

Christmas 2018

12/23/18

1. Three of the 4 Gospel accounts tell the Christmas story
 - a. Only Mark leaves it out completely
2. The earliest time frame speaking on the existence of Christ is mentioned is found in the Gospel of John
 - a. The briefest Christmas account is in John

John 1:1 *In the beginning was the Word*, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God*.

V.2 He was in the beginning with God.

1. "In the beginning was the Word"
 - a. This is the earliest record of the existence of Christ
 - b. When we start at the beginning we see Christ
 - i. Which beginning is this? – The world? Time? All beginnings?
 - ii. It doesn't matter – He was in the beginning of whatever
2. "the Word was God"
 - a. We know that He has always been God
 - b. He didn't become God as the Mormons believe
 - c. He isn't a secondary God as the Jehovah's Witnesses believe
 - d. Two things are stated about Him in the next couple of verses

V.3 *All things came into being by Him*, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

1. "All things came into being by Him"
 - a. **#1.** We see that He made everything that exist or ever existed

V.4 *In Him was life*, and the life was the light of men.

1. "In Him was life"
 - a. **#2.** He is the source of all life (physical & eternal)
 - i. To this day man doesn't know what life is
 - ii. Man has tried to produce life but can't
 - b. Then John records the Christmas story

V.14 And *the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us*, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

1. "the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us"
 - a. John didn't go into much detail!

Dr. Luke gives the details

Luke 1:5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

V.7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years.

V.8 Now it happened that while *he was performing his priestly service before God* in the appointed order of his division,

1. "he was performing...priestly service before God in the appointed order"
 - a. The priest were divided into 24 units – King David did that
 - b. Twice each year (for one week) each unit served at the temple
 - c. Each day **4 lots** were drawn to determine which priest (out of that division) served that day:
 - i. The **first** lot, before daybreak, chose the priests who were to cleanse the altar and prepare its fires
 - ii. The **second** lot chose the priest who was to offer the sacrifice and cleanse the candlestick and the altar of incense
 - iii. The **third** lot chose the priest who should burn incense
 - iv. The **fourth** lot appointing those who were to lay the sacrifice and meat-offering on the altar, and pour out the drink-offering.
 - d. **Zacharias** drew the lot to burn incense on the altar for that day
 - i. This would be his only time to do that in his entire life
 - ii. **At that time** there were 20,000 priest in each division
 1. To be chosen was a miracle
 2. You weren't eligible again

V.11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense.

V.12 Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear gripped him.

V.13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.

V.23 When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home.

V.24 After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months...

Thirty days later – in another location

V.26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth,

V.27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary.

V.28 And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you."

V.29 But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was.

V.30 The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God.

V.31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.

V.32 "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David;

V.33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end."

V.34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

V.35 The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.

V.36 "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month.

V.37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."

V.38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

V.39 Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah,

V.40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

V.41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

V.56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

V.57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son.

1. "Mary stayed with her about three months"

a. Apparently Mary stayed until John was born & then went home

i. She probably stayed & helped Elizabeth b/c she was older

When Mary returns home – pregnant

Matthew 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

1. "she was found to be with child"
 - a. She has been gone for 3 months and comes home pregnant
 - b. Obviously, her story didn't make any sense to Joseph
 - i. Being engaged was legally binding in that day
 - ii. Her story just didn't make sense
 - iii. Joseph decided to terminate the engagement **V.19**

V.19 And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away **secretly**.

V.20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.

V.21 "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

V.22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet^(Isaiah):

V.23 "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL," which translated means, "GOD WITH US."

1. "BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD"
 - a. Joseph gets answers & instructions & marries Mary **V.24**

V.24 And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife,

1. "took Mary as his wife"
 - a. It isn't stated whether he married her then or later, after Christ was born
2. "did as the angel of the Lord commanded him"
 - a. That is explained in **V.25**

V.25 but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

Meanwhile, the world went on about its business while the Son of God was developing in the womb

Luke 2:1 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.

V.2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.

V.3 And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.

Because of the new tax law from Rome, Joseph had to go to Bethlehem

V.4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,

V.5 in order to register along with Mary, *who was engaged to him*, and was with child.

1. "who was engaged to him,"
 - a. Luke is making it clear that their relationship is that of an engaged couple
 - b. Or they might not have been married yet!

V.6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.

V.7 And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, *because there was no room for them in the inn*.

1. "because there was no room for them in the inn"
 - a. The census had caused a shortage of rooms

V.8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.

V.9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

V.10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;

V.11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

V.12 "This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

V.13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

V.14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

V.15 When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."

V.16 So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.

V.17 When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child.

V.18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds.

V.19 But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart.

V.20 The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Eight days later – in Jerusalem

V.21 And when eight days had passed, before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

V.22 And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord

V.24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS."

V.25 – V.38 tell of the events that occurred while they were in Jerusalem

V.39 When they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth.

Matthew goes to a different time & place to show that the world doesn't care about any Savior

Matthew 2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea *in the days of Herod the king*, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,

1. "in the days of Herod the king"
 - a. This is Herod the Great
 - b. Herod reigned from 40 BC until his death in 4 BC
 - i. So Christ was born before 4 BC

V.2 "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

V.3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled^(?), and all Jerusalem with him.

V.4 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

V.5 They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

V.6 'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.'"

V.7 Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared.

1. "exact time the star appeared"

- a. Matthew is writing about a completely different time period than Luke

V.8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him."

V.9 After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was.

V.10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

V.11 After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

1. "coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary"

- a. It is obvious – Jesus isn't in a manger

- i. He is living in a house

- b. He isn't an infant anymore – He is now a toddler

V.12 And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.

V.13 Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord *appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."

V.14 So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt.

V.15 He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet^(Hosea-Moses): "OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON."

V.16 Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and *slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined* from the magi.

1. "slew all the male children...two years old and under...according to the time...determined"
 - a. Jesus was estimated by Herod to be as much as 2 years old
 - b. Matthew is showing that the religious leaders knew where Jesus was born
 - i. Bethlehem was 6 miles from Jerusalem
 - ii. The religious leaders didn't bother to go see Him
 - iii. No one went from Jerusalem to see Him
 - iv. Herod tried to kill Him
 - v. John wrote about this in chapter 1

John 1:10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

V.19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, and said,

V.20 "Get up, take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead."

V.21 So Joseph got up, took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

V.22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Then after being warned by God in a dream, he left for the regions of Galilee,

V.23 and came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: "He shall be called a Nazarene."

1. Christ came the first time as a baby in a manger
2. He came to pay for all the sins of all mankind

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.

¹⁷ "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.

¹⁸ " He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

3. When He comes back again, He comes as the judge of the whole world

Matthew 26:64 Jesus said to him, " You have said it *yourself*; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see THE SON OF MAN SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, and COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF HEAVEN."

4. Until then know that He is in control & the world will be as He said it would be

Revelation 22:11 " Let the one who does wrong, still do wrong; and let the one who is filthy, still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous, still practice righteousness; and let the one who is holy, still keep himself holy."

¹² "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done.

¹³ "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end."

¹⁴ Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city.

V.17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes, take the water of life without cost.

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming quickly." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

²¹ The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all. Amen.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

