

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 04 Dec Num 1:1-8:26 Stay True to Your Commitments
- 2) 11 Dec Num 9:1-10:10 Stay on Track with God's GPS
- 3) 18 Dec Num 10:11-15:41 Stay Fearless in Your Obedience
- 4) 25 Dec ...Num 24:15-19; Mat 1:1-2:23..... **The Messiah has Come**
- 5) 01 Jan 2012 Num 16:1-25:18 Stay Grateful for God's Care
- 6) 08 Jan Num 26:1-36:13 Stay Focused on the Goal
- 7) 15 Jan Deut 5;19;24; Mat 5 Be Resolute about Life's value
- 8) 22 Jan Deut 1:1-4:43 Be Exclusive
- 9) 29 Jan Deut 4:44-11:32 Be Passionate
- 10) 05 Feb Deut 12:1-16:17 Be Different
- 11) 12 Feb Deut 16:18-26:19 Be Honest and Fair
- 12) 19 Feb Deut 27:1-30:20 Be Repentant
- 13) 26 Feb Deut 31:1-34:12 Be Positive

INTRODUCTION

- The world is taking God out of government and schools and replacing Him with humanism and naturalism
- The world is replacing Sunday – once a day of rest, with just another work day
- The world is taking Christ out of B.C. (Before Christ) and replacing it with B.C.E (Before Common Era)
- The world is taking CHRIST out of CHRISTMAS and replacing it with Happy Holidays
- What can we Christians do about these once sacrosanct issues?
 - A. We can do nothing
 - B. We can whine and complain
 - C. We can be confrontational
 - D. Or we can do what the early church did – don't worry about the secondary issues – but stay focused on the essentials
 - Honor God by obeying His word in every aspect of life
 - Love thy neighbor as thyself and defend the weak
 - Seek Righteousness and Justice (Psalms 97:2b)
 - Contend with evil (Pr 28:4) with gentleness (2Tim 2:24-25)
 - Contend for the faith (Jude 1:3)
 - Be devoted to prayer (Col 4:2)
 - ...and let God be God ('Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done')

Passage	Comments
Matthew 1:1-25	<p>The 'Star' is Born</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew's genealogy record goes from Abraham to Joseph, the husband of Mary, through Solomon – making Jesus the legal and kingly heir to the throne of David • Luke records Jesus' physical bloodline (Judah) from King David's son, Nathan, to Mary (Eli's daughter) .Luke 3:23-38 • vv18-24. Joseph was not only a righteous man who wanted to show compassion to his pregnant fiancée, he was also sensitive & obedient to God's leading <p>WOMEN – Don't you crave for a husband like that? MEN – Seek God's righteousness & compassion for people and women will crave after you (theoretically ☺)</p>
Matthew 2:1-23	<p>The 'Star' is Seen Again</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v2. "...we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him" – possible link to Numbers 24:17 – "a star shall come from Jacob, a scepter (or a king) from Israel" • Some say these wise men (possibly from Syria, Iran and/or Iraq) got their knowledge from Daniel's lingering influence when he was a captive in Babylon (modern day Iraq) • Another possibility, when these 'scripturally astute' wise men saw this heavenly event in their western skies, apparently dangling over Israel, they thought of Numbers 24:17 where it says a star and a king would arise from the land of the Jews
More info	See Matthew 1-2 , Christmas 2010 Lesson Plan

CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

- The early church new nothing about B.C. and A.D calendar divisions; nor did they celebrate Sunday as a day of rest – it was a typical work day for Romans & Jews; nor did they celebrate Christmas as a sanctioned holiday
- Yet, they were so effective at touching the world over time, they eventually captured the hearts and minds of young & old, male & female, rich & poor, kings & slaves; white & black; smart & dumb, freed & jailed
- Rather than trying to get the world to reverse course, we should be like the early church, and focus on the essentials & let God do the convicting
- This would herald in the kingdom of God better than restoring B.C.E with B.C.; better than restoring Sunday as a day of rest; and yes, better than being able to freely say "Merry Christmas"

NEXT WEEK:

Numbers 16-25 – Staying Grateful for God's Care

Passage	Comments
Numbers 24:15-16	<p>The Oracle of Balaam</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • God used a heathen prophet for His own bidding • God actually forced Balaam to comply..... Josh 24:10 (God channels the king's heart like water, Pr 21:1) • Balaam, a Midianite prophet/diviner, was used by God to bless Israel and to thwart Israel's enemy • Balaam did God's bidding for a while before greed took over 2Peter 2:15; Jude 1:11 (More on this in next week's lesson for 1 January) • v16. "The oracle of him who hears the words of God" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Though a non-Jew, was Balaam a true believer? ♦ "...they professed to know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" Titus 1:16 ♦ So, people can know the Christmas story, but that doesn't make them a Heaven-bound saint
Numbers 24:17-19 <i>"a star and a scepter shall arise from Israel"</i>	<p>The 'Star' is Seen</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • v17. God gives a greedy prophet (an unbeliever) a special revelation about the future Messiah.....Why <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Sometimes the best witness to an unbeliever is another unbeliever (or a recent convert) ♦ Consider the woman at the well and her impact • vv18-19. Edom & Seir (Moab) shall be a possession of Israel (fulfilled by David in history, 1King 11:15,16, and by Christ in mystery – Obadiah 1:18; Rev 19:21)

