

Chronological Details Surrounding the Birth of Jesus Christ

Then the angel said to the shepherds, “... Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Luke 2:10-11

By

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The *Unbefore-Known* Truth of the Major Events Surrounding the Birth of the Messiah

The purpose of this writing is to correct misunderstandings surrounding the birth of the Messiah and what followed thereafter.

And to bring forth the truth of that time can only be done by putting the Scriptures into their proper order together with the needed details that correctly mesh with them.

This writing will cover the birth of the Christ-Child until Joseph and Mary, His mother, were forced to flee with Him from Nazareth to Egypt to escape the wrath of King Herod who was seeking to kill Him, and their return from Egypt to their home in Nazareth.

The basic Scriptures are found in the following four chapters:

- 1) Luke 1, speaks of the angel Gabriel visiting Mary.
- 2) Matthew 1, speaks of Joseph taking unto himself his wife, Mary.
- 3) Matthew 2, gives an overview of His birth and what took place at the time.
- 4) Luke 2, fills in with complete details.

Within these four chapters is found the pertinent information of that time. In addition, detail will be added for understanding regarding the circumstances of that very important time in the history of mankind.

Of necessity there will be some overlapping of both Scripture and details.

Understanding the Holy Scriptures

Jesus Christ gives us keys for understanding the Holy Scriptures that are not always found to be in their proper order as made known by the following quote.

MYSTERY OF THE AGES, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Author's statement, Page xi:

"I learned that the Bible is like a jig-saw puzzle—thousands of pieces that need putting together—and the pieces will fit together in only one way. Then the picture becomes crystal clear to the one willing to believe what God our Creator says." End of Quote

A Major Key Needed from Scripture for Understanding

Further, God's prophet gives us a major key for finding the correct pieces to aid us in making clear pictures of any given subject.

Isaiah 28:9-13

"Whom will he teach knowledge and whom will he make to understand the message ... but the word of the LORD was to them, precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little ... (Isaiah 46:9-10, 42:9)."

At the same time, the pictures can only become complete by receiving and using God's Holy Spirit of truth (*John 16:13*), along with the needed wisdom and understanding from God (*James 1:5; Proverbs 4:7-9; Psalm 111:10*).

God's Perfect Time Table

Another important key for understanding, which virtually everyone has missed in their studies of Christ's birth is to realize God has a perfect Time Table into which all major events and prophecies have to fit within it in their particular time frames.

This key will be used in this writing to unlock those mysteries surrounding Christ's birth until they were forced to flee to Egypt to save their lives.

And within that Time Table, *from Genesis to Revelation*, it came time for the greatest miracle and blessing that could have ever been given to mankind in 4 B. C., the birth of JESUS, IMMANNUEL, God with us, God in the human flesh.

(Excerpts from the Harmony of the Gospels by Fred Coulter, will be used in part in this writing along with various quotes taken from the internet).

Gabriel Appears Before the Virgin Mary

The impregnation of Mary that would lead to the birth of JESUS, begins with the visit of Gabriel, a special angelic messenger sent by God, to the virgin Mary who lived in Nazareth of Galilee:

Luke 1:26-39, 56-57

vs.26-27 Now in the 6th month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent by God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, who was of the house of David, and the name of the virgin was Mary.

The name of Mary is equivalent to Miriam in the Old Testament, sister of Moses.

Nazareth had a bad name (*John 1:46*). The people living there had a different dialect in speech much like those living in the south in this country. And they were looked down on as being backwards and uneducated (*cf. John 7:15, Christ having come from Nazareth*).

vs.28-29 And having come in (*Gabriel appeared as a man to Mary—apparently he knocked on her door and she invited him into her home, curious as to why he was there to see her*), **the angel said, “Greetings, you greatly favored and honored one! The LORD is with you: you are blessed above all women.” But seeing him she was awestruck at his words, and was wondering what kind of salutation this might be.**

At this point, though Scripture does not say, but when coupled with Gabriel’s appearance before Zacharias in the Temple (*Luke 1:11-18*), and Gabriel identifying himself as a special angel sent to him by God (*Luke 1:19*), it seems logical to believe that he would have also identified himself with the same words to Mary. This left her awestruck and fearful:

vs.30-31 But the angel told her, “Mary, don’t be afraid, because you have found favor in the sight of God! Now listen, you shall conceive in your womb and give birth to a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS (*Immanuel, Isaiah 7:14*).

vs.32-33 “He shall be great, and He shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the LORD God will give Him the throne of David His forefather (*II Samuel 7:12-17; Psalm 132:11; 84:3-4; Jeremiah 3:17-18; John 1:49; 18:36-37*); **and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His Kingdom there shall never be an end.”**

vs.34-35 But Mary asked the angel, “How shall this possibly be, since I have not known a man?” And answering, the angel told her, “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of the Highest shall envelop you (*overshadow*); **for which cause also the Holy, Sacred Child born to you shall be called the Son of God.**

Philippians 2:7 margin: Jesus Christ emptied Himself of His Divinity and reduced Himself in size to a tiny Sperm. In brief and overview: The Sperm was placed within the womb of Mary by the Almighty God and He impregnated the Sperm. The Most High God then became the Father of JESUS.

A quote from Mr. Armstrong: “No trinity! Otherwise Jesus would have been the Son of the Holy Spirit, not of God the Father.”

v.36 “Now then, Elizabeth your relative, she has also conceived a son, in spite of her old age, and this is the 6th month for her who had been called barren. Because nothing shall be impossible with God.

v.38 And Mary said, “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; let it happen to me according to your word.” Then the angel left her.

Harmony of the Gospels, page 10: Luke gives additional details which show that Mary must have become pregnant in the last two weeks of Elizabeth’s 6th month.

Learning of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, Mary was anxious to go and spend time with her.

v.39 And those days Mary got up and hurriedly went to the hill country (Hebron – city of priests, 70 miles from Nazareth, probably a three or four-day journey), into a city of Judah. When she entered into Zachariah’s house, she greeted Elizabeth.

Elizabeth was of the tribe of Levi; Mary was of the tribe of Judah.

vs.56-57 And Mary remained with her about three months (the full term of Elizabeth’s pregnancy), and returned to her house. Now Elizabeth’s full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son (John).

Though Scripture does not say, but considering the timing, Mary may have remained with Elizabeth until she had her baby. This seems very likely. For why would she wait until almost the time of John’s birth and then leave? Perhaps she did anyway for reasons not made known.

Mary’s Pregnancy with the Christ-Baby

The following takes place shortly after Mary returned from her visit with Elizabeth.

Matthew 1:18-19

v.18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with Child of the Holy One.

Betrothed to Joseph: This refers to the previous marriage agreement without which no woman was ever married among the Jews.

Though Joseph and Mary had not yet established their own home together, Joseph had noticed the swelling in her stomach area and was shocked to see she was pregnant! This baffled him! It was obvious Mary was pregnant, but by whom?

v.19 Then Joseph her husband, because he was a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example (unlike Judah who told men to burn Tamar, Genesis 28:24), was minded to put her away secretly.

A Vision Given to Joseph from God

Possibly a few days may have passed before an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and resolved the worrying and troubling problem in his mind—he loved Mary.

Matthew 1:20-24

v.20 But while he thought on these things (*trying to think his way through this problem*), **behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is** (*has been*) **conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.**

The name of Joseph from the Hebrew means Jehoshua, Numbers 13:16. After the captivity to Babylon, it was contracted to Joseph, Nehemiah 7:7—meaning JHVH the Savior.

v.21 “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”

v.22 So all of this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord though the prophet, saying,

v.23 “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name IMMANUEL, which is translated, “God with us.”

v.24 Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife (*problem resolved*). **And did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.**

Nosey Neighbors and Gossip

Prior to this time, Mary’s pregnancy was also noticed by her neighbors. Gossip began spreading throughout their neighborhood—*and remembered!*

During the ministry of Christ this was made known to the Pharisees. Jesus Christ was then accused by them of being illegitimate (*John 8:41*).

Gossip is timeless! No one has ever conquered his tongue or ever will in this human life (*James 3:1-10*). However, this does not give anyone license to freely do it.

Christ expects His people to put a bridle on his or her mouth to refrain as much as possible not to participate in what could be harmful to the character of another person, when not knowing the fullness of the truth of what is being spread about an individual (*Psalms 32:9*).

The Birth of Jesus Christ

During the last stage of the ninth month of Mary’s pregnancy, circumstances forced Joseph and Mary to fulfill prophecy by leaving their home in Nazareth and go to Bethlehem where she would give birth to JESUS.

Luke 2:1-6

vs.3 And it happened that in those days a decree was issued from Augustus Caesar that all the Roman Empire should be registered and taxed ... so all went to be registered, everyone to his own city.

NOTE: The Scripture literally reads: “This census is a first one coming to pass when **Quirinius** is ruling Syria (c. 51 BC – AD 21).” See the New American Standard Version Bible. Also, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, page 515. Luke in Acts 5:37 refers to the A. D. 6 census—the second and largest one.

vs.4-5 Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem (also called Ephrath, or Ephratah), because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife (not yet legally married), who was with Child.

Latimes. Nativity: But one thing is certain: The world of Mary and Joseph was a difficult and dangerous place, one whose harsh conditions were not fully chronicled in the Gospel accounts of their travails. Writers of the gospels of Matthew and Luke “are so laconic about the [Nativity] event because they assume the reader would know what it was like,” said James F. Strange, a New Testament and biblical archeology professor at the University of South Florida in Tampa. Today, he added, “we have no idea how difficult it was.”

Joseph and Mary’s hardships would have begun more than a week before the birth of their son, when the couple had to leave their home in Nazareth, in the northern highlands of Galilee, to register for a Roman census.

They had to travel 90 miles to the city of Joseph’s ancestors: south along the flatlands of the Jordan River, then west over the hills surrounding Jerusalem, and on into Bethlehem.

“It was a fairly grueling trip,” said Strange, who annually leads an excavation team at the ancient city of Sepphoris, near Nazareth. “In antiquity, the most we find people traveling is 20 miles a day. And this trip was very much uphill and downhill. It was not simple.”

Strange estimates that Joseph and Mary likely would have traveled only 10 miles a day because of Mary’s impending delivery.

And the trip through the Judean desert would have taken place during the winter, when “it’s in the 30s during the day [and] rains like heck,” said Strange. “It’s nasty, miserable. And at night it would be freezing.”

The journey would have taken Joseph and Mary at least four to five days.

End of Quotes

Arrival in Bethlehem

Upon the arrival of Joseph and Mary in Bethlehem Joseph sought a place for them to stay in the Guest Chamber House (Inn). But they were too late—there were no vacancies.

Mary began to go into labor and the only place Joseph could find for them to stay and for her to give birth to her Son was in a barn.

Though Joseph may have had to do a little rearranging and cleaning up a bit in the barn, for the most part it must have been kept clean. The animals were in their stalls and presented no problem to them.

Then the time came for Mary to give birth to her Son.

Luke 2:6-7

v.6 So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered.

Mary could not hold back any longer for the contractions were too strong and too close to each other. With the final contraction, she gave birth to the Christ-Child-JESUS, her first-born Son.

v.7 And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger (*feeding trough for animals—this would be in alignment with visits from the shepherds*), because there was no room for them in the Inn.



Inn, Greek, *kataluno*, not Inn, but Guest Chamber House.

Harmony of the Gospels, page 11, “Furthermore, there were no guest rooms available at the Inn when Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem. This shows that many people were already in the Jerusalem area for the taxation and for the fall festival season.

Bethlehem was a festival city because of its close proximity to Jerusalem [*six and one-half miles south from Jerusalem*]. Since there was no room at the Inn, they were forced to lodge in a barn. Jesus was born there and was laid in a manger [*a feeding trough*].

Page 10, Projecting forward 9 months from Mary’s probable conception, we arrive at the two-week period during which Christ was probably born ... September 16-29.

The entire sequence of events has been charted out day by day from the beginning of 5 B.C., until the birth of Jesus Christ in 4 B.C. When displayed graphically in chart form, this sequence provides an accurate basis for determining the approximate period when Jesus was born. The Feast of Trumpets is the middle day of the probable two-week birth period. Other evidence in the Bible shows that the Feast of Trumpets is the Feast Day picturing the second coming of Jesus Christ.

The Day of the Lord and the angelic trumpets in the book of Revelation clearly project this symbolism and meaning for us! Is it not reasonable that God would also use the Feast of Trumpets as the day of Jesus’ birth? If so, it would be in harmony with God’s Great Plan as portrayed through the Annual Holy Days.”

End of Quotes

Announcement made by an Angel to the Shepherds in the Fields of the Birth of Jesus Christ

Irrefutable proof of the timing of the birth of the Christ-Baby is made known by the following writing:

Clarke Commentary, volume 5, page 370, Luke 2:8-9:

“Keeping watch—by night, or, as in the margin, *keeping the watches of the night*, i. e. each one keeping a watch (which ordinarily consisted of three hours).



The reason why they watched them in the field appears to have been, either to preserve the sheep from *beasts of prey*, such as wolves, foxes, &c., or from freebooting banditti, with which all the land of Judea was at that time much infested.

It was a custom among the Jews to send out their sheep to the deserts, about the Passover, and bring them home at the commencement of the *first rain*: during the time they were out, the shepherds watched them night and day.

As the Passover occurred in the spring, and the first rain began early in the month of Marchesvan, which answers to part of our *October* and *November*, we find that the sheep were kept out in the open country during the whole of the *summer*.

And as these shepherds had not yet brought home their flocks, it is a presumptive argument that October had not yet been commenced and that, consequently, our Lord was not born on the 25th of *December*, when no flocks were out in the fields; nor could it have been later than September, as the flocks were still in the fields by *night*. ...”

End of Quotes

News of the Birth of the Christ-Baby Made Known

God intended the birth of the new-born Christ-Baby to be spread by word of mouth to all near and far by shepherds tending their flocks in the nearby fields to be a witness of the promised birth of the promised Messiah.

And to make that possible, an angel of the Lord appeared to them and made the glorious announcement of His birth:

Luke 2:8-9

vs.8-9 Now there were shepherds in the same country, lodging in the fields (*in tents or booths*), while keeping watch over their flock during the night. Then suddenly an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord SHINED all around them (*cf. Acts 9:3*); and they were terrified, and trembled with great fear.

vs.10-11 And the angel told them, “Do not be afraid, because I am announcing good news of great joy to you, which shall be to all the people. Because today a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, was born to you in the city of David.

v.12 And this shall be the sign for you: you shall find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

vs.13-14 Then suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly angels, praising God and proclaiming, “Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth among men who have godly desires.”

v.15 Then as the angels disappeared out of sight into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go even as far as Bethlehem, and see this event that has occurred, which the Lord has made known to us.”

vs.16-18 And hurriedly they came, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the Baby who was lying in a manger. Now after seeing this, they **SPREAD THE**

NEWS ABROAD about the message which had been told to them concerning this little Child. And everyone who heard it was astounded at the things which the shepherds told them.

The well-known grapevine has always been used to pass along news as well as gossip to other interested parties. With this greatest news of all time in mind, one can be sure this was passed on to friends and relatives in and around Jerusalem and elsewhere.

The Circumcision of the Messiah

To fulfill the law of God, it became necessary that the eight-day old Baby-Jesus Christ be circumcised on this particular day:

Luke 2:21-24

v.21 And when 8 days for the circumcising of the Child was completed, His name was called JESUS, which He was called by the angel before He was conceived in the womb (*still in Bethlehem*).

v.22 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed ($33+7=40$ days, *Exodus 13:2, 12; Leviticus 12:1-4, 6-8*) in accordance with what was written in the law of Moses (*all law is from God! Moses was not the law-giver (James 4:12), he only told the people the laws that God had set in motion, John 1:14, Malachi 4:4*), they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.

v.23-24 In accordance with what had been written in the law of the Lord, that every firstborn male opening the womb shall be called holy and consecrated to the Lord; and to offer a sacrifice according to that which had been commanded in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons (*Leviticus 12:2*).

While they were in the Temple, there was the blessing of Simeon and the blessing of Anna bestowed on and about the Baby-Christ (*Luke 2:25-38*).

The Faithful People in Parthia

As shall be seen later in this writing there were many including those among the nobles within the Empire of Parthia who had not lost sight of the prophecies of God and knew it was almost time for their fulfillment.



This is made known by the 12 WISE MEN. They studied the prophecies that foretold the birth of the Messiah, meaning IMMANUEL, and were looking forward to His birth.

These 12 MEN were recognized as their chosen leaders as Elijah was by the school of prophets (*cf. II Kings 2:3, 5, 7*). Their number 12 would represent all of the sons of Jacob.

A Star Miraculously Appears Before Their Eyes

Then the time came for the fulfillment of the prophecy concerning the birth of the Messiah.

Suddenly and miraculously a brilliant lighted STAR appeared before their very eyes! They would not have known *why*—the meaning of its appearance—*except* the same must have occurred to them as it did with the shepherds tending their flocks when an angel of God said to them:



Luke 2:10-11

vs.10-11 And the angel told them, “Do not be afraid, because I am announcing good news of great joy to you, which shall be to all the people. Because today a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord, was born to you in the city of David.

The Savior for the ten tribes of Israel (*cf. Matthew 10:5-8*), who for the most part no longer knew their identity.

And to recognize the Christ-Child a sign was given to them:

v.12 “And this shall be the sign for you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.”

The shepherds did find the newly-born Christ-Child just as they were told by the angel lying in a manger (*a feeding trough*) in a barn.

However, when the WISE MEN saw Him, they were then living in a house. More about this later.

Some Overlapping

There will be some overlapping here and there in this writing. However, this becomes necessary to fill in needed background. This will be seen beginning with the Book of Matthew that connects some important events and dates.

This will be touched on later in this writing.

The Wise Men Arrive in Jerusalem

The very small city of Bethlehem came to be the center of attention for it would be the birthplace of JESUS, IMMANUEL, God with us.

Matthew 2:1-16

v.1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days when Herod



was king (Herod was an Edomite, made king by the Romans, Exp. Commentary), behold, wise men from the East (Parthia—where the lost 10 tribes of Israel were located) came to Jerusalem,

v.2 Saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East (Parthian Empire, His star—making known the birth of

the Messiah had taken place—at least 12 weeks before their arrival) and have come to worship Him.”

Each Wise Man was a very notable and important man therefore they had a large entourage, military force, hundreds of men, accompanying them—and seeing them caused a stir among the people in Jerusalem as to what does this mean?

Halley’s Handbook, 24th Edition, 1965, Matthew 2;1-12 Visit of the Wise-Men, Page 419,

“They were men of high standing, for they had access to Herod. They are commonly spoken of as the ‘Three Wise-Men.’ But the Scriptures does not say how many. They were probably more, or at least they were with an entourage of scores or hundreds, for it would not have been safe for a small group to travel a 1000 miles over desert wastes that were infested with bandits. Their arrival in Jerusalem was of sufficient show of importance to stir the whole city.

Aside from symbolizing the homage of wisdom, and of distant lands, to the new-born KING, and of calling to the attention of Jerusalem that He had arrived, one of the objects of their visit, which they themselves knew not, was to supply money for the Child’s flight to Egypt (*distance from Nazareth to Egypt is 487 miles*).

The parents were poor, and except for the gold brought by the Wise-Men, escape from Herod may not have been possible. Return of the Wise-Men may have paved the way, in their own country, for later preaching the Gospel.”

End of Quotes

The Star's First Appearance

The Wise Men had been shocked and sobered upon seeing the STAR. However, they knew there was meaning and purpose for it to appear at that particular time to them.

It was not long before they knew why it was revealed to them.

They came to realize it had to do with the newborn birth of the Baby-Messiah. How? Undoubtedly by an angel of the Lord—very probably the same angel that had appeared to the shepherds with the same announcement to them—and within minutes of each other.

The Manifestation of the Star

Putting together all the Scriptures concerning the STAR, it had to be an angel in appearance as a miniature star due to its brilliant light. They are often used synonymously of each other (*cf. Revelation 12:4*).

Though God can do anything, it does not seem reasonable that it would have been a literal star (*huge in size dwarfing our sun*), nor a meteor (*a meteor is composed of iron, stone, and stony iron*), but an angel appearing as a luminous light—a *brilliant shining light*.

Since the STAR had an appearance similar to the LIGHT of a star in the heavens, it could be thought of as a star. In any case, Scripture calls it a STAR.

The shining of the STAR was a super natural light similar to the BRILLIANT LIGHT SHONE around Saul (*Acts 9:3, 7; 22:6, 9*).

Those with Saul heard the voice but saw no one; they also saw the light, but did not hear (*perceive*) the voice of Him who spoke with Saul. Perhaps it was the same with the WISE MEN.

The Star was Visible Only to the Wise Men

Considering the potential problems that could have been connected with the STAR, if



everyone along that great distance were able to see it, God saw to it that no one was able to see the STAR throughout the journey except for the 12 men and their entourage.

Otherwise, it would have attracted people all along the way and perhaps drawn unwanted followers as well as others out of curiosity to see where this most unusual brilliant light was leading them.

This would have also hindered the travel time of the Wise Men.

Follow the Star

The WISE MEN were told by the angel to follow the STAR for it would lead them to the newly-born Baby-Christ. Once there, they would be able to see Him.

Creation Today.Org: "... the Greek word which has here been translated as star, *aster* (αστερα) implies something that is strewn. What could it be that could move easily, from West to East if need be, appearing as strewn light? A good candidate for this phenomenon would be the pillar of fire:

"Moreover, You led them by day with a cloudy pillar, And by night with a pillar of fire, To give them light on the road Which they should travel ([Nehemiah 9:12](#))."

End of Quotes

Preparation for Their Travel to Jerusalem

The 12 Wise Men hastily made preparation for the long trip and began their travel over the very long distance from Parthia to Jerusalem a distance of approximately 1200 miles. They wasted no time for they were anxious to see the newly-born Christ-Child who would become the Savior of their people and of the world (*cf. John 1:29*).

The STAR led the way for them in their travel as did the LORD leading Israel *via* of the cloud and fire remaining overhead in the travels of Israel across the desert leading them to the Promised Land (*Exodus 13:21; Nehemiah 9:12*).

Their appearance in Jerusalem would also fulfill prophecy by being a witness to the priests and the people of the city of the birth of the promised Messiah. Also, they would be able to see with their own eyes the newly-born Christ-Child.

The Journey of the Wise Men

The journey of the wise men traveling by camels or horses would have taken about 12 weeks (*three months—84 days*) from Parthia to Jerusalem, 20 to 30 miles a day, a total distance of about 1200 miles. Though it could have been a longer distance depending on where they were situated within the Parthian Empire.

To reach Jerusalem the Wise Men had to travel through territory belonging to Rome—enemies and wars between them over many years as the following quote makes known.

Internet: "The **Roman–Parthian Wars** (54 BC – 217 AD) were a series of conflicts **between** the **Parthian** Empire and the **Roman** Republic and **Roman** Empire." End of Quote

With this in mind one might wonder how it was possible for the Wise Men from Parthia to be able to travel through Roman territory without creating a problem between the two Empires?

The answer is made clear in the following writing.

The Lost 10 Tribes of Israel ... Found, by Stephen Collins, Quotes from Pages 272, 273—

“History records that Roman-Parthian relations were peaceful at the time that Jesus was born. This confirms this was the case as the Parthian Magi did not sneak into Roman territory to look for the Messiah, but rather came directly to King Herod, quite open about their reasons for being in Roman—occupied Palestine. They informed Herod that they had come to worship “he that is born king of the Jews.”

It is a tribute to the power of Caesar’s policy that the Roman-Parthian peace be maintained, that war did not result from this statement, for Herod could easily have flown into a rage, and yelled “How dare you ask to see another king of the Jews beside me. I am king of the Jews!” That Herod swallowed his pride, and meekly answered the Parthians is quite noteworthy. This is a tribute not only to Caesar’s policy to maintain the peace, but also to Herod’s memory that the Parthians had militarily controlled the throne of Judea a few decades earlier.

Herod’s very meek response to the highly provocative question of the Parthian officials may also indicate that he was intimidated by the many Parthian soldiers who accompanied the Magi. Indeed, since the whole city was “troubled” by the Parthians’ arrival, the presence of many Parthian soldiers may have sparked rumors that a new Parthian-Roman war was imminent. Herod may have suspected that the Parthians’ question was designed to provoke an incident which would lead to an outbreak of hostilities and his removal from the throne.

When Herod realized that he had been fooled, he wrathfully killed all the young male children of Bethlehem in a vain effort to kill the Messiah. However, there is no record that he made any attempt to overtake or punish the Magi. As high Parthian nobles, they had “diplomatic immunity”, and Herod dared not anger Caesar by provoking the Parthians. Also the size of Magi’s armed escort apparently dissuaded Herod from attempting to pursue them.

There is another important aspect of this remarkable episode. While it is not surprising that Jewish leaders during Herod’s reign were sufficiently familiar with prophetic writings to pinpoint for Herod where the Messiah would be born. It is surprising that God was working more closely with members of the Parthian ruling class than He was with the Jewish priests! This makes no biblical sense unless (A) the Parthians were descended from the exiled tribes of the House of Israel and (B) the Magi (Parthians priests) were Levites. ...” End of Quotes

The Arrival of the Wise Men

The wise men finally arrived after the very long journey to Jerusalem that took at least three months or slightly longer to complete the trip.

At this time the Christ-Child with His mother, Mary, and Joseph were living in a house (*Matthew 2:11*)—having established a residence in which to live right after the observance of the Feast of Trumpets.

The Christ-Child would have been about 3 months old at this time—in sequence with the travel time of the 12 Wise Men.

Creation Today.org: “The actual journey of these wise men could easily have taken a long time. It would appear from [Matthew 2:7](#) that the star, which the wise men had seen, had appeared at the moment of Jesus’ birth. But the wise men had arrived after the birth. If they saw the star at the moment of Jesus’ birth, then it would have taken at least a few months for the wise men to arrive. ...” End of Quote

The Wise Men from Parthia

Who were the Wise Men? An intriguing question.

Wikipedia: “In [Eastern Christianity](#), especially the [Syriac churches](#), the Magi often number twelve.^[4] Their identification as kings in later Christian writings is probably linked to [Isaiah 60:1–6](#), which refers to "kings [coming] to the brightness of your dawn" bearing "gold and frankincense".^[5] Further identification of the magi with kings may be due to [Psalm 72:11](#), "May all kings fall down before him".^{[6][7]}

As early as A.D. 200, Tertullian was laying out arguments that the Magi, while astrologers by trade, were considered kings.” End of Quotes

Wikipedia: **Tertullian** ([/tərˈtʌliən/](#); full name *Quintus Septimius Florens Tertullianus*; c. 155 – c. 240? AD)^[2] was a prolific [early Christian](#) author from [Carthage](#) in the [Roman province of Africa](#).^[3]

It is interesting to realize what reputable men wrote concerning the visit by the Wise Men to visit the CHRIST-CHILD—each of them in agreement—the Wise Men were of nobility, either kings, princes, or priests.

An Additional Writing About the Birth of the Messiah

The following excerpts are taken from an article in the Plain Truth, December 1966, that is both enlightening and well documented.

“The Greatest Story Never Told”

By

Dr. Charles Dorothy,

Faculty Member and Minister, Ambassador College/Worldwide Church of God

The Mysterious Magi, Page 28

“How can God announce Jesus' birth to His own nation the Lost Ten Tribes of the House of Israel? How can God witness to the nobles, dignitaries, "higher ups"? The answer has never before been told. The answer is in the mysterious Magi ... the much maligned, much misunderstood Magi!

Matthew is the only Gospel writer who records this great story. But scholars cannot agree about what Matthew means. Do you know who the Magi were? Commonly the Magi are supposed to be either heathen or pagan worshippers of Zoroaster, or maybe practitioners of black magic.

The Bible talks of two kinds of Magi or Magians. The earliest mention in all ancient records of the Magi is found in Jeremiah 39:3, 13. The King James says "Rab-mag," left untranslated because the translators did not know the meaning. Rab-mag has correctly been deciphered as "Chief Magi."

These were pagan priests, physicians, learned men in the company of the Babylonians. The best authorities—ancient and modern—all tell us that "Magi" comes from *mag* or *mog* meaning priest, great one, from the old Persian language called *pahlavi*. You may confirm this in any reliable Bible dictionary.

From these priests (Magi) descend a long line of evil and perverted priests, sorcerers, etc. - from Haman the Agagite (Book of Esther) to Bar-jesus or Elymas the sorcerer (Magian) of Acts 13.

The Bible shows that "Magi" sometimes means a priest of paganism. But that is not all. Classical history, ancient Greek dictionaries, and the Bible all agree there is another kind of Magian or Magi.

Look at **Daniel 2:48**: "Then the king made Daniel a great man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler of the whole province of Babylon, and CHIEF of the governors OVER ALL THE WISE MEN [Hebrew: Magi] OF BABYLON."

One of God 's most righteous men is PRESIDENT of Babylonian Magi! Since Daniel remained the Magi president for a long time, this example proves there was at least one righteous Magi—namely Daniel. Daniel also taught, and certainly set the example of, God's way to those he ruled!

Through Daniel's teaching the Magi the pagan (priests) of the pagan world came into contact with Bible prophecies about Christ, as we shall see proved later.

So also Matthew - who follows the Hebrew very closely in every way - has two expressions for areas east of Palestine. First, Matthew says the Magi are from "eastern parts" (in Greek, *ton anatolon*), or the distant East.

Second, Magi see the star in "the east" (*te Anatole* in Greek) - west of the Magi, but east from Palestine's view, in the "Near East." (See Upham's Star of The Wise Men). Now consider this. One great empire east of the Euphrates - biblically " the distant east" - conquered the lands east of the Euphrates area, had Babylon as its capital, and included the areas of Persia, Bactria, etc. It was the Parthian Empire. It ruled this whole area, and was the empire of THE EAST; the land of the MAGI!

Who Were the Parthians?

The Parthians rose to power around 250 B.C. in and around the southern shores or the Caspian Sea. That was the very land into which the House of Israel - not Judah - was exiled! The exiles in this land were members of the ten tribes of Israel! The Parthian Empire included none other than the exiled lost ten tribes of Israel - many of whom remained in the land of their captivity until about A. D. 226."

Were there Magi in Parthia? Indeed! The geographer Strabo shows the strong influence of Magi in the king's council of Parthia, which "consists of two groups, one that of kinsmen [king's relatives], and the other that of wise men and MAGI, from both of which groups the kings were appointed" (Geography, 11.11.3).

Final Proofs

Contrary to the false story of "Three Kings" who are supposed to be the Magi, eastern writers all agree there were TWELVE Magi! Thus, the Magi do not represent the three sons of Noah, nor the Trinity or any such idea.

What do the twelve Magi represent? Is it coincidence that there were TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL? And certain of the ancient Magi could claim Abraham as their father! (See McClintock's & Strong's Cyclopedia, article "Magi".) The Magi of Matthew 2 were following the star, were following the prophecy of Numbers 24:7 ["**There shall come a**

star out of Jacob” [and most of the "lost tribes" of Jacob or Israel in New Testament times were in Parthia, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.]

This explains why later tradition connects the apostle Thomas' work with the Magi in Parthia after the resurrection of Christ. The distant nation of Israel had a witness of Christ at His birth, (not to mention other nations through which this large caravan of Magi traveled)!

Now we clearly understand why Matthew mentions the Magi. Matthew - and he alone - puts in the words of Christ: **"I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matthew 5:24)**. But we do not read that Christ went to the "lost sheep of Israel." No, He personally did not go to preach to the house of Israel. **THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL CAME TO CHRIST!**

Is it mere coincidence that the shepherds (Jews) come first to Christ; the Magi (representing the tribes of Israel in exile) come second; then the Gentiles come third? An amazing story of precision, of fulfilled prophecy! But there is more. How does God witness to the whole nation? Let's see. "When Herod the king had heard these things [the Magi arriving at Jerusalem], he was troubled, and **ALL JERUSALEM WITH HIM**" (Mat. 2:3). This Idumean (not Jewish) king is **SHAKEN!** Prophecy is being fulfilled! A new king threatens Herod's throne. "

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together [in his palace], he demanded of them where (not "whether") the Christ should be born" (verse 4). What meeting is this? Nothing less than the Supreme Court of the Jewish nation: **THE SANHEDRIN**. **"And they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet" (verse 5, [Micah 5:2]).**

Do you realize what Matthew is saying? The greatest ruling body in the nation - the Sanhedrin - pronounces with one voice that Christ is born in Bethlehem. They do not deny the fact! They publicly and officially proclaim the truth of God **TO** the king. Do you see now how God has reached the king?

Do you see how God has witnessed to the rulers and nobles of that age? Do you see how (probably under threat of their lives from Herod) the Sanhedrin pronounces and admits the truth of the Old Testament - only to deny it a generation later? That very Sanhedrin (with slight changes of personnel) killed the same Jesus whom they testified of!

This only begins the "great story never told." You need to begin reading **YOUR** Bible. You will see a great story all through the pages of your New Testament. You will see diametric opposites from what is commonly taught in the name of religion today! The great story of Christ's life—as the Bible tells it—is not being published by the professing Christian world today.” End of Excerpts

Further Proof of the Country the Wise Men Represented

To further corroborate the writings of Dr. Dorothy, and fill in a few details, a key is found in Scripture where the Wise Men had come from during the time of the observance of Pentecost, the Feast of Firstfruits in 31 A. D.:

Acts 2:5, 9

vs.5, 9 And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, ‘devout men’ from every nation under heaven ... ‘Parthians’ ...

The Ten Tribes of Israel Forgot Their Identity

To the world the identity of Israel has been lost and even to themselves! It is noteworthy to realize the nations of Israel considers themselves to be Gentiles.

For example, Britain and the United States of America do not realize they are of the House of Joseph.

What happened to them? How did they lose their identity? To answer these questions, it becomes necessary at this point to reflect on where the Ten Tribes of Israel went after having broken away from the Kingdom of Judah (*I Kings 12:26-33*).

To understand more fully where the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel went after breaking away from Judah, please read the book, “The United States and Britain in Prophecy”, by Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong – www.cog-ff.com

In brief, the following quote:

*Internet: “About 200 years after the kingdom split [*I Kings 12:16*], the northern tribes of Israel fell to Assyria and were deported by the Assyrians to the northern parts of their empire [*II Kings 17:23*]. Often referred to now as the lost tribes, they later migrated northwest across Europe [*over the 200 years*], eventually settling in new homelands far from the Middle East.” End of Quote*

As already made known, history shows they finally settled in the land of Parthia. Over time they came to be a world-ruling Empire.

To the world they came to be known as the lost Ten Tribes of Israel. However, Christ and His disciples knew where they were located as mentioned by the Apostle James.

James 1:1

v.1 “James, a bond servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the 12 tribes which are scattered abroad.”

Jesus Christ commissioned His apostles to go and witness to the 12 Tribes (*this was about 30-31 A.D.*), as the following Scripture makes known:

Matthew 10:5-6

vs.5-6 These 12 Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying, “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (II Kings 17:23, 6).”

The following quote further corroborates the location of the 10 tribes as being in Parthia; and their dynasty identity as well:

www. Bible Study: “Parthia: There is, surprisingly, a Semitic-Israel connection to David's royal household that exists in the royal Parthian ruling family. The Arsacid dynasty of rule were Jewish descendants of Phares and King David. Israelite tribe and clan names are found throughout the area they controlled. The capital city of the Parthian empire was named after Abraham's only son through Sarah - Isaac.

Josephus, the well-known ancient Jewish historian, stated that Parthia was so powerful that they forced [Herod the Great](#), just before the Romans made him king of Palestine, to run so as not to be killed (Antiquities of the Jews)! End of Quotes

Further information about the Parthians follows:

International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

“PARTHIANS

par'-thi-anz (Parthoi):

1. Country and Early History:

A people mentioned in [Acts 2:9](#) only, in connection with other strangers present at Jerusalem at Pentecost, from which we infer that they were Jews or proselytes from the regions included in the Parthian empire. This empire stretched from the Euphrates to the confines of India and the Oxus, and for centuries was the rival of Rome, and more than once proved her match on the battlefield.

The Parthians are not mentioned in the Old Testament, but are frequently in Josephus, and they had an important connection with the history of the Jews, on account of the large colonies of the latter in Mesopotamia, and the interference of the Parthians in the affairs of Judea, once making it a vassal state.

Parthia proper was a small territory to the Southeast of the Caspian Sea, about 300 miles long by 120 wide, a fertile though mountainous region, bordering on the desert tract of Eastern Persia. The origin of the Parthians is rather uncertain, though the prevailing opinion is that they were of Scythic stock or of the great Tartar race.”

“**Parthia** was about 1200 miles east of Jerusalem.” End of Quotes

The Godless History of the 10 Tribes of Israel

It seems necessary to go back and review the Scriptures that reveal the godless history of Israel after their departure from the Kingdom of Judah. Knowing this, some might question, why were Wise Men found coming from among them? Indeed, they were godless—having rejected both their Husband and God as the following Scriptures reveal—

For it was immediately after their break from Judah, Israel was led away from God by their new king Jeroboam. He led them back into the worship of the golden calf, setting up one in Bethel and the other in Dan, saying, “Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt.” He made priests from every class of people, changed the Feast days, changed the Sabbath to Sunday (the originator of Sunday worship, I Kings 12:26-33).

When considering the extreme Israel went to in departing from Judah, one can see this is a valid question as to why Wise Men would come from the Empire of Parthia, where Israel had settled, after having turned their back on their true God.

The Caring Love of God for His People Israel

The answer to the question is found in the overview and running flow of the history of Israel over time as made known by God through His prophet Isaiah.

Scriptures reveal the continued love for His wife Israel (*cf. Jeremiah 3:14, 22*), in spite of her rejection of Him, and idolatrous worship of Baal:

Isaiah 63:7-11

v.7 “I will mention the lovingkindness of the LORD and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD has bestowed upon us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which He has bestowed on them according to His mercies, according to the multitude of His loving kindnesses.

v.8 “For He said, ‘Surely they are My people, children who will not lie,’ so He became their Savior (*also, their husband*).

v.9 “In all their affliction He was afflicted (*cf. Luke 19:41-44*), and the Angel of His presence saved them; in His love and in His pity He redeemed them; and He bore them and carried them all the days of old.

v.10 “But they rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit; so He turned against them as an enemy, and He fought against them.

v.11 “Then He remembered the days of old, Moses and his people, saying, ‘Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who PUT HIS HOLY SPIRIT WITHIN THEM?’”

The Lord had placed His Holy Spirit within Israel at the time of their marriage to the LORD (*Exodus, chapters 19 through 24*), He placed His Holy Spirit within Israel as His bride but they were *not begotten by the Father (John 6:44)*. *No one was begotten until the Day of Pentecost in 31 A. D., John 7:37-39; 17:1, 4-5*), and then only to Spiritual Israel, the Church of God, who then became the Firstfruits of His spiritual harvest.

At the time of Israel’s breakaway from the Kingdom of Judah, and then led into their rejection of God by their new king, Jeroboam, God then removed His Holy Spirit from them. (*the antitype—Christ also removed His Holy Spirit from the membership of the Worldwide Church of God when they chose to follow Mr. Tkach into the worship of Baal, 1986-1995*).

Always the Few Thousand Who Have Followed and Obeyed God

However, in the midst of the evils of rebellious Israel, the LORD God has always reserved from one man to a few thousand to be faithful to His truth and be used to fulfill His purpose over any given period of time from man’s creation, such as Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, etc., while all others chose to disobey Him.

Moving forward into the time of Elijah the Prophet of God, this can be seen when times were at their worst when King Ahab and Queen Jezebel reigned in the kingdom of Israel (*I Kings 16:29-33*).

The wicked woman that Jezebel was, massacred the prophets of God trying to stamp out any worship for the true God—a type of the reign of Bloody Mary, Queen of England, July 1553 –; 17 November 1558, **Religion: [Roman Catholicism](#)**. During her five-year reign, Mary had **over 300 religious dissenters** burned at the stake in what are known as the Marian persecutions.

Think back to the presidential years of Obama. He put religion into the closet, no more public prayers—a type of King Manasseh (II Kings 21:1-5, 9-15). This will be done again either during the year—2021—or shortly thereafter by Madam-President Hillary Clinton who will have Obama by her side (Amos 5:10-11; cf. II Kings 11:1).

Other prophets in Israel were in hiding due to their fear of also being murdered by Jezebel because of not worshiping Baal. Speaking of them, Obadiah said to Elijah:

I Kings 18:13

v.13 “Was it not reported to my lord what I did when Jezebel killed the prophets of the LORD, how I hid 100 men of the LORD’S prophets, 50 to a cave, and fed them with bread and water?”

Sometime later, when Elijah was at his lowest point—Jezebel was seeking to kill him and he was running for his life—very discouraged—believing he was the only one left in all Israel who followed the LORD (*I Kings 19:2-9*).

A type of the future for God's true and faithful people—all alone—persecuted—and lives in jeopardy, Matthew 10.

Elijah said to the LORD:

I Kings 19:14

v.14 So he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword, I alone am left; and they seek to take my life.”

The LORD God then made known to Elijah, he was not alone:

v.18 “Yet I have reserved 7,000 in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”

From these passages of Scripture one should be able to see God has always reserved for Himself a few people who continued to believe and obey Him regardless of the adverse circumstances.

This continues to be true today. It is only the remnant of the Philadelphia Church Era that Jesus Christ is yet using in this end-time due to their love for the truth and faithfulness to it (*Luke 12:32; Revelation 3:7-13*).

The Expectations of the Wise Men

The Priests in Jerusalem were without excuse of knowing the time of the birth of their Messiah. They had studied and were familiar with the prophecies. Also, they knew when the time of His birth was to take place from a prophecy in Daniel (*Daniel 9:23-27*). For the prophecy in Daniel foretold the year of the birth of the Messiah, and that year in time had come.

In addition, consider the miraculous and spectacular news of His birth from the shepherds in the fields! They had spread the news of what they had seen and witnessed with their own eyes!

News of that miraculous event must have reached the hearing of many people—and *this wondrous news*—had to have traveled near and far for they could not contain such marvelous news within themselves.

With all this in mind, it seems incredible the priests and people of Jerusalem were not excited and joyous about this wonderful event having taken place! However, they had deliberately closed their minds to the prophetic Scriptures and what they had heard as well as the following quote makes known:

Internet: “The wise men had expected all Jerusalem to be full of its new-born King, and the time and the place, and circumstances of His birth to be familiar to everyone (*Micah 5:2: Daniel 9:23-27*). Little would they think that the first announcement of His birth would come from themselves.” End of Quote

The Hypocrisy of the Jewish Priests in Jerusalem

In addition, and in retrospect, the news of His coming birth was well known in Hebron where Zacharias and Elizabeth lived for God had inspired Zacharias to speak of His birth (*Luke 1:65-69*).

Therefore, it seems unlikely that Jerusalem would have been in the dark about it for the angel Gabriel had also appeared to John while fulfilling his part in the Temple service (*Luke 1:5-22*). And seeing his inability to speak, the people believed he had seen a vision. This alone would have made them very curious to know what was happening.

The Jewish priests in Jerusalem were hypocrites. This was made known by what Jesus directly said to them during His ministry (*Matthew 23:27-28, 33-34*).

Consider further, even the Roman historians were aware of the coming birth of the Messiah:

Experimental Commentary, volume 5, page 4: The Roman Historians, *Suetonius and Tacitus*, bear witness to an expectation, prevalent in the East [*Parthia*], that out of Judea should arise a Sovereign of the world.” End of Quote

Even the Gentiles were looking forward to this marvelous event to take place.

It is also interesting to note the news of the expectancy of the birth of the Messiah was *PREVALENT* in the East—which was in Parthia for this is where the Wise Men lived.

Consider the parallel: This is what Jesus Christ is using this little flock to do in this end-time—announcing the soon return of Jesus Christ back to this earth as KING of Kings and LORD of Lords (Revelation 19:11-16). It is believed, based on prophecy and major events to yet take place, His coming will very probably be in either—2029 or 2030, and will occur on the Feast of Trumpets.

Herod’s Kingship Thought to be in Jeopardy

Upon their arrival in Jerusalem the Wise Men sought news of where the newly-born KING, the Christ-Child was located (*for shortly before this time the STAR had disappeared from sight and they had to enquire about Him*).

The news of the arrival of the Wise Men with their large military escort came to Herod along with the alarming purpose of their visit to Jerusalem—seeking the KING-Child!

A KING! This troubled Herod for this could mean the end of his rule as king over his very large domain:

Matthew 2:3-9

vs.3-4 When Herod heard these things, he was troubled (viewing this as a danger to his own throne), and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together (the Sanhedrin in his palace—the Great Sanhedrin was the supreme court of ancient Israel, made up of 70 men and the high priest), he enquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

v.5 So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea for thus it is written, by the prophet:



Because of their fear of Herod, they dared not hide from him the place of Christ’s birth. They gave him the answer from Scripture. At the same time, they *branded* themselves as *hypocrites*—refusing to accept the truth of their own prophetic Scriptures, which they already knew.

They gave Herod the information from Scripture:

v.6 “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel (Micah 5:2).”

Herod now knew the place! All he needed now was to learn the time of His birth, and where He was located. He would then murder him. For this needed information he called for the Wise Men and asked them to go and get it for him:

v.7 Then Herod, when he had SECRETLY called the wise men (into his palace), determined from them what time the star appeared.

Not knowing Herod’s evil intentions, the WISE MEN told him what he wanted to know, though they did not know where the Christ-Child was located for the purpose of the STAR was to guide them to where He would be upon their arrival, and they no longer saw it.

For a number of reasons this took place. Two of them are as follows:

- 1) Since the STAR had disappeared before their arrival in Jerusalem they had to enquire of His whereabouts.
- 2) This forced the priests to witness against themselves by making known their knowledge of the prophetic Scriptures concerning His birth, the place, and the timing of it (*Micah 5:2: Daniel 9:23-27*).

After having heard from the priests where the Child was to be born, Herod told the WISE MEN the Child was in Bethlehem:

v.8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

Herod deceived them of the real reason for sending them to Bethlehem. But not knowing his evil intentions, they believed him as Scripture makes known.

v.9 When they heard the king, they departed (in the direction of Bethlehem. Safely away from Herod, the STAR reappeared and guided them to their destination); ... v.10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy, and behold, the STAR which they had seen in the East went before them. v.9 Till it (the STAR) came and ‘STOOD OVER’ (implying an angel) where the young Child was.

For the correct story flow, verse 10 belongs here in the middle of verse nine (9). Then, the rest of verse nine (9) to follow.

The Wise Men rejoiced knowing the STAR was with them once again and would lead them to their final destination of being able to see the Christ-Child.:

Remember the Scripture for needed understanding: “... **a little here, a little there, a line here, a line there ...**,” as found in Isaiah 28. Also, Scriptures are scrambled.

Joseph and Mary’s New Residence

The wise men were then led by the STAR to the house in Bethlehem where Joseph and Mary with the Christ-Child lived at that time (*Luke 2:21-24*).

Matthew 2:11

v.11 When they had come INTO THE HOUSE, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother (three months old at that time), and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures (individually), they presented gifts to Him; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

This Scripture implies the WISE MEN paid homage to Jesus Christ, either kneeling or prostrating themselves before Him—even though He was a Baby. Then they presented their gifts individually to the Newly-Born Christ who would in time become KING over all Israel.

Their gifts would have amounted to a lot of gold as well as the frankincense and myrrh.

Rcspirituality.org “The three gifts had a spiritual meaning: **gold** as a symbol of kingship on earth, **frankincense** (an incense) as a symbol of deity, and **myrrh** (an embalming oil [sweet smelling]) as a symbol of death. ... Sometimes this is described more generally

as **gold** symbolizing virtue, **frankincense** symbolizing prayer, and **myrrh** symbolizing suffering.” End of Quote

Wise Men Warned by an Angel of the Danger from Herod

The following Scripture makes known the Wise Men had remained overnight, or perhaps a little longer, perhaps a week or more. This would give them the opportunity to rest for a little while from their long journey. At the same time this rest period would prepare them for their long journey back to Parthia.

Toward the end of their rest period a warning came from an angel to one of the Wise Men in a dream to leave for their home in Parthia another way so Herod would not know the location of the Christ-Child.

Mathew 2:12 Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

The following verse 13—reveals another gap in time occurs after the first part of the beginning sentence—in verse 13.

v.13 Now when they had departed ...

The remainder of the verse—speaks of Joseph and his family returning to their home Nazareth. However, this would not have taken place right away, but some few weeks after the WISE MEN had departed for Parthia.

Joseph and Family Return to their Home in Nazareth

The following Scripture makes this known:

Luke 2:39

v.39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord (*circumcision, purification, the offering in the Temple, plus the visit of the Wise Men, etc. When taking into consideration other details—to be make known later—the birth of the Messiah to the time of their departure for Nazareth, would have covered about five months*). They returned to Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

Thus, the remainder of the Scripture in verse 39 fits into place for continuity and flow.

Scripture does not say exactly how long Joseph and his family were once again in their own home in Nazareth before an angel told them they had to leave for Egypt.

However, both Scripture and the time of Herod’s death, enables us to know the approximate time, as will be noted later!

The Secret Departure to Egypt

Based on the events of that time with Herod seeking to murder the Christ-child, who was almost six months old at this time, they had to leave for Egypt—a very long distance of 487 miles. More about this later.

Due to the exact time needed for their departure, it undoubtedly would have been in the middle of the night when they and their neighbors were fast asleep, when an angel spoke to Joseph in a very vivid dream telling him they had to leave immediately for Egypt to save their lives from the wrath of Herod:

v.39 ... behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise take the young Child and His mother, FLEE to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.”

Joseph wasted no time. Quickly, he awakened Mary and told her they had to leave immediately for Egypt. She asked why? He replied that an angel had just told him in a dream that Herod would be looking for them with the intention of murdering the Christ-Child.

They made hasty preparation for the very long and arduous trip to Egypt with the Christ-Child, who by this time was almost six months old (*Herod had not yet died*). Quietly they slipped out in the darkness of the night without attracting any attention by their neighbors.

By leaving without anyone knowing would not create a problem for the neighbors if asked by Herod’s soldiers where they were or might have gone.



Matthew 2:14-15

v.14 When he arose (from bed and began making preparation to leave with his family, afterwards), he took the young Child and His mother BY NIGHT and departed for Egypt.

The Long Journey from Nazareth to Egypt

Searching the internet for the distance from Nazareth to Egypt states that it is 487 miles. This is the distance that is used in this writing, and it appears to be accurate.

Considering the distance and the time to walk that great distance, it would probably have taken them about 45 to 50 days under normal circumstances to arrive in Egypt.

But how long did it take Joseph and his family to make that 487-mile journey to Egypt? Taking into consideration under normal circumstances healthy people can walk three

miles an hour—possibly 25 miles in one day. And Joseph and Mary were healthy and strong—and so was the Christ-Child.

However, with a six-month old child there would be brief stops needed for breast feeding and rest. There would be needed time for eating their own meals as well. The beginning of their journey was over rugged territory. But once they made their way to the way of the sea their journey would have been a little easier.

Wikipedia: “Egypt was a logical place to find refuge, as it was outside the dominions of King Herod, but both Egypt and Judea were part of the [Roman Empire](#), linked by a coastal road known as "[the way of the sea](#)",^[1] making travel between them easy and relatively safe.” End Quote

Another problem was cold weather for they left Nazareth close to the Passover, March 30, 4 B.C. By no means however this was this an easy trip—a hard and trying journey to Egypt.

Also, they did not travel on the Sabbath Days, weekly or annual Sabbaths during that lengthy and arduous trip. With these things in mind it could have taken them at least 60 days to complete their journey to Egypt.

Food and Clothing

Consider the following quotes regarding the food they ate and clothing they wore on their trip—a very tough and trying time for them:

Nativity: “Mary and Joseph had to bring their own provisions. “In wineskins, they carried water,” said Vasko. “And they carried a lot of bread . . . Breakfast would be dried bread, lunch would be oil with bread, and herbs with oil and bread in the evening.”

To protect themselves during inclement weather, Mary and Joseph would likely have worn heavy woolen cloaks, constructed to shed rain and snow. Under their cloaks, the ancient residents wore long robes, belted at the waist. Tube-like socks and enclosed shoes protected the feet, Strange said.”

End of Quotes

The Observance of the Annual Sabbaths In-route to Egypt

Within those 60 days there would have been eight weekly Sabbaths. Also considering the death of Herod occurring after the Passover on April 10, 4 B. C., and the Passover on March 30, 4 B. C. followed by the Days of Unleavened Bread—two of which are Annual Sabbaths—this would have possibly extended the duration of their trip to at least 60 days.

The Christ-Child would have been about eight months old at the time of their arrival. With this in mind and taking into consideration the 6-month time window, Herod must have died somewhere close to two weeks or so after their departure for Egypt.

During this time, Herod slaughtered the male babies in Bethlehem.

Overnight Stays in Chamber Houses

Once they had put a safe distance behind them, they very probably began staying overnights in chamber houses when available.

Since they had a lot of gold given by the Wise Men to the Christ-Child, it undoubtedly was carried in bags placed on the donkey. And when Joseph needed some of it to pay their expenses he would have taken just enough from the bags before the need so as not to attract any undue attention to him.

Realizing they were traveling alone, with no physical military presence to protect them from thieves, bandits, killers, a question arises as to how they could make the long journey to Egypt without a military escort?

Angelic Protection Provided for Them

God provided an angelic army to protect Joseph and his family from any possible harm, though they were probably unseen by Joseph and Mary.

This is based on the promised unseen protection for the lives of God's people throughout history and continues always (*Psalms 34:7*).

The army of angels appeared as men well-armed surrounding Joseph and his family to make sure they were well protected from any potential danger to their lives. (*cf. Psalm 34:7; Matthew 4:5-6*).

When they were seen by "bandits, pirates of the desert and robbers" which were common hazards along the major trade routes like the one Joseph and Mary would have traveled on that long trip to Egypt, and it appeared they could be in danger, the angelic army became visible to them. And it terrified them.

Therefore, no one bothered them. Remember, they were carrying the Christ-Child, and God would not permit any serious danger to come upon the family while traveling alone.

Consider also, paying their expenses along the way with gold, would have also brought about the problem of robbers, thieves and murderers, upon seeing these payments, they would have been robbed and left for dead. However, the angels of God were there to protect them from any real danger to their lives.

Arrival and Stay in Egypt

At long last the journey was completed, probably passing close by the Great Pyramid as they entered Egypt.



Then Joseph made arrangements for a house in which they would live while sojourning in Egypt.

Matthew 2:15

v.15 And was there until (sometime after) the death of Herod (Herod's son, Archelaus, now reigning—beginning in 4 B. C.), that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.”

To follow the story flow, verse 15 belongs after verse 16.

Herod Murders the Male Babies

Based on the foregoing, and knowing Joseph and his family needed some lead time to put some distance behind them, it would have been perhaps a week, or just a very few days after their departure for Egypt, that Herod took action to seek out and murder the Christ-Child.

Matthew 2:16

v.16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry, and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts; from two years old and under, according to the time he had determined from the wise men.



Harmony of the Gospels by A. T. Robertson, 6 the probable time of the Savior's Birth, point 2. pages 262-263

“It has been inferred by some that Jesus was at least two or three years old when Herod slaughtered the infants in Bethlehem, Matt. 2:16. ... But this not demanded by the “two years” of Matthew, for Herod would naturally extend the limit so as to be sure to include the child in the number slain, and a child just entering the second year would be called “two years” old by Jewish custom. ...”

End of Quotes

Another worthwhile comment follows in the same context:

BibleHub: “But we know that Herod died in the spring of 4 B. C., and since the wise men come to Herod to find out where the king was to be born, the visit must have been shortly after the birth of Jesus. Herod probably set the age of two years old in order to be sure he killed the one who was to be king, thinking that the wise men had been traveling for some time [*on their way back to Parthia*] ... Herod the Great died shortly after having the children slaughtered.” End of Quote

An Ancient Prophecy Fulfilled

The murders committed by the soldiers of Herod brought to pass an ancient prophecy:

Matthew 2:17

v.17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, “A voice was heard in Ramah (*Ramah was a city in [ancient Israel](#) in the land allocated to the [tribe of Benjamin](#) the youngest son of Rachel, she died giving birth to Benjamin, Genesis 35:18-20*), lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

Rachel had hard labor while giving birth to Benjamin. Knowing she was dying, she wept. The mid-wife spoke comforting words to her. From this sad time brought about this enlarged prophecy of Rachel weeping for her children (*Genesis 35:16-19*).

The Timing of the Slaughter of the Infants in Bethlehem

The timing of the slaughter of the male-babies by Herod is possibly to be dated during the last two weeks or so of the six months of Herod’s life.

Sometime after Herod sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem to bring news back to him of the location of the Christ-Child, and not seeing or hearing from them, Herod’s patience came to an end.

The infuriated Herod sent his soldiers to murder all of the male babies two years and younger in Bethlehem and in all districts trying desperately to destroy the Christ-Child.

This could have possibly included Nazareth. If so, probably Herod had learned after slaying the babies that Joseph and his family had returned to Nazareth,

He would have then sent soldiers to try and find the family there. But they were already gone. The neighborhood could tell them nothing. Herod was at a dead-end in his search to find the Christ-Child and murder him, and he sulked.

The Death of King Herod the Great

Shortly thereafter, or about the same time, God brought about the death of Herod by smiting him with a chronic kidney disease that brought about intense suffering before he died, stage 4, and no dialysis machine to aid him—died in his 70th year in Jericho.

ABC.NEWS “More than 2,000 years after Herod the Great succumbed at age 69, doctors have now settled on exactly what killed the king of ancient Judea: chronic kidney disease complicated by a very uncomfortable case of maggot-infested gangrene of the genitals.”

End of Quote

God Repays with Vengeance

The Apostle Paul wrote that God will take vengeance on those who reject His laws:

Hebrews 10:30-31

v.30 “For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. ... ‘It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’”

And God does exact vengeance. An example is that of Mr. Joseph Tkach, Sr.: After having destroyed the beliefs and teachings of the Worldwide Church of God along with the credibility of Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, Jesus Christ smote him. He suffered terribly before he died with bone cancer, plus.

No Peace of Mind to the Wicked

In actual fact, Herod never knew peace of mind nor has any despotic ruler known peace of mind, now or ever (*Isaiah 48:22*). Always living in fear of their lives being taken from them in one way or another, or conspiracies intended to dethrone them.

Internet: “Scholars agree Herod suffered throughout his lifetime from depression and paranoia.^[79] Josephus stated that Herod was so concerned that no one would mourn his death, that he commanded a large group of distinguished men to come to Jericho, and he gave an order that they should be killed at the time of his death so that the displays of grief that he craved would take place;^[80] but his son Archelaus and his sister [Salome](#) did not carry out this wish.^[81]” End of Quote

An Overview

Could it be that the Wise Men had first seen the star almost two years before their departure as some want to believe? No! That belief is due to misunderstanding by those who have tried to understand the events at that time.

When considering the six-month time frame into which all of these major events had to take place, from the time the Wise Men saw the STAR, and their anxiety to see the Newly-Born Messiah, while considering the distance involved, and the time needed for their travel to Jerusalem, it would have taken them no more than about three months, not two years.

An Arduous Travel Back to Nazareth from Egypt

But this is not the end of the chronological details concerning Joseph, Mary, and the Christ-Child! This will be seen by the events that followed the present complexities of dates and time:

Matthew 10:19-23

v.19 Now when Herod was dead (*once again, a gap in time. After the death of Herod, the following takes place—120 days—figuring in travel time of walking that great distance of 487 miles to Egypt, and the same distance back to Nazareth, plus their stay in Egypt*), **behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,**

Christ would have been six months old at the time of Herod's death. However, taking into consideration their travel time to Egypt, He probably would have been about eight months of age upon reaching their destination.

Again, Scripture does not tell us, but to fulfill prophecy, Joseph and Mary probably lived in Egypt for only a few weeks. But when considering the rule of Archelaus, 4 B. C. to 6 B. C., and the required travel of Joseph and Mary back to Israel, connecting with the death of Herod in 4 B. C., the answer would appear to have been only a few weeks.

Then the time came for their return to Israel and Nazareth. To make this known an angel appeared in a dream to Joseph:

v.20 “Arise, take the young Child and His mother (*the Christ-Child would have possibly been about eight or nine months old at this time*), **and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead.”**

v.21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

v.22 But when he heard Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod (*it would seem Joseph did not know of Herod's death*); **he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.**

Wikipedia: “**Archelaus** (a name meaning "leading the people") came to power after the death of his father **Herod** the Great in 4 BC, and ruled over one-half of the territorial dominion of his father. c. 4 BC to 6 AD).

Based on the years of Archelaus reigning from 4 B. C. to 6 A. D., and considering the death of Herod who died in April 4 B.C., Archelaus began his reign in 4 B.C., immediately after Herod's death.

Albert Barnes' Notes on the Whole Bible:

“He heard that Archelaus did reign - Archelaus possessed a cruel and tyrannical disposition similar to his father. At one of the Passovers he caused 3,000 of the people to be put to death in the temple and city. For his crimes, after he had reigned 9 years, he was banished by Augustus, the Roman emperor, to Gaul, where he died. Knowing his character, and fearing that he would not be safe, Joseph hesitated about going there, and was directed by God to go to Galilee, a place of safety.” End of Quote

v.23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

It was in Nazareth where Jesus Christ grew from a young child of approximately one year of age into His adult years.

Luke 2:40

v.40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

Important Dates and Times

There is now a need to put together the important dates and times that will make known how old the Christ-Child was from His birth, circumcision, purification, offering in the Temple, visit from the Wise Men, move back to Nazareth, departure for Egypt, and return to Nazareth.

All these are based on facts concerning the time of the birth of the Messiah, that connects with the death of King Herod—a six-month interval of time.

Harmony of the Gospels: “Jesus was born before the death of Herod (*king of Judea*). Herod died just before the Passover in 4 B. C. Jesus was born in early Autumn of 4 B.C. – about one-half a year before Herod’s death. Herod died of a horrible disease—he was 70 years of age—had reigned 37 years.” End of Quote

The following quote also tells us the month and day Herod died, just before the Passover, April 10, 4 B. C. (*Hebrew Calendar*).

Associates for Bible Research: “**Herod**, by name **Herod the Great**, Latin Heroes Magnus, (born 73 bce—**died** March/April, 4 bce, Jericho, Judaea), Roman-appointed king of Judaea (37–4 bce).” End of Quote

Approximately six months previous to this time, the Christ-Child was born during the Feast of Trumpets.

Major Events in Sequence

Putting all of these times in sequence: All these important events have to fit within that six-month time frame between the birth of the Messiah and the death of Herod.

- 1) The Christ-Child was born on the Feast of Trumpets, September 22, 4 B. C. (*Hebrew Calendar*)
- 2) Herod died just before the Passover, March 30, 3 B. C. (*Hebrew Calendar*).
- 3) An approximate six-month interval of time between them.
- 4) The arrival of the 12 Wise Men—three months' travel time from Parthia.
- 5) Joseph and family return to Nazareth—Christ was almost six months old at the time.
- 6) The murder of the male infants by Herod.
- 7) The departure of Joseph and family for Egypt taking them about 60 days.
- 8) Herod died shortly thereafter—possibly within a couple of weeks after murdering the male children.
- 9) With Herod's death ends the 6-month time frame into which all of the major events connected with and surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ.
- 10) Jesus Christ would have been six months old at the time of Herod's death.
- 11) The return of Joseph and family to Nazareth taking them about 60 days to complete the journey.
- 12) Joseph and Mary then settled in their home in Nazareth. Christ would have been about one-year of age.

The Return of Jesus Christ Back to This Earth

Soon, *very soon*, possibly 2029-2030, Jesus Christ, He who was rejected by His own people and mankind, from the time of His birth to the end of His physical life, will return to this earth in all power and glory to begin His reign on this earth.

Then Satan the devil, the adversary, will have been removed and his power of darkness will then be removed from mankind as well (*Isaiah 25:7; Habakkuk 2:14*).

All knees will then begin bowing before Jesus Christ in worship and praise (*Isaiah 45:25; Philippians 2:10-11*), glorifying Him who is worthy of all honor praise and glory forever and ever.

For without Him, and all He has done for mankind, there would be no hope for forgiveness nor for a better life to come.

“Thy Kingdom Come.”

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