

CALL to PRAYER - pray for clarity in presenting the gospel message

Galatians 4:4-5 - The Early Years of our Lord

Intro - I read an article a couple of weeks ago that called into question the Biblical account of our Lord's birthplace. It was written by someone claiming to be a pastor (?) who said that the scriptures are confusing and contradict one another. He said the gospel writers themselves were unsure of where Jesus was from (Nazareth or Bethlehem?). The Christmas season is often used to combat biblical truth. Christendom itself also condenses the gospel account to fit on a holiday card....several events that happened over months/years are crammed together as though it all happened in one night. Today we are going to unpack the early years of our Lord and answer the question of where Jesus Christ was from. Was He from Bethlehem...Egypt....Nazareth?

HE was from HEAVEN

- Jesus Christ did not begin in Bethlehem
 - He was born in Bethlehem, but He did not begin in Bethlehem
- Micah 5:2
 - The little town of Bethlehem was to be the birthplace of the Ruler of Israel.....
But HE is from "long ago" He comes from Eternity
 - The Eternal One...with no beginning...was to be born in Bethlehem
- Jesus was from heaven
 - He said so Himself John 3:13 John 6:38 John 6:51
 - He was sent by the Father Conceived by the Holy Spirit He is from Heaven

HE was from BETHELEM

- Luke gives us the account of the birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-7)
 - A decree from Caesar went out that there was to be a census. (9 BC? - 14 yr cycle)
 - People required to return to hometown to register
 - Joseph & Mary took a 90-mile trip down south from Nazareth to Bethlehem
 - (OKC to Ardmore)
 - While in Bethlehem Jesus was born
 - The innkeeper wasn't mean, just "No Vacancy" because of the crowds
- We don't know the date of Jesus' birth
 - It was at "just the right time" or "fullness of time" (Gal. 4:4)
 - The perfect time in history...to fulfill prophecy...and settle our destiny
- The night of His birth an angel appears to shepherds in the fields
 - Luke 2:9-12
 - This one angel was joined by a host of angels Luke 2:13-14
 - The "glory" (2:9) might have been the *star* seen from the east by the Magi
 - Matt. 2:2
 - The frightened shepherds go and find the Baby lying in a manger - then go tell
- 8 days old - the details don't end at the manger scene

- circumcised and named JESUS on the 8th day Luke 2:21
- Jesus came born of woman and born under the law. The law required circumcision at 8 days (shows there is something wrong with man from birth)
- Jesus came to fulfill the law. He was born to obey
 - Jesus came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3) Gal. 4:4-5
- He was given the name JESUS because He would save His people - Matt. 1:21
- 40 days old Joseph & Mary take Jesus to Jerusalem (Luke 2:22-38)
 - This was for purification after childbirth and the dedication of firstborn to Lord
 - We know they were poor because couldn't afford a lamb (Lev. 12:8)
 - Blessed and prophesied over by Simeon and Anna
- Group of Magi show up maybe 2 years later
 - Matt. 2:1 says it was "after" Jesus was born that they showed up
 - They gave the timing of when they saw the star to Herod and he killed the children 2 years and younger from this timeframe (Matt. 2:16)
 - We don't know the number of Magi...but they caused quite a stir
 - JV McGee "3 wouldn't do it...it could have been 300 of them"
 - They entered the HOUSE and saw the CHILD Matt. 2:11
 - The wise men were not at the manger scene
 - The Magi gave 3 gifts (there were 3 gifts not 3 guys)
 - These gifts funded the poor family in their move from Bethlehem to Egypt

HE was from EGYPT

- The night after the Magi left the young family was warned by an angel to leave because Herod was going to try and kill the Child (Matt. 2:13)
 - They abruptly and quickly moved to Egypt Matt. 2:14
- The 3 gifts of the Magi right before the exodus from Bethlehem mimicked the plundering of the Egyptians in Israel's exodus from Egypt
 - This is an interesting illusion in the provision of God for the family move
- No details are given of their time in Egypt
- They stayed in Egypt until the death of Herod Matt. 2:15
 - Britannica says that Herod died in year 4 BC (census in 9 BC) = 5 years (?)
 - So...2 years in Bethlehem...move to Egypt (loaded)...stay for about 3 years

HE was from NAZARETH

- Joseph was scared to go back to Bethlehem Matt. 2:22-23
 - He took the family full circle and returned to Nazareth where Jesus grew up
- Where was Jesus from?
 - Heaven for eternity
 - Bethlehem for 2 years (?) then moved to Egypt for 3 years (?)
 - Nazareth for growing up years Luke 2:51-52
- That is where Jesus is from, but where are you going?