

# The Messenger

COLDWATER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dec. 22, 2013



## Test Your Knowledge: What does the Bible say about Jesus' Birth?

According to the Bible, can you identify 7 non-biblical/non-historical things in this picture? (check answers inside)



1. True or False: Jesus was born December 25th.
2. True or False: Mary, who was pregnant with Jesus, rode a donkey to Bethlehem.
3. True or False: The donkey, upon which Mary rode, was led by Joseph.
4. True or False: An inn keeper turned them away because there was no room.
5. True or False: Mary gave birth to Jesus the same night they arrived in Bethlehem.
6. True or False: Jesus was born in a stable or barn.
7. True or False: Jesus was born among domestic animals.
8. True or False: There were three wise men (magi) from the East.
9. True or False: The wise men (magi) traveled on camels from the East.
10. True or False: The wise men (magi) arrived the night Jesus was born.
11. True or False: The star of Bethlehem shone over the manger the night Jesus was born.

*This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you... (1 John 1:5).*

**VISITORS,  
WELCOME!**

Sunday:

9:30 a.m. Bible Class  
10:30 a.m. WORSHIP  
1:00 p.m. WORSHIP

Wednesday:

7:00 p.m. Bible Class

We have Bible classes for  
all ages & Pew Packers  
each Sunday at 12:30

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### ELDERS

Billy Bland

Seth Daniel

Jim Jackson

W. Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

### DEACONS

Jason Bayless Jared Brown

Jerry Davis Jeffrey Ferrell

Ron Johnson Andy Ratliff

### PREACHER

Clifton Angel

12. True or False: The night Jesus was born, angels sang to the shepherds.
13. True or False: The shepherds were directed by the star to the place Jesus was born.

According to what the Bible actually says, the answer to every question above is “False.” Discarding all human misconceptions and traditions, here is what we learn from the biblical record itself. The birth and infancy of Jesus are recorded only in Matthew (1:25-2:18) and Luke (2:1-39). Matthew mentions the birth of Jesus in just one verse (1:25) and then discusses events that took place sometime afterwards (2:1-12). Luke describes events leading up to Jesus’ birth and gives much more information about the immediate circumstances of his birth (2:1-20).

**Here is a chronological harmony of the two accounts:**

1. Mary was betrothed to Joseph without having had sexual relations (Matthew 1:18a; Luke 1:27).
2. God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary that she was to conceive and bear a son by the power of the Holy Spirit and call his name Jesus (Luke 1:26-35; cf. Matthew 1:18).
3. Mary visited her relative Elizabeth (who was pregnant with John) in the hill country of Judah for three months (Luke 1:39-56).
4. Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit’s power, and an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph to assure him that the pregnancy was miraculous in fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14; the child was to be called Jesus, and Joseph was to take Mary as his wife (Matthew 1:18-24).
5. Joseph took Mary as his wife (Matt. 1:24) and traveled to his ancestral town of Bethlehem in compliance with Caesar’s decree to be registered (Luke 2:1-5).<sup>1</sup>
6. While they were there (for an unspecified period) Jesus was born (Luke 2:6-7a; Matthew 1:25).
7. Baby Jesus was placed in a manger (feeding trough) -- most likely carved out of rock rather than made of wood -- because there was no room for them in the *katáluma* = lodging place or guest room (Luke 2:7; cf. 22:11; Mark 14:14). It was probably not an “inn” where there was no room, since the typical word for inn is *pandocheion* (cf. 10:34). More likely there was no space in the upper-floor guest room of a relative’s house (cf. Matthew 2:11), so they were staying on the ground floor where animals were customarily kept.

Biblical text	Occasion	Word used	Meaning	Not Inn	Inn
Luke 2:7	Birth of Jesus	<i>katáluma</i>	lodging place/guest room	✓	
Luke 22:11	Last Supper	<i>katáluma</i>	lodging place/guest room	✓	
Mark 14:14	Last Supper	<i>katáluma</i>	lodging place/guest room	✓	
Acts 1:13	Apostles residing	<i>huperōon</i>	upper room	✓	
Acts 9:37, 39	Tabitha’s deathbed	<i>huperōon</i>	upper room	✓	
Acts 20:8	Troas assembly	<i>huperōon</i>	upper room	✓	
Luke 10:34-35	Good Samaritan	<i>pandocheion</i>	inn		✓

8. An angel of the Lord told shepherds where to find the Christ-child, after which a host of angels praised God and the shepherds visited Joseph, Mary, and the newborn (Luke 2:8-20).<sup>2</sup>
9. The infant was circumcised on the eighth day and named Jesus (Luke 2:21).

10. Following the “days of purification” (cf. Leviticus 12:1-8), when baby Jesus was around six weeks old, he was taken to Jerusalem where a sacrifice was offered, and he was seen by Simeon and Anna in the temple (Luke 2:22-38). Note that the traditional sacrifice was a lamb and a young pigeon or turtledove (Leviticus 12:6). If one could not afford a lamb, the alternative sacrifice of the poor was two turtledoves or two young pigeons (Leviticus 12:8). The fact that only two birds were offered (Luke 2:24) indicates that Jesus was born into a relatively poor family.
11. Sometime afterwards, conceivably up to two years later (cf. Matthew 2:16), Joseph, Mary and young Jesus were residing in a house in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:8, 11).
12. An unspecified number of wise men (magi) from the East,<sup>3</sup> directed by a star, visited young Jesus and his mother in the house in Bethlehem, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:1-12).
13. Having been warned of danger by an angel of the Lord, Joseph took Mary and young Jesus to Egypt for safety (Matthew 2:13-15).
14. Herod [the Great] put to death all the male children up to two-years old in Bethlehem and all its districts (Matthew 2:16-18).

Note what is NOT included in these birth narratives:

1. The date of Christ's birth.
2. Mary riding a donkey led by Joseph to Bethlehem.
3. An inn-keeper turning them away because there was no room.
4. Mary giving birth to Jesus the same night they arrived in Bethlehem.
5. Jesus born in a barn or stable.
6. Jesus born among farm animals.
7. The number of wise men (magi).
8. The wise men (magi) traveling on camels from the East.
9. The wise men (magi) arriving the night Jesus was born.
10. The star of Bethlehem shining over the manger the night Jesus was born.
11. Angels singing to shepherds the night Jesus was born.

While the Bible never instructs us to celebrate Jesus' birth as a religious holy day, it does set aside the first day (Sunday) of every week (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2), the day of the Lord's resurrection (Mark 16:9), to commemorate his death (1 Corinthians 11:20-26). What will you be doing this Sunday and all the following Sundays until Christ returns? How committed and faithful are you to the blueprint of God's word? Don't blindly rely on others to interpret the scriptures for you (Acts 17:11) or mislead you into thinking that imaginative speculations are historical fact with divine sanction. "Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15 ESV).

**–written by Kevin L. Moore**

**Endnotes:** <sup>1</sup> See *Luke's Historical Blunder?* <sup>2</sup> Cf. John 10:1-16; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 5:4; Rev. 7:17. Note that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David were all shepherds.

<sup>3</sup> The Greek word is *magoi*, plural of *magos*, which refers to a Persian or Babylonian “wise man and priest, who was expert in astrology, interpretation of dreams and various other secret arts” (BAGD 484). They may have been astrologers who studied stars, who could identify something out of the ordinary among the luminaries unobservable to the untrained eye. Religious leaders in Jerusalem were consulted to determine that Bethlehem was the town of the Messiah's birth (Matt. 2:1-12).

*\*Seven non-biblical/non-historical things in the above picture: (1) the barn, (2) the tiny star hovering over the barn, (3) only one shepherd, (4) the wooden manger (rather than the typical Palestinian manger carved out of rock), (5) the wooden manger (rather than the typical Palestinian manger carved out of rock), (6) three wise men, (7) wise men present at Jesus' birth.*

# NEWS & NOTES

## Please Pray

**Clifton Angel**, awaiting results from followup ultrasound and biopsies; **Jared Brown** and family; **Joe Owen**, recovering from neck surgery; **Inez Neyman**; **Wiley & Betty Tuggle**; **Sue Cobern**; **Helen Bowman**.

**Far East Missions**  
**Fishers of Men**  
**NetCasters**

## Family & Friends

**Paul Perkins**, Mischel's father, pacemaker surgery; **Jim Cooper**, Jan's uncle, terminal cancer; **LaJuan Collums'**, receiving treatments for cancer, battles other health problems, and has had pneumonia recently; **Frederick Bland**, feeding tube installed; **Lara Savage**, herniation in back; **Janet Colvett**, has shown improvement, at home, but more treatments to come; **Eli Williams**, his cancer has returned and he will begin treatments again; **Bobby Gayton**; **Marie Sims**, Ashby Johnson's mother, cancer treatment now, surgery January; **James Cooper**, Jan's brother, stomach cancer; **Vicki Angel**; **Ray Maples**; **John & Anita Simpson** & family, John is scheduled to have another surgery in January; **Martha Hatfield**, Lynn's grandmother, has stage 4 cancer; **Virginia Johnson**, wife of gospel preacher Roger Johnson, has stage 4 lung cancer; **Joy Angel**, battling various health problems; **JoAnn Prestage**, Sara Norris' sister, cancer; **Tasha Higginbotham**, in need of a kidney transplant; **Linda Perkins**, leukemia; **Mac Owen**; **Bob Spurlin**; **Ally Jo Kelly**, toddler with leukemia; **Brad & Sheri Daniel**, in efforts of adoption of baby Faith; **Carly Wright**, 3 yr. old with liver cancer; **Joe & Josephine Johnston**, and their sons, Charles and Chris;; **Carla Carlson**.

## Birthdays

12/17 Kaiden Ferrell  
12/22 Dalton Owen  
12/23 Jeremy Moore  
12/24 Daniel Owen  
12/27 Reese Kinney  
12/30 Renee Davis

## Anniversary

12/13 Jerry & Renee Davis

## Get Involved!

**Elders & Deacons Meeting -- TODAY**  
Between services

**Singing Night -- Dec 25 -- 7 PM**

**PRAYER MEETING -- Dec 29 -- 1 PM**  
5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Service, Introducing 2014 Theme

**Bible Bowl -- Jan 18 -- Gen 25 -- 27**  
At Looxahoma, 10:30 AM

**Standing in the Gap Lectureship**  
January 24 – 26, 2014

## Privileged to Serve

### Sunday, December 22

#### Morning

Prayer Before Class	Jeffrey Ferrell
Announcements	Jerry Davis
Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Lord's Supper:	
Preside	Seth Daniel
	Joe Owen
Assist	Daniel Owen
	Dalton Owen
Opening Prayer	Billy Bland
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Closing Prayer	Jeremy Moore

#### Afternoon

Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Opening Prayer	Andy Ratliff
Sermon	Clifton Angel
Lord's Supper	Joe Owen
	Daniel Owen
Closing Prayer	Timothy Wilkes, Sr.

### Wednesday, December 25

Song Leader	Jason Bayless
Prayer	Jim Jackson
Invitation	Daniel Owen
Prayer	Jerry Davis