

A BRIEF CHRONOLOGY AND STUDY OF THE EVENTS PERTAINING TO THE BIRTH OF JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE CHRIST

About the Birth of Jesus Christ

**Eternity before the Creation: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit
The Word {John 1:1}**

Old Testament prophecies of Messiah / Christ.

Comparing Luke 2:1-40 and Matthew 2:1-18

Decree by Caesar Augustus for a census {about 4 B.C.}

Joseph & Mary travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register for the census.

Jesus is born in Bethlehem.

The Word was made flesh {John 1:14}

Shepherds see the glory of God and go to see the Christ in the manger in Bethlehem.

The shepherds leave immediately to proclaim the Good News.

The Magi see a star in the East and set out for Jerusalem.

Jesus is circumcised the eighth day while still in Bethlehem.

After thirty-three more days Mary goes to the temple in Jerusalem.

Mary's offering is the turtledove, the offering of the poor. If the Magi had come to the manger Mary & Joseph would have the gifts from the Magi.

Simeon and Anna see the Christ child in the temple in Jerusalem.

Joseph & Mary return to Nazareth.

After a journey that takes two years the Magi visit King Herod and ask to see the new King. Herod diligently inquires of the time the Magi saw the star and learns where the Christ was to be born.

The Magi start out for Bethlehem based on the city of His birth but they see the star and follow it to the house where Jesus, a young child {not an infant}, was in Nazareth.

The Magi worship Christ and give Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

We are not told how many Magi {wise men} there were but based on the three gifts, tradition makes it three.

The Magi leave immediately.

When Herod learns he has been tricked by the Magi he orders all male children two years old and under to be killed. Why two years? That is the time the Magi told Herod they first saw the star proclaiming the birth of King Jesus.

Joseph is warned about Herod's murder warrant and flees with Mary and Jesus into Egypt.

There is much tradition that surrounds the birth of Jesus that will not hold up to an examination from Scripture. What follows is simply what the Scripture reveals.

His Preincarnate Existence:

- John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
- John 1:14 *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.*
- Micah 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is the ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

Old Testament Prophecies:

- Mark 1:1,2 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; as it is written in the prophets. . .*
- Revelation 19:10 . . .*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*
- Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (God to Satan)*
- Genesis 22:18 *And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. (God to Abraham)*
- Galatians 3:16 *Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*
- Isaiah 7:14 *Therefore the Lord Himself shall give you a sign; Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*
- Daniel 9:20-27 (Messiah will come in 490 years!)

There are at least 40 prophecies in the Old Testament concerning certain aspects of the Messiah (Hebrew)/ Christ (Greek), the Anointed One of God.

The Old Testament tells of a divine-human Person, clothed in our human nature as the seed of woman, yet everlasting Ruler. When He came to His own, the Jews, they misunderstood the Scriptures and were looking for an earthly king to deliver them from the Romans and to make them great among the peoples of the earth. Messiah or Christ of the Old Testament and Jesus of Nazareth are one and the same.

Jesus is the perfect fulfillment of all of the Messianic prophecies. His divine-human Person (two natures in one Person), the place and manner of His birth, His teaching, His miracles, His suffering, His death, His burial, and resurrection, the redemption which He accomplished, and the nature of the kingdom He established are all in perfect harmony.

The Forerunner, John the Baptist, was of prophecy. Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; 4:5

Jesus confirmed that John the Baptist was the "Elijah" to come. Matthew 17:9-13

Luke 1:26-38 The annunciation to Mary in Nazareth; Gabriel is the same angel who spoke to Daniel; Mary is a virgin; an espousal could only be broken by divorce.

Matthew 1:18-25 Joseph is reassured; they had not had sex; Joseph is perplexed and had three choices; (stone her for adultery i.e., a public example; divorce her - put her away privately; honor the betrothal)

Luke 1:39-56 Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth; John leaps in the womb at the Name; Mary is a sinner and needs a Saviour.

Genealogies: Matthew 1:1-17 gives Jesus the **legal** right to the throne of David, through the lineage of Joseph. An adopted son had all the rights of a son.
Luke 3:23-38 is the **human** lineage to the throne of David through Mary.

The Jews never challenged Jesus' right to David's throne, i.e. as the Son of David.

Luke 2:1-40 Joseph and Mary must go to Bethlehem where the Christ is to be born; Caesar Augustus decreed a census tax (to fulfill God's purpose); no room at the inn, so a feed trough (manger) will do; shepherds see the glory of God and hear the angels, and come the same night and leave immediately. At 8 days, He is circumcised and named Jesus, they are still in Bethlehem; and then 33 days later, for Mary's purification, and to present the firstborn, they go to the temple in Jerusalem. This is before the magi bring gifts because they offer turtledoves, the poorest offering allowed. Immediately after Simeon and Anna they return to Nazareth. (Exodus 13:2, 12, 15; Leviticus 12:1-4)

Matthew 2:1-18 The Wise Men come to Herod. How many? More than one, perhaps three since three gifts are mentioned. They were not "kings," but magi (astrologers). Herod was afraid of a new king, so he finds out where the Christ was to be born, and diligently inquires of the time. The Wise Men start out for Bethlehem, and **BEHOLD** (amazement), the star leads them to the house where the **young child** (not infant) was, now back at Joseph's house in Nazareth. They worship Jesus and immediately leave. Joseph and Mary flee to Egypt. When Herod realizes he has been tricked, he commands that all the male children from two years old and under be killed. Why two years? It took the Wise Men two years to get to Jerusalem. Jesus was about two years old before the Wise Men found Him in a house in Nazareth, not a babe in a manger.

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