. What actions did Joseph initially decide to take upon learning about Mary's pregnancy and what did it take to change his mind?
3. What do these mean?
  - a. "Jesus"
  - b. "Christ"
4. What prophet prophesied of this birth? Give verse.

Matt 2:1-18

1. Which direction did the wise men come from? How many?
2. How did the priests/scribes know where to tell Herod to look for Christ?
3. The star directed them to a \_\_\_\_\_ (manger/house) in Bethlehem.
4. Why did the wise men not report back to Herod?
5. How and what ruthless act of Herod did Joseph and family avoid?

Luke 1:26-38

1. What is the meaning of "Gabriel"?
2. What was Mary's initial reaction to Gabriel's announcement?



3. What OT scripture would the conception & birth of Jesus fulfill?

Luke 2:1-38

1. Why did Mary and Joseph leave Nazareth and go to Bethlehem?
2. What did each of the following say about Jesus?
  - a. "angel of the Lord"
  - b. "heavenly host"
  - c. Simeon
  - d. Anna

Thought question:

List the following events concerning Jesus' birth in the proper chronological order: (a) the shepherds' visit, (b) Anna's prayer, (c) Joseph, Mary and Jesus' travel to Egypt, (d) Simeon's blessing, (e) the wise men's visit.

# Genealogy of Jesus

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

RAHAB  
 BOAZ  
 RUTH  
 OBED  
 JESSE

ABRAHAM

DAVID

JECONIAH

ISAAC

SOLOMON

SHEALTIEL

HEZEKIAH

JACOB

REHOBAM

ZERUBBABEL

MANASSEH

JUDAH

ABIJAH

ABIUD

AMON

PEREZ

ASA

ELIAKIM

JOSIAH

HEZRON

JEHOSHAPHAT

AZOR

RAM

JORAM

ZADOK

AMMINADAB

UZZIAH

AKIM

JACOB

NAHSHON

JOTHAM

ELEAZAR

JOSEPH

SALMON

AHAZ

MATTHAN

MARY

JESUS