Series: Story of the New Testament
Lesson: The Birth of the Messiah in Matthew and Luke
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Chronology of Jesus' Infancy – Teachers Copy

1.	Jesus' birth in a stable	Matthew 1:25-2:1; Luke 2:1-7	Aprox. 8 B.C.[2] if imperial census was on a 14 year cycle (for which there is some evidence).
2.	Angels proclaim the good news to shepherds nearby	Luke 2:8-20	
3.	Jesus' circumcision when 8 days old	Luke 2:21-24	
4.	Adored at 8 days by a prophet and prophetess in the temple	Luke 2:25-38	
5.	Adored around the age of two by wise men in his house	Matthew 2:1-12	Aprox. 6 B.C.
6.	Escape to Egypt	Matthew 2:13-18	
7.	Return to Israel and the city of Nazareth[3]	Matthew 2:19-23; Luke 2:39-40	Herod the Great dies in 4 B.C.

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[2] The teacher may need to explain how Jesus could have been born in 8 B.C., especially if students have learned that B.C. means "before Christ." A sixth century French monk conceived the dating system that places the birth of Christ at the center of history. It took centuries to catch on, but eventually became popular. When more accurate historical investigation revealed that the calendar's creator had miscalculated, the system was too popular to change. Thus, despite long standing tradition, Jesus really was not born in A.D. 1 nor the church "established" in A.D. 33.

[3] This is the only serious problem between the two accounts. All else is reconciled easily. Luke seems to suggest that Jesus' family returns to Nazareth immediately after his circumcision in the Temple (Luke 2:39). It should be noted, though, that Luke can skip intervals of time when they do not contribute to his overall message. See Acts 9:19 and 23 where Paul's stay in Damascus is spoken of in terms of days, while in Galatians 1:17-18 Paul tells us he stayed there three years. In Acts 9:30 Paul goes off to Tarsus. Luke gives no indication whatsoever that almost fourteen years have passed when Barnabas finds him (11:25-26; compare with Galatians 2:1). Thus, Luke's silence about the flight to Egypt should not be taken as evidence that he did not know about it or that it did not occur.