

THE BIBLE VIEW

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What Does the Bible Say about the Birth of Jesus?

Bill Brinkworth

Many people's impression of the first Christmas, when Jesus was born, is often not the one described in the Bible. People often get what they believe happened at Christ's birth from television shows, movies, artists' renderings, or an inaccurate story told to them. Much of what they see or are taught is not according to the Scriptures. Here is some of what the Scriptures say about the birth of Christ:

- **The wise men were not there when Jesus was born.** According to Luke 2, the shepherds were there. After Christ's birth, more of His young life is revealed in Matthew 2. There it mentions that the young child was in the "house" (Matthew 2:11) when the wise men arrived, not in the manger.

It is possible that Jesus was up to two years old at the time the wise men arrived. Herod, the king, heard that the "King of the Jews" was born, and to eliminate someone that could possibly usurp his position on the throne, he had all the children two years old and younger

killed. If Jesus had just been born, Herod would not have picked that age range to assure Jesus would be killed.

- **Also, to get the scene biblically correct, the Bible never mentions that there were three wise men.** They did bring three different kinds of gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The Bible never mentions that there were exactly three packages as many pictures portray. There could have been a multitude of packages of the three different kinds of gifts. The cash value of these items may have provided the finances Joseph and his family needed to escape the genocide of all the children Herod sought to murder. Thus, the wise men may have paid the way to keep the young Saviour from being killed.
- **There was no special star shining at His birth.** According to the Matthew account, the guiding star was used to lead the wise men to where Jesus was; so since they came when He was in His “house”, there was no star at Christ’s birth.
- **Although Christ’s birth is celebrated on the 25th of December, it probably did not occur then.** His birth was most likely at the end of September. At Christ’s birth, the shepherds were “abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock.” Since the winters today are much like they were 2,000 years ago, it was too cold for grass to grow. The flocks usually grazed in the fields from April to October.

Also, Joseph and Mary went to pay their taxes (not partaking in a “census” or “registering” as many of the

modern Bible perversions retell it). The taxes were probably collected at the end of the harvest, not when the average temperature was too cold to travel (average temperature may have been about 29 degrees in December). The tax turnout would not be sufficient if it were too cold to travel.

- **A Christmas tree was not part of His birth.** Nowhere in the birth of Christ is a Christmas tree indicated. The only decorated tree mentioned in the Word of God is found in Jeremiah 10:3-4, and it was part of a heathen custom.

The birth of the Saviour, over 2,000 years ago, was the most important birth of all time. That birth brought into this world God's only Son; who over 33 years later would die on a cross to pay for the sins of all that accepted His payment. Although the ideas of many concerning Christmas may be unbiblical, it is wonderful that many still stop their busy lives to remember His birth, at least once a year. Misconceptions of any Bible information should teach us that the only way we will ever know the truth is to read God's Word for ourselves, and not to rely on other sources that may not be accurate.

“They gave him a manger for a cradle, a carpenter's bench for a pulpit, thorns for a crown, and a cross for a throne. He took them and made them the very glory of his career.” — Orchard

We Have Much to Sing Praises For!

C. H. Spurgeon, Morning and Evening, Jan. 20

"And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." --Luke 2:20

What was the subject of their praise? They praised God for what they had heard — for the good tidings of great joy that a Saviour was born unto them. Let us copy them; let us also raise a song of thanksgiving that we have heard of Jesus and His salvation.

They also praised God for what they had seen. There is the sweetest music — what we have experienced; what we have felt within; what we have made our own; “the things which we have made touching the King.”

It is not enough to hear about Jesus. Mere hearing may tune the harp, but the fingers of living faith must create the music. If you have seen Jesus with the God-given sight of faith, suffer no cobwebs to linger among the harp strings, but loud to the praise of sovereign grace, awake your psaltery and harp.

One point for which they praised God was the agreement between what they had heard and what they had seen. Observe the last sentence: “... as it was told unto them.” Have you not found the Gospel to be in yourselves just what the Bible said it would be? Jesus said He would give you rest. Have you not enjoyed the sweetest peace in

Him? He said you should have joy, and comfort, and life through believing in Him. Have you not received all these? Are not His ways of pleasantness and His paths of peace?

Surely you can say with the queen of Sheba, "The half has not been told me." I have found Christ sweeter than His servants ever said He was. I looked upon His likeness as they painted it, but it was a mere daub compared with Himself; for the King in His beauty outshines all imaginable loveliness. Surely what we have "seen" keeps pace with, nay, far exceeds, what we have "heard." Let us, then, glorify and praise God for a Saviour so precious, and so satisfying.

"God be thanked for that good and perfect gift, the gift unspeakable; His life, His love, His very self in Christ Jesus." — Babcock

The Humiliated Christ

Dr. Guthrie.,1854

Many name Tsar Peter I as the founder of the Russian empire. He left his palace and the seductive pleasures, all the pomp, and royalty, to acquire the art of shipbuilding in the dockyard of a Dutch seaport. He learned it, that he might teach it to his subjects. He became a servant, that he might be the better master, and lay in Russia the foundations of a great naval power. His country has been grateful. Saint Petersburg, which bears his name, is adorned with a monument to his memory. It is as massive

as his mind and the city has embalmed his deathless name in her heart and in her victories.

Yet, little as men think of Jesus; lightly as they esteem Him, His humbling acts were far greater. He was a king who become a subject that his subjects might find in Him a king. The Son of God stooped to toil and suffer great anguish, that we would have a hell-less eternity and a loving, guiding Lord. What an amazing sacrifice our Saviour gave for us!

“Being a humble instrument in the hands of our heavenly Father, I desire that all my words and acts may be according to His will; and that it may be so, I give thanks to the Almighty, and seek His aid.”

— Abraham Lincoln

His and Our Birth

Oswald Chambers

“And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:35

Jesus Christ was born into this world, not from it. He did not evolve out of history. He came into history from the outside. Jesus Christ is not the best human being. He is a being who cannot be accounted for by the human race at all. He is not man becoming God, but God Incarnate, God coming into human flesh, coming into it from outside. His

life is the Highest and the holiest entering in at the lowliest door.

“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” Galatians 4:19

Just as our Lord came into human history from outside, so He must come into me from the outside. Have I allowed my personal human life to become a “Bethlehem” for the Son of God? I cannot enter into the realm of the Kingdom of God unless I am born from above by a totally “unnatural” birth.

*“Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”
John 3:7*