



9:00 Live Sunday School at FBJ

Lesson 10: Is the Bible Really True? Luke 2:1-20 – Part 1

I. vv.1-2

A. v.1 – Caesar Augustus – Julius’ nephew – the first Caesar with title from the Roman Senate

- Julius-Augustus: July-August
- The census was for taxes; not military service

B. v.2 – Quirinius was governing Syria – NKJV and CSB

1. Syrian Governors – Roman Empire

- 9-7/6 BC Gaius Sentius Saturninus
- 7/6-4 BC Publius Quinctilius Varus
- 4-1 BC Unknown
- 1 BC-4 AD Gaius Julius Caesar Vipsanianus
- 4-5 Lucius Volusius Saturninus
- 6-12 Publius Sulpicius Quirinius

2. Homonadesians and the Taurus Mountains

II. vv.3-5

A. v.3 – Luke often uses hyperbole because not “all” went – women were not required to go

B. v.4 - Why did Mary go? Did she know Micah 5:2?

C. v.5 - Why would Luke say they were still betrothed instead of married?

- Likely because they had not consummated the marriage but the ceremony had taken place
- Remember Matthew tells us they didn’t have sex until after Jesus was born

III. vv.6-7 – When was Jesus born? (no one knows for sure)

A. I like September 29, 2 BC - Missler, commentaries and history journals

1. Luke 2:8 - shepherds were in the fields which means winter is out – October/November latest
2. Matthew 24:20 - warns against leaving Judea in the winter (tribulation times)

B. 4 BC? Comes from Josephus who says Herod died during an eclipse in 4 BC

1. Eclipse also happened in 1 BC and several historical references to Herod's death
 2. Irenaeus says 41 years from beginning of Augustus' rule
 3. That would mean Jesus was born in 6 BC to give time for Magi to arrive (Matthew 2:7; 16)
- Totally throws off John the Baptist's ministry and Jesus' ministry timelines and other dates

C. 2 BC?

1. Tertullian (gave us term trinity) says it was 41 years from Augustus' rule which really began with his power/authority 2 years after his "beginning" with defeat of Cassius and Brutus

a. Also 30 years after death of Cleopatra

b. Also says Augustus Caesar died 15 years after Jesus' birth – Augustus died in 14 AD

2. Eusebius, Father of Church History also gives similar info with 2 BC date

3. "Course of Abijah" in 1st Chronicles 24:7-19 dates Zechariah's time in the temple with Gabriel Talmud (Jewish laws above the Torah) and Josephus both say temple destroyed on August 5, 70 AD by Titus

- Both say 1st Course of priests were ministering when destroyed

4. Working back from there, Zechariah was ministering on July 3, 3 BC

5. Assume 280 days for typical pregnancy then JTB born April 19-20, BC

6. Mary was with Elizabeth in her 6th month which would have been 4th week of December 3 BC

7. Assume Mary had typical term for pregnancy that puts Jesus's birth at beginning of Rosh Hashanah – the Jewish New Year - That's September 29, 2 BC

D. v.7 – What inn? Likely a caravanserai

IV. Thoughts on Determining the Truth of Scripture (taken from Truth or Tradition website)

- A. The Bible was written for believers, not skeptics
- B. The Bible is complete – 40 books and that's it
- C. Understand the literary form the verse is in (Poetry? Allegory? Fiction? History?)
- D. You are in one of two camps: 1) The Bible is inerrant or 2) The Bible has errors
- E. Context, context, context
- F. There are no perfect versions. English ain't easy to translate into.
- G. The Bible should always be taken seriously and most often literally. Jesus doesn't want you to pluck out your eyes.

Thoughts? Questions? Comments? nick@nickwalters.org