

LUKE 1 (vv1-4) Luke writes by the Spirit an orderly account so that we would all know *“the certainty of those things.”* (v5) This was Herod the Great of the Herodian Dynasty, he was an Idumean, a descendant of Esau, who were called Edomites. **GENESIS 25:19-34** Isaac waited twenty years for his prayer to be answered. The sorted lives of Esau (Edom) and Jacob (Israel). **GENESIS 36:8** *“Esau is Edom.”*

NUMBERS 20 (vv1-5) let's move forward in time a few hundred years to the fortieth year of the Exodus wanderings; consider the desperate situation these Jews were in, traveling through the desert, no water, with children and livestock. (vv6-8) forty years earlier there was a similar scene: **EXODUS 17:1-7** God told Moses to hit the rock this first time (**1 CORINTHIANS 10:1-11** the *‘rock’* was a foreshadow of Jesus). In the **NUMBERS 20** scenario, Moses was told this second time to *‘speak ye unto the rock’* - by hitting the rock again Moses spoiled the typology of Jesus' death never being repeated. Jesus was smitten the first time at the cross, today all who ask Him into their lives by faith will receive the *‘living waters’* of eternal life (**JOHN 7:37-39**).

NUMBERS 20 (vv9-21) because of this event Edom and Israel became bitter enemies. **DEUTERONOMY 23:7,8** God instructed Israel to be kind to Edom. **OBADIAH 1-4, 10-14** since 70 AD, the Edomites have vanished; *“vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord!”*

MATTHEW 2 (v1) *‘...wise men [Magi] from the east...’* as we examine the scriptures, we will not be taken in by the somewhat ridiculous tradition of three kings coming to Jerusalem on camels. At this point of history, the Parthian Empire was a powerful rival of the Roman Empire. The Parthian Empire was in the area of the old Persian Empire, which the Parthian's wrestled back from the Greeks after the death of Alexander the Great. The Babylonian Empire (612 – 539 BC), of which Daniel was put in a high position though he was a prisoner, was taken over by the Persian Empire (539 – 331 BC). **DANIEL 4 (vv8,9); 5 (vv10,11)** Daniel was made *‘master of the magicians’* - the magicians were the priestly caste of Babylon. When Persia took over Babylon, the Magi were considered to be expert in the interpretations of dreams. As we move a few hundred years from that point, into the time of the Parthian Empire, the Magi became a dual priestly/political caste with the extreme power of absolute choice and election of the king of a realm. **MATTHEW 2 (vv2-18)** the Magi ask Herod; *“Where is he who is born King of the Jews?”* Herod was an Edomite, not a Jew. Then the Bible goes on to say, *‘when Herod heard these things he was troubled and all of Jerusalem with him.’* Three men on camels would not have got the whole city agitated. No, this was the Parthian military coming to make a new king! War was a possibility!

LUKE 1 (v5) Herod the Edomite was hated by Israel, it was Rome that made him the king. *‘Zacharias,*

of the division of Abijah’ - 1,000 years earlier, King David had split up the priesthood into 24 divisions, and they took turns offering incense (**1 CHRONICLES 24:1-10**). Both Zechariah and Elisabeth were descendants of Aaron, their son John was born into the priestly lineage. (vv6-9) Because of the vast number of priests, most would never perform this honor, and none got to do it twice. This must have been the absolute highest point of Zechariah's priesthood (vv10-17) John would be the forerunner for the Messiah (**MALACHI 4:5,6**) fulfilling at least part of this prophecy (vv18-25) In God's perfect timing, Elisabeth becomes pregnant (v26) in the sixth month of her pregnancy, the angel Gabriel is sent by God to Nazareth (vv27-30) the Greek word makes it clear that Mary had never had sexual relations with a man (vv31-33) Part of this will not be fulfilled until the Millennium (vv34,35) the virgin becomes pregnant by power of the Holy Spirit, Who caused the humanity of Christ to originate; a sinless human nature received by the Eternal Son (**HEBREWS 10:1-10**). (vv36-80) Messiah would deliver men from their sins and give light to those in darkness.

LUKE 2 (vv1-12) Caesar makes a decree that his whole empire be taxed, and all must go to the city of their inheritance. This would not have happened in winter since much of Israel would have been impassable. Many believe that it was no later than October, not December 25th.

The prophecies of Messiah: He would be human, not an angel (**GENESIS 3:15**); a Jew, not a Gentile (**GENESIS 12:1,2**); of the Tribe of Judah (**GENESIS 49:10**); of the family of David (**2 SAMUEL 7:1-17**); born of a virgin (**ISAIAH 7:14**); in Bethlehem (**MICAH 5:2**). **JEREMIAH 1:12** *‘Then said the Lord...for I am alert and active, watching over My word to perform it.’* (Amplified Version)

LUKE 2 (vv13-20) can you imagine this scene as a multitude of angels are praising God. A Savior is born! The Messiah, the LORD! (vv21-24) Mary and Joseph were poor, so they offered *‘a pair of turtledoves’* (**LEVITICUS 12:1-8**). The grace of our God, the Messiah was born in a feeding trough, to poor parents, into a hated race of people, the Jews. **God can break through any barriers in your life!** (vv25-27) Simeon has the Holy Ghost upon him; **ROMANS 8:14** tells us that those led by the Spirit are the sons of God; **GALATIANS 5:24** tells us to walk in the Spirit. (vv29-32) Simeon is holding Salvation. It's all about Jesus! (vv33-35) Mary's heart would be broken as the world's bitter hatred unfolds against Jesus (vv36-40) Now Anna gives glory to God for His Redemption, which again, is a Person, Jesus Himself!

It is so easy to see God at work, fulfilling His word in the life of Jesus. This Christmas, with even greater faith and trust than ever before, let's believe God to fulfill His word in us. **ROMANS 8:24-39 Merry Christmas! Praise God for His gift of His Son!**