The background of the image is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, distant stars. A single, exceptionally bright star is positioned in the upper center, emitting a powerful, multi-pointed starburst of light. A thick, luminous beam of light extends vertically from this star down towards the horizon. At the base of this beam, on a dark, silhouetted landscape, sits a manger scene. The scene includes a dark, triangular tent-like structure on the left, a central manger with a small light emanating from it, and some other indistinct shapes on the right. The overall atmosphere is serene and celestial.

The Birth of Jesus

- Myths Perpetuated by Christmas Traditions
- Lessons from the Birth of Christ
- Our Attitude Towards Christmas

How Many Inaccuracies Can You Find?



Peace on Earth

TRUE or FALSE?

Joseph and Mary
couldn't find a room at
the inn, so they slept
outdoors in a stable,
where Jesus was born.

Let's Read

- LUKE 2:4
- ⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was **no guest room (no room in the inn)** available for them.

“Nowhere in the Bible does it state that Joseph went from home to home looking for a place to stay. That story stems from many translations’ use of the word “inn” in Luke 2:7. From that, we extrapolate a whole slew of events—the innkeeper, innkeeper’s wife, a No Vacancy sign flashing. The problem is that the word used in Luke 2 (*kataluma*) is not the word for inn—that’s a bad English translation. The word is better translated as “upper room” or “guest room.”

- This myth would imply that Joseph was careless and neglectful of his pregnant wife and unborn son.

No Reason to believe they weren't settled in their residence well before the birth date, either.





A *manger* or trough is a feeder of carved stone, wood, or metal construction used to hold food for animals (as in a stable).

TRUE or FALSE?

The night Jesus was
born, he was
spontaneously visited
by 3 wise men, with
gifts.

Let's Read

- Matthew 2: 1-12
- Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,
- ² Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
- ³ When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
- ⁴ And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.
- ⁵ And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

- ⁶ And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.
- ⁷ Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.
- ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.
- ⁹ When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.
- ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

- ¹¹ And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.
 - ¹² And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.
-

The Wise Men came in response to the appearance of Jesus' "Star in the East;" they couldn't have physically been there.

Timeline of Events:

1.Christ is Born

2.Wise men see star in the east,
travel to King Herod, on their quest for
Jesus

3.Wise men travel to Bethlehem, worship
Jesus, and present him with gifts.

TRUE or FALSE?

When Jesus was born,
winged angels
appeared before Mary
and Joseph, and the
glory of the Lord shone
about them.

Let's Read

• Luke 2: 9-20

- ⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.
- ¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.
- ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.
- ¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

- ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,
- ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.
- ¹⁵ And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.
- ¹⁶ And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.
- ¹⁷ And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

- ¹⁸ And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.
- ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.
- ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

- Angels appeared to the “lowly” shepherds!!
 - *God chose shepherds to experience this miracle,
Not kings, nobles, or rich men...

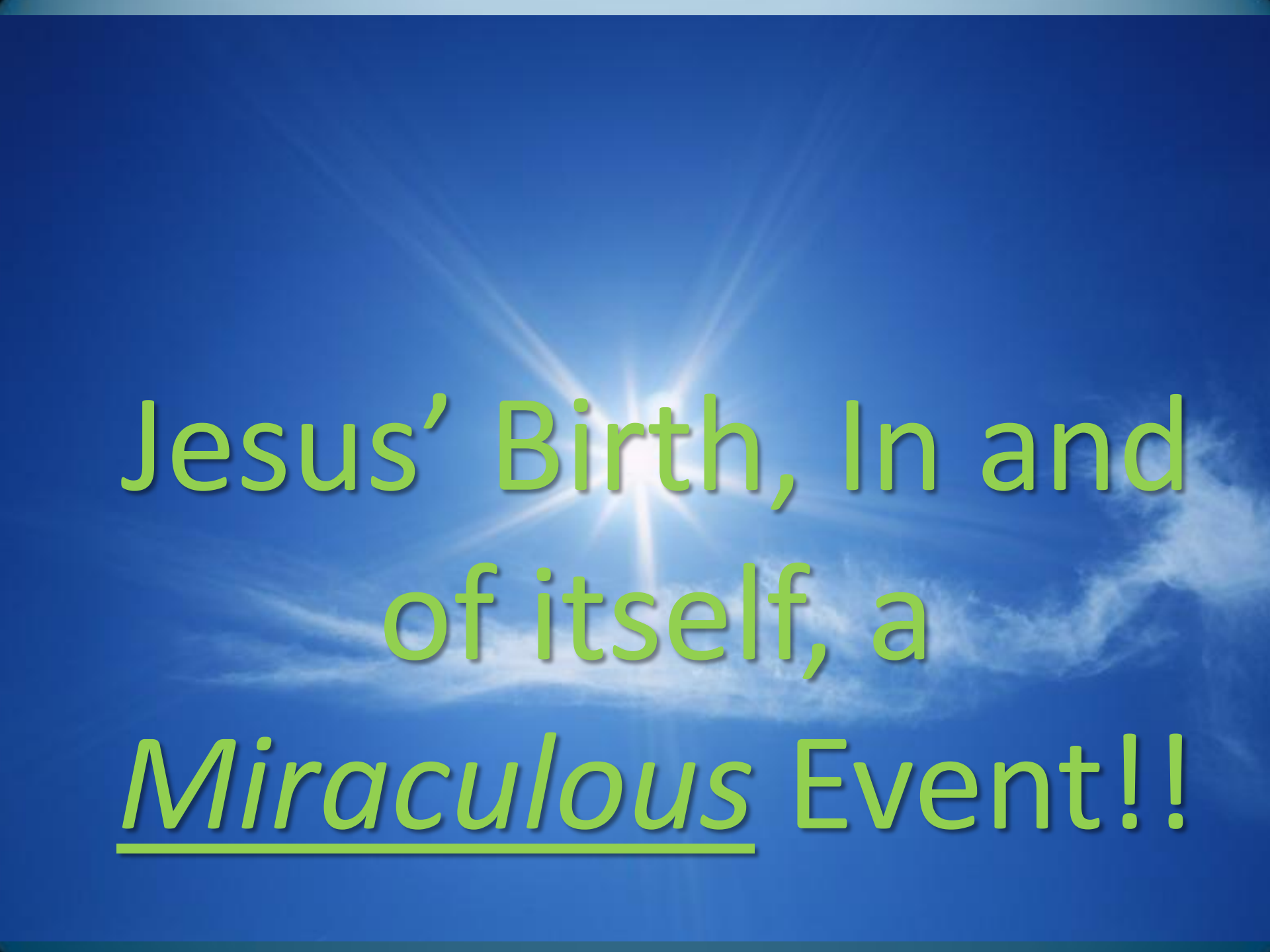
How Many Inaccuracies Can You Find?



Peace on Earth

Lessons from Christ's Birth





Jesus' Birth, In and
of itself, a
Miraculous Event!!

Mary's Virgin Conception

Only instance in history

(Matthew 1:20)

²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

-Luke 1: 31-37

- ³¹ And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS.
- ³² He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:
- ³³ And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.
- ³⁴ Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
- ³⁵ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.
- ³⁶ And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
- ³⁷ For with God nothing shall be impossible.

Joseph almost leaves Mary

- Mary becomes pregnant, outside of wed-lock.
 - It was disgraceful to marry a woman that was not a virgin
- Joseph only marries because of God's intervention.
 - **Matthew 1:18-24**

¹⁸ This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

- ²⁰ But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,^[f] because he will save his people from their sins.”
- ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”^[g] (which means “God with us”).
- ²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Surviving the Slaughter of King Herod

-God's Intervention-

King Herod orders all male children (2 yr and younger) to be killed, in the region of Bethlehem

-Matthew 2:13-18

- ¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."
- ¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."^[c]

- ¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:
 - ¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”^[d]

The Fulfillment of Prophecy



- 1. Promised Through the Seed of Abraham:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Genesis 22:18
- New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 1:1

- 2. Promised Through Isaac:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Genesis 21:12
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 3:34

- 3. Out of the Tribe of Judah:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Micah 5:2
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 3:33

- 4. Born in the Family of Jesse:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Isaiah 11:1
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 3:32

- 5. Born in the House of David (King):

- Old Testament Prophecy: Jeremiah 23:5-6
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 3:31

- 6. Born in Bethlehem:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Micah 5:2
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 2:4-7

- 7. Born of a virgin:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Isaiah 7:14
- New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 1:18

- 8. Worshipped and Presented gifts by Kings:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Psalm 72:10
- New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 2:11

- 9. Worshipped by Shepherds:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Psalm 72:9
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 2:9

- 10. Weeping for the Children

- Old Testament Prophecy: Jeremiah 31:15
- New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 2:16

- 11. Flight to Egypt

- Old Testament Prophecy: Hosea 11:1
- New Testament Fulfillment: Matthew 2:13-14

- 12. He will be called Lord:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Psalm 110:1
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 2:11

- 13. He is the Son of God:

- Old Testament Prophecy: Psalm 2:7
- New Testament Fulfillment: Luke 3:22
(Matthew 3:17, Mark 1:11)

Our Attitude, at Christmas Time



OUR ATTITUDE

So, it's that time of year again. Christmas time. And it's a time when some of our worldly friends, colleagues, and acquaintances (that are not even remotely religious) suddenly become experts on "the meaning of Christmas." They can tell you all about the story of Jesus' birth, and will use catchy phrases like "don't forget the reason for the season!"

I have friends and family that become very irritated at the world during the Christmas season. They'll say: The new testament wasn't written to emphasize the importance of Christ's birth,

But to emphasize the importance of his death, burial, and resurrection. To emphasize

The importance of his teachings, and the message of salvation through baptism, repentance, and obedience.

*I don't argue with that

Christmas is a man-made Holiday. Nowhere, in the Bible, does it teach us to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The date, December 25, has no historical accuracy.

Some aspects of Christmas were derived from Pagan holidays.

I agree with these things. and I also do not recognize Christmas as a God appointed festival, celebration, or holiday. But some people get so wrapped up in telling people all the reasons Christmas is inaccurate, that they fail to embrace this amazing opportunity to teach, inspire, and help the ones around us!

(Olive Branch Slide)

People that might NEVER otherwise open a Bible throughout the year, will go to church!

Families that never talk to God will offer "grace" before their meal. People that are otherwise stingy and tight with money, go out of their ways to donate to charity, buy gifts for those in need, and look for ways to reach out.

What an opportunity for us to start a conversation about God's DAILY expectations for us, by this annual worldly tradition of Christmas. No matter what the foundational circumstances, there is no doubt that this man-made tradition yields wonderful teachable moments for us to discuss with friends, family, and neighbors. (some positive conversation starters)

-So, who says grace at YOUR Christmas dinner every year?

-I love how everyone is SO nice at Christmas time...

-You are such a generous and giving person...

-Isn't it special how everyone focuses on Jesus, if only for this one special day?

With so many of our friends and neighbors making a special effort to be more Christ-like, this time of year, we want to make sure that we encourage them in that behavior. And most importantly, we want them to look at us, and see Christ staring them right back in the face; by our deeds, our care, our compassion, our seasoned words, even with our body language and facial expressions.

Using this Opportunity





Christ's birth is not the MOST important part of the Bible, as some would lead you to believe. But it is an important part of it. And it's a very "teachable" subject for us to use in our daily lives, and when mingling with less educated Christians this Holiday season.

I hope that you've learned something new today, and that this lesson will serve you well this week as you are out and about at Christmas time.

You're Invited to:

-Be Baptized →

-Lay down your burden
of sin & ask for prayers

