

## **Lesson 1 – Where Was Jesus Before He Was Born?**

"Where was Jesus before he was born?" (To begin the lesson, ask the student this question to get them thinking and to see their level of understanding.)

### **Mary, Servant of the Lord**

(Read Luke 1:26-38.) (Ask the student to tell what happened in the text.) Mary was a pious woman. She found grace in the eyes of God. Although she was engaged to be married to Joseph, she was a virgin. Was! It is wrong to speak of Mary now as "the virgin Mary." After they were married, she had more sons and daughters (Read Matthew 13:53-58 – especially if there is any doubt). But, at that time she was a virgin. Which is why she was surprised by the announcement that she was going to have a son. It is also not correct to think that Mary was without sin. In Luke 1:47 she calls God her Savior. Only sinners need a Savior.

The important thing is that Mary had to give birth to Jesus without having relations with any man. This is because Jesus was a unique person. Gabriel told her that the child was to be called the Son of God. The Son of God. The main issue here is that Jesus did not come into existence in the womb of Mary. Yes, Mary was the mother of Jesus physically. But she was not His mother in terms of His spirit. This is the reason why He was not conceived in a normal way.

### **Jesus Existed Before Being in Mary's Womb**

(Read John 8:56-59.) (Ask the student to share what they understand in this text.) Jesus found himself in conflict with the religious leaders several times. This time, they were talking about Abraham, the "father" of all Jews. Abraham lived some two thousand years before Jesus was born, and all the Jews, including Jesus physically, were Abraham's descendants. But here Jesus declares that He existed before Abraham. "Before Abraham came into existence, I AM," he said. To those men this was blasphemy and they tried to kill Him on the spot.

In this text we clearly see that Jesus existed before he was born – before he was conceived in the womb of Mary – more than 2,000 years before. All of us began to exist in the womb of our mothers. But Jesus was different. He existed before. He was more than a man. He was and is the Son of God.

### **Jesus Existed Before the World**

(Read John 17:1-5.) (Ask the student which words in this text answer the question: where was Jesus before he was born?)

In John 17 we have an outstanding prayer from Jesus. It is the night he instituted the Lord's Supper. It is the night he was to be handed over to be crucified the next day. He is imploring His Father for his disciples, but first of all in the verses read He is pleading for himself. He will suffer horribly. "The time has come" (ver. 1). His request? "Glorify your Son... glorify me with your own self." He knows that suffering is coming within twenty-four hours. He is going to be taunted, slapped, insulted, crucified. He is thinking of the glory that will come after all that.

What interests us now are these words: "Father, glorify me with your own self with the glory which I had with you before the world existed." "With you before the world existed." Here we have two great truths. Where was Jesus before he was born? In heaven with the Father. Since when was He there? Since before creation. Jesus was not just any man. He was not just a great teacher, a great religious leader. He was human, yes. But at the same time He was divine. He was the Son of God.

### **The Birth of Jesus According to the Gospel of John**

(Read John 1:1-4, 14.) (Ask the student if they know who the Word is.) Matthew and Luke narrate details of the birth of Jesus. Mark doesn't say anything about it. And John? John is very different. The Gospel of John begins the same as Genesis: "In the beginning." "In the beginning was the word." If there is any doubt as to who the Word is, verse 14 helps us when it says "The Word became flesh, and lived among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father." "The one and only Son of the Father," that is, the Son of God, Jesus. The Word is Jesus. Jesus is the Word. Verse 14 is John's way of recounting the birth of Jesus: "The Word became flesh."

Two thousand years ago, the Word was made flesh through Mary. However, the Word existed with God from the beginning. Verse 1 says not only that "the Word was with God," but it also affirms that "the Word was God." There are things here that are difficult to understand, but the important thing is to grasp that Jesus was and is divine, He was and is more than a man. And this is what we mean when we say that we believe that Jesus is the Son of God.

(If there is time you can consider Philippians 2:1-11, where it explains how Jesus, being at first divine, humbled himself, took the form of a man – for us – but He is now glorified and will come again.)

### **Questions**

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of God? (such concepts as: He was and is more than a man, He is divine, He is eternal, He existed in heaven and took the form of a man through Mary)
2. Why was it important that Jesus' mother was a virgin? (because the child that was to be born was more than a man)
3. Why did some Jews think that Jesus was blaspheming? (for saying that He existed before Abraham)
4. Was the Word with God, or was He God? (both)
5. Do you believe that Jesus is the eternal divine Son of God? (\_\_\_\_\_)