

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

From Heaven, or of Men? (Part 10)

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and ye shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). How could we know the fulfillment of this prophecy given by Isaiah if the accounts of Jesus' birth, recorded in Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-35; 2:1-7, had not been given to us? Would we not be still looking for the One who was to be the Savior of mankind? We would have no knowledge of the One of whom the prophecies, given by holy men of old, were speaking. Truly, we are thankful to God for leaving the accounts of Jesus' birth!

Even though God has recorded accounts of Jesus' birth, the majority of the world refuses to believe. The lawmakers of our nation give honor to the nations who do not believe and who continue to look for the Messiah. The courts of our nation make rulings that forbid Christians to publicly show and speak of our faith. The words of the Bible and the names of God and Jesus are being silenced by atheistic organizations and judges willing to further atheistic causes. It is a time for believers to speak, and to pay the necessary prices.

Is this time of year the time of Jesus' birth? God has not revealed the time to us. Does God give instructions to us for observing Jesus' birth? No. It is important for us to know that Jesus' birth occurred, so we may know that Messiah has come. God has also revealed to us Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. We may with confidence say that, because of Jesus' sinless life and sacrificial death, our sins are forgiven if we have obeyed God's clear commands as to how to receive forgiveness. May we never forget that He **has** come and is the Savior of all who obey Him! May we spread this joyful word throughout the world!

So, the basic question remains: how does a person gain faith? God tells us how to do so: *"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God"* (Romans 10:17). Personal reading and study of God's Word are essential. At this time of year, when assumptions are made about Jesus' birth, it is clearly illustrated that many who consider themselves "believers" are taking the word of men, rather than of God. An important truth that has gotten lost in today's religious world is this: throughout the ages, God has given clear instructions as to when man is to worship Him and how man is to worship Him. He has never permitted man to design his own worship. At this critical time in our nation may all believers go back to the Bible, leaving man-ordained religious teachings and practices, and be determined to follow God only!