

# Designations, Magi and Shepherds

The Fulfillment of a Promise

Genesis 3:15

- Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

# The Celebration of the Birth of Christ

- The date is unknown though probably not in December. (SM) Perhaps when the Passover lambs were being born.
- There was already a Jewish festival during this time, John 10:22, the Feast of Dedication, Feast of Lights or Hanukkah.
- It is unlikely that Jesus was born near this time as it would have been mentioned.
- Nothing is said about celebrating this feast or prohibiting the celebration of it.

# Christmas and the Early Christians

- The early Christians celebrated the birth of Christ on many different days: January 2; March 21, 25; April 18, 19; May 20, 28; November 17, 20. The Western church settled on December 25 by the 4<sup>th</sup> century and the Eastern church which had celebrated on January 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> later switched to December 25 and celebrated January 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> as the day the magi came.

# The Second Coming

- The early Christians celebrated the birth and looked forward to the second coming of Christ.

# Numbers 24:15, Micah 5:2 & Matt. 2:1-2 . . .

- Num. 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a **Star** out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.
- 1 ¶ Now when Jesus was born in **Bethlehem** of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born **King of the Jews**? for we have seen his **star** in the east, and are come to worship him.

# The Magi

- Two or more, we don't know the number.
- Balaam may have been a magi. He was from Pethor on the Euphrates near Mari where there was a school of wise men.
  - Three gifts:
    - Gold – the metal of Kings
    - Frankincense – incense offered to God
    - Myrrh – anesthetic and embalming the dead, Mark 15:23

# Luke 2:8. . .”for all the people”

- After 400 years of silence for the nation of Israel a national message was finally given.
- A Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
  - How would He save them? By being the lamb that takes away the sin of the world.

John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.

Who better to announce the birth of the sacrificial lamb than shepherds?



# Designations at His birth

- Immanuel (God with us) – Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23
- Savior – Luke 2:11 and John 4:42
- Lord – or Master, Luke 2:11
- Christ – Messiah, Luke 2:11
- Jesus – Savior, Luke 1:23
- Light – Isa. 9:2 and John 1:4&5

# Isaiah 9:6

- Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

# Looking Ahead

- The birth of Jesus was the birth of our perfect passover lamb (Exodus 12:1-6).
- His second coming will be the victorious fulfillment of God's promise (Rev. 5:6-14).

Put a lamb on the top of the tree (if you have one) and a lamb on the shelf instead of an elf. Tell the children we look forward to the return of the lamb.