



## THE REAL STORY OF CHRISTMAS

KENNETH COPELAND AND KELLIE COPELAND

DECEMBER 19-23, 2022

### DAY 1 – THE REAL STORY OF CHRISTMAS

You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. We have made assumptions about the birth of Jesus that are not specified in God's WORD. Joseph and Mary were well-financed and able to take care of their needs as they traveled and finally settled in Nazareth. The angel appeared to Mary to give her the plan.

#### STUDY IT

- I. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:32).
  - The truth is that our God will meet all our needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).
  - We are using the book *Christmas, the Rest of the Story* by Rick Renner, to increase our understanding of the account of Jesus' birth.
  - The more real Jesus is to you in the biblical account, the more real Jesus will become to you.
    - The connection between Jesus and you will cause you to see the reality of who you are in Christ.
- II. We have made assumptions about Jesus' birth that are not specified in God's WORD.
  - We see the Nativity scene with Mary, Joseph, the Baby, shepherds and wise men.
    - That is actually a composite of the accounts found in Matthew and Luke.
  - For example: The wise men were not at the birth of Jesus. They journeyed first to Jerusalem (Matthew 2:1-8). Later they arrived in Bethlehem to see the young child (Matthew 2:9).
  - Three gifts are mentioned but there were probably more than three wise men.
    - There were perhaps as many as 500 people in the caravan.
  - The wise men were highly respected and powerful people. They had the authority to set up and to remove national leaders.
    - Herod was afraid the wise men were coming to remove him from his official position as king.
  - The wise men left Jerusalem and followed the star to Bethlehem to the place Joseph, Mary and Jesus were staying, and gave Jesus magnificent gifts (Matthew 2:11).



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- After the wise men left, an angel came to Joseph and told him to take his family to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod (Matthew 2:13).
  - Herod was sending his soldiers to Bethlehem to kill all the male children 2 years old and under (Matthew 2:16).
  - Those children were the first martyrs for Jesus.
- III. Joseph and Mary were well-financed and able to take care of their needs as they traveled and finally settled in Nazareth.
  - Luke's Gospel is an account of the life of Jesus. The early days of Jesus were from interviews Luke had with Mary.
  - Luke began his account of Jesus' life with Zacharias and his encounter with the angel Gabriel.
  - The word of The LORD came to announce that Zacharias and Elisabeth would have a son, and they were to name him John.
  - Zacharias began to give all the reasons it could not happen.
    - To stop Zacharias from speaking unbelief, God shut his mouth and he could not speak until his son was born (Luke 1:18-20).
- IV. The angel appeared to Mary to give her the plan (Luke 1:31-33).
  - Gabriel told Mary the baby would be named Jesus.
  - The angels of God were watching over Mary to protect her.
  - The conception of Jesus in Mary was accomplished as the Holy Spirit hovered over her (Luke 1:35). That was an amazing miracle.
    - The same thing happened to you when you received Jesus as Savior and LORD.
    - The Holy Spirit hovered over you, and the Holy Spirit came to live in you and made you the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

Seek the truth, especially when you study God's WORD. Knowing the historical background of biblical events gives you greater understanding of the plan of God.

Listen for the voice of The LORD to tell you the truth about every situation and decision in your life.

Pray this prayer with us.

*Heavenly Father, help me to always listen to You as I follow the path You have for my life. Thank You for always leading, guiding and protecting me. In Jesus' Name. Amen.*



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### DAY 2 – MEET JOSEPH, THE EARTHLY FATHER TO JESUS

The book *Christmas, the Rest of the Story* by Rick Renner, gives insight into the setting of the birth of Jesus. Nazareth was a small town in Jesus' time. Everyone knew everyone else. The people were astonished to hear Jesus' ability to publicly teach The WORD of God.

### STUDY IT

- I. The book *Christmas, the Rest of the Story* by Rick Renner, gives insight into the setting of the birth of Jesus.
  - Luke had detailed information because he interviewed Mary when she and the Apostle John were in Ephesus attending Timothy's church.
  - Paul encouraged Timothy to not be intimidated by the responsibility of pastoring Mary and John.
- II. Nazareth was a small town in Jesus' time. Everyone knew everyone else.
  - Many members of David's lineage lived in Nazareth.
  - When Jesus spoke, the people in Nazareth didn't receive Him as the Messiah; they only knew Him as the carpenter's son (Matthew 13:55).
  - The word *carpenter* could have meant "one who works with wood," but it actually meant much more.
    - The Greek word translated *carpenter* is *tekton*. From it we derive the word *technology*.
    - A person who was a *tekton* had technologically advanced skills.
    - He was one who could manipulate materials such as marble, gold and precious jewels in a brilliant way, and create wonders.
  - Jesus was not just a carpenter or a carpenter's son. He was not just an...anything.
  - If we diminish any part of God, the devil will trick us into believing God is limited. This lie kept the people from believing Jesus was the Messiah.



- III. Joseph was not a poor carpenter; he was a master craftsman.
- Joseph and the other workers who built the neighboring city of Sepphoris created intricately designed buildings and mosaic-covered floors, and worked with precious jewels—all these were the work of carpenters or *tektons*.
  - Joseph was technologically advanced, a well-paid artisan, who listened to the Spirit of The LORD to do his work with excellence.
  - Joseph was the Father's choice to protect and teach Jesus, God's Son.
    - God chose Joseph's family, which included his sons James and Jude, writers in the New Testament.
  - When God performed the most important act before or since THE BLESSING of Abraham—bringing the sacrifice for our sins into the world—He did not bring Jesus into a poverty-stricken family.
- IV. The people were astonished to hear Jesus' ability to publicly teach The WORD.
- Jesus' first miracle was turning water into something spectacular.
    - Trained by His father as a *tekton*, Jesus was expert at turning one thing into another.
  - Jesus' skills as a carpenter, an artisan, were well-known.
  - The people of Nazareth knew Jesus as a carpenter; and suddenly, He became a preacher.
    - They looked down on a person moving from an artisan to a preacher. They felt He gave up the ability to make money to become a rabbi.
  - They couldn't believe He was Anointed by God.

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

Jesus, an expert at creating beautiful things, created you! Begin to think of yourself as a beautiful, born-again child of God. He is waiting for you to ask Him to move all obstacles out of your way, as you honor, praise, worship and obey The LORD.

Write down some of the wonderful things God has done for you.

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### DAY 3 – WHO WERE THE MAGI?

Jesus came into the earth and everything changed. The sacrifice of God was here. The angels appeared making heaven's announcement: "Peace on earth, good will toward men." The Father chose Joseph to teach Jesus earthly things. The wise men traveled with a caravan of servants and supplies to see Jesus.

### STUDY IT

- I. Jesus came into the earth and everything changed. The sacrifice of God was here.
  - History tells us that Joseph's and Mary's families were very wealthy.
  - We know from Deuteronomy 27-30 that poverty is a curse.
    - God would not have His Son born in a poverty-stricken household. That would mean they didn't keep the Law and tithe, and were therefore cursed.
  - Jesus was born and placed in a manger.
  - Jesus was born in a meager situation because Joseph and Mary were late getting to Bethlehem, not because they had no money.
- II. The angels appeared to the shepherds and make heaven's announcement: "Peace on earth, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).
  - Jacob saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder between heaven and earth (Genesis 28:12).
    - Jesus told Nathaniel, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man" (John 1:51).
  - When Jesus came, He became the connection between heaven and man.
    - Now as believers, we are the connection between heaven and man.
- III. The Father chose Joseph to teach Jesus earthly things.
  - Joseph was a master craftsman.
    - The word carpenter (*tekton*) in the Greek is where we get our English word "technology."



- God picked a man who was wealthy; a good man who was merciful, who would teach Jesus about the Law, the Prophets, tithing and how to handle money according to Abraham's teachings, and other things of God.
  - By the time Jesus was 12 years old, He was very advanced because of the teaching of His mother and earthly father.
  - The angel told Mary she was BLESSED and had favor with God. That meant God would take care of everything.
    - Joseph was part of Mary's heavenly supply. He was a man of mercy who would not shame his intended wife and her pregnancy.
  - Luke, John and Mary talked together about the birth of Jesus.
    - Sitting in the holy presence of Mary, Luke heard all about Zacharias, Elisabeth and their son, John (the Baptist).
- IV. The wise men traveled with a caravan of servants and supplies to see Jesus.
- The wise men, Magi, were elite, powerful, wealthy, high-ranking priests who studied the stars.
    - Astronomy was regarded as a science at that time.
  - The Magi held political sway to dispose or install kings with a single word. They were king-makers.
  - This group held the reins of financial, religious, scientific and political power.
    - That's how the devil controls political leaders today. He threatens to take away their power. They are determined to do anything to maintain and increase their position.
  - This background tells us that when Herod found out the Magi were coming to Jerusalem, he was very afraid.
  - When the Magi asked about the location of the "King of the Jews," Herod knew his kingship and political power were in danger.
  - The Magi didn't come to see Herod; they came to see Jesus.
  - The wise men were used to people giving *them* gifts and falling at *their* feet.
    - They bowed at Jesus' feet and gave Him magnificent gifts suitable for a king.

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

God announced the birth of His Son to the wealthy Magi and to the lowly shepherds. It is His will that all people come to know and have a relationship with Jesus.

What can we do? We can live our lives as witnesses to the Love of God so that others will want to know the God we serve. Pray that others will see Jesus in you. Pray that God will give you the words to share this wonderful gift of God—Jesus Christ our LORD.



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### DAY 4 – CHRISTMAS, THE BIRTH OF GOD'S PLAN

Mary and Joseph were chosen by Almighty God to teach and train His Son until He began His ministry. We know Mary and Joseph had more children after Jesus. The shepherds in the fields watching the sheep suddenly saw a really bright light and an angel appeared. Jesus, in resisting the temptations, had to undo everything that Adam did.

### STUDY IT

- I. Mary and Joseph were chosen by Almighty God to teach and train His Son until He began His ministry.
  - The prophet prophesied about Jesus' birth and where He would be born (Micah 5:2).
    - Jesus was born in Bethlehem 715 years later.
  - The LORD prophesied 715 years before it happened so that all nations and circumstances would be at the right place at the right time.
    - The Roman decree came that all the world was to be taxed, each in his own hometown. Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1).
    - The constellations had to line up exactly for the Magi to see "the star" and make the trip to see Jesus.
    - Everything had to be lined up to fulfill the plan of God, and it took 715 years.
  - First, God spoke His plan; then it began to come to pass.
  - That's the same God who is directing your life.
- II. We know Mary and Joseph had more children after Jesus (Matthew 13:55).
  - Jesus was the firstborn son. The firstborn represents the family before God.
  - Joseph and Mary traveled slowly and when they arrived, all the inns were full.
    - They camped in a cave the shepherds used to protect the sheep in bad weather.
    - Jesus was born at the lambs' birthing trough, where sacrificial lambs were laid when they were born.
  - The Baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes that were normally used to wrap a newborn lamb to keep it from thrashing around right after birth.





- III. The shepherds watching the sheep in the field suddenly saw a really bright light and an angel appeared.
- The angel said, "Fear not! Look, I bring you good tidings of great joy. Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is the Messiah" (Luke 2:10-11).
  - The shepherds were the first to find out that the Messiah had been born.
    - They were told, "You will find Him wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger" (Luke 2:12).
  - Suddenly, a multitude of angels appeared, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the Highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14).
  - When the angels left, the shepherds decided to go into Bethlehem and see the Baby.
  - The angels said, "Good will toward men;" not good will *among* men.
    - God was announcing He was making a way for His good will to get to men through His Son.
- IV. Jesus, in resisting the temptations, had to undo everything that Adam did when he disobeyed God in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:17-19).
- When Adam disobeyed God and ate the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he bowed his knee to the devil.
  - The devil became the god of this world. God and the devil were at war.
  - The day the war ended was the day Jesus rose from the dead.
    - Then the Day of Pentecost came. Suddenly, not just Jesus, but men and women were filled with the Holy Spirit.
  - Jesus was full of God's WORD, and He was quick to use it against the devil (Matthew 4:3-10).
  - Jesus withstood every trial, so we can, too.

## MAKE IT PERSONAL.

Pray with us:

*Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to save us and open a way so we could come into Your family. Jesus' life demonstrates that through the power of the Holy Spirit, we can be accepted by You, and we can defeat every attack of the enemy. Thank You for Your plan. Thank You for Jesus! We pray in Jesus' Name. Amen.*





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### DAY 5 – THE HEART OF THE FATHER

Mary kept these things and pondered them in her heart. Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to The LORD. Jesus' brothers did not believe Jesus was the Messiah until He rose from the dead. Nicodemus came to talk to Jesus.

### STUDY IT

- I. Mary kept these things and pondered them in her heart (Luke 2:19).
  - The Apostle John took care of Mary after Jesus died on the cross. They moved to Ephesus, where Luke interviewed Mary about the birth of Jesus.
  - Paul wrote two letters to Timothy to encourage him as he pastored the church in Ephesus.
    - Pastor Timothy could have been intimidated by having John and Mary in the congregation.
- II. Mary and Joseph took Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to The LORD (Luke 2:22-24).
  - Jesus was circumcised when He was 8 days old according to the Mosaic Law.
    - The pray-ers knew who Jesus was (Luke 2:25-32, 36-38).
  - A man, Simeon, saw the Baby Jesus and prophesied over Him and Mary.
  - A widow, Anna, a pray-er came in also and saw Jesus. She gave God the glory and told everyone about the Messiah.
  - Simeon and Anna were the first people who recognized Jesus as the Messiah without angels or another person telling them.
    - That must have given Mary and Joseph more confidence about what the angels had told them about Jesus being the Messiah.
- III. Jesus' brothers did not believe Jesus was the Messiah until He rose from the dead (John 7:5).
  - Some of your family members may reject you because of your faith in Jesus Christ.
  - Keep loving them. God loves them.
  - Remember it is God's will that your family be saved.



- Roll the care and the fear of their attitudes onto The LORD.
  - Believe and speak in faith for the salvation of your family members.
- IV. Nicodemus came to talk to Jesus (John 3:1-21).
- Jesus said to him, you must be born again; born from above in the spirit.
  - In speaking to Nicodemus, Jesus talked of Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness (John 3:14).
    - This was a word to Nicodemus that Jesus would be crucified.
  - “Whosoever”—anyone, no matter their backgrounds or past sins, can be saved (John 3:16).
  - Jesus is a gift to the whole world, to whoever will believe.
  - The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is the gift to the believer.
    - Speaking in tongues is the gateway to the supernatural power of God through His supernatural Son, Jesus, and His supernatural birth.

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

Isn't this good news? God sent His Son into the world that you might be saved and become a child of God. Let us know about your life through Jesus Christ by [clicking here](#), or [contact us on Facebook™](#).

Let's join together to preach this good news on every available voice. People around the world need to know how to reach God through Jesus. For more information about partnership, or to sign up, call today: 1-800-600-7395, or visit us at [kcm.org/Partner](http://kcm.org/Partner).

Remember: God loves you, we love you, and JESUS IS LORD!