

## Christmas Story Refuted

Only two of the four gospels tell us anything about the infancy of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke claim to speak about the birth of Jesus. They have given rise to the Christmas story.

The idea is that Joseph took his wife Mary to Bethlehem to register in a census. There was no room for them in the inn and they had to settle in a stable and there Mary gave birth to her firstborn son and laid him in a manger while shepherds and angels attended. Kings from the east came with gold, frankincense and myrrh to honour the Christ child. King Herod in a failed attempt to kill the baby Jesus had all the male babies in Bethlehem slain.

There are a lot of problems with the tales. Also, Christianity has manipulatively made people delight in the stories about God becoming a helpless vulnerable baby all for us. That idea is the spiritual attraction. And the faith knows fine well that if Jesus is God then he was only acting helpless and wasn't really helpless at all! He was running the universe.

What if the story makes blunders and is absurd? It matters because Christianity claims the Bible was ultimately authored by God. If there are historical errors in it then that is not true.

Matthew and Luke alone record the birth and childhood of Jesus but Luke who wrote later knew nothing of Matthew's version.

The annunciation is the story of an angel announcing the birth of Jesus to his mother.

Matthew's silence on the annunciation, a tale that appears only in Luke, proves that it never happened. Luke chose to say an angel announced the strange conception to Mary before it happened. Matthew doesn't mention it and has Joseph her husband hearing about it in a dream long after he saw his wife to be was pregnant.

Who says the dream was real? Mary was found pregnant meaning her condition was showing so it was only then Joseph believed her to be pregnant. She hadn't told him before for he had no reason to question her claim to be pregnant even if the story of how the baby got there was the last thing he expected to hear. There probably is a contradiction between Luke and Matthew. Christians never worry about probable contradictions at all. They just arrogantly assume there is no error in the Bible.

Haley rejected the opinion of Strauss that when Mary was told in Luke just before the conception of Jesus that she would have Jesus and in Matthew only Joseph was told about it when Mary began to show there is a contradiction (page 406). If Mary conceived miraculously as Haley believes, she would have told Joseph even if he would not believe for God would convince him and take care of the future and because he had a right to know and would know eventually.

Matthew says that the holy family lived in Bethlehem and Luke says they lived in Nazareth. There need be no contradiction here for they might have gone to Nazareth some time after they left Bethlehem. Luke says they had no home in Bethlehem and only visited there making it a wee bit more likely that there is a contradiction. When Matthew and Luke contradict one another on such a serious matter as the danger from Herod it is likely that their traditions are not complementary. The fact that nobody else bothered with trying to satisfy people's curiosity about the childhood implies nobody cared about it and that the traditions were made up. If Mark was derived from Peter's teaching as Christianity maintains and John wrote John and both Peter and John were closest to Jesus we would expect an account of the childhood in them. Even forgers would know that they could not masquerade as Mark and John unless they created stories of the childhood.

Was there a Nazareth in the first century? If there was then where did Jesus get work as a carpenter there? Jesus' line of work suggests that the town was a big one when he was alive which we are certain is not true.

Nazareth was never mentioned by Paul or by the Talmud. The Talmud mentioned about sixty-three towns in the reign of Galilee and it was not one of them. It treated Nazareth like it never existed. And when the Talmud complains about Jesus and seeks to run him down at every opportunity this omission of Nazareth is extraordinary for the Jews had always felt that nothing good could come from this town according the gospels. Josephus never mentioned Nazareth either. And he mentioned forty-five villages and cities of Galilee and even mentioned Japha which was only a short distance from where Nazareth is today. The first time Nazareth was mentioned was in a poem by the Jews in the 600s AD. The Case For Christ says all this and then claims that an Aramaic list made after 70 AD shows that some priest families were sent to Nazareth. Pity it does not ask why first century tombs were found outside the town which accords with Jewish Law and why there are no older tombs.

Jesus was called the Nazarene. Nazarene meant one who was consecrated to God in a special way and could not cut their hair. Nazareth seems to have appeared after Christ. There was confusion in the Bible between Nazareth and Nazarene. Both words mean branch. If Nazareth did not exist and the priests were sent to a branch for people called the Nazarenes then confusion would result. When the town of Nazareth appeared the gossellers got confused and thought their Jesus the Nazarene hailed from Nazareth and that was what Nazarene meant.

If the gossellers made the mistake of saying Jesus's home was a town that never existed when he was supposedly alive that would mean they were making things up about him. And they did make that mistake.

Matthew says that a star led the magi or astrologers to the house where the baby Jesus was in Bethlehem. He says the magi said this. Oddly the star led them to Jerusalem first - the wrong place! Another oddity is how the magi rely on it so little that once they get to Jerusalem they investigate to find out where the Christ child is!

One star.

Now in astrology, it would be the position of the star that counts. But there is no such thing as a system that can tell people where a person will be born and who that person is and exactly when he will be born and if that person is the most important person in the world. So, the law of correspondence, the magical law that like is connected with like, dictates that a huge star would have to indicate such a person. A small star would mean an important person is being born but a huge one would imply that a more important person is being born because it is bigger.

God condemned astrology and would not make a big star appear in the right place on the magi's charts. Matthew would have wanted us to realise that. So what made them think it was a portent of a unique and divine birth? It had to have been the sudden appearance and the size.

Though it guided them to Palestine it was so big that they thought it had indicate that Jesus was born in Jerusalem. If it filled the sky to a large extent that would have been an easy mistake to make.

Matthew said that the star stopped moving over where Jesus was. A small star could not have provided such guidance. It must have been very big.

Ignatius of Antioch thought the star was bigger and brighter than the sun and the stars put together.

It is odd that the magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Their horoscope must have told them that they would find a king.

Kepler found that a conjunction of Saturn and Jupiter happened in 7BC. Professor Konradin Ferrari d'Occhieppo who was once with the Austrian State Observatory found that Jupiter stood still in the sky in July of 7 BC and the two stars were in conjunction in November and found that Jupiter the star of Marduk or Kakkabu was the most sacred star in the Babylonian system of astrology both of which facts would demonstrate that a saviour was about to be born. A clay tablet found in 1925 near the Euphrates stated that the two planets would come together in the winter of 7BC and herald the coming of a new saviour. First of all, it was pagans who were saying these things and that could have triggered off legends about a Messiah among the Jews. The Jews were more likely to be impressed by a low and unusually bright star than by astrological claptrap. The ancient world was full of such prophecies. None of this explains why the magi spoke in terms of following a star and it resting over a house. The prediction and the birth of Jesus are unrelated for two planets connecting would not fit what the Bible understands by the star which seems to be a huge disk in the sky. Christians however still used the fact that the pagans were expecting a saviour at that time and rejected their reason for believing. I mean because the pagans wanted a saviour then, they said he was born then, but they rejected the pagan's reason for saying it was that time.

Science and history bear witness against the star of Bethlehem. It was an early Christian legend inspired by a stupid interpretation of a verse from the Law. The gospels give no evidence against the view that the star was not real but only a vision or a real temporary star that only the Magi could see. Even if there was a star it wouldn't prove that Matthew was truthful but that like others he plotted his god's birth at the time the star appeared to impress people.

Luke's tale of the finding of the child Jesus in the Temple is untrue. It has Mary and Joseph looking for Jesus among their friends and relatives in their party after they left Jerusalem. They would have left him in somebody's charge and when that person did not have him they would have not spent a day looking for him. They would have immediately went back to Jerusalem and told somebody else to do the searching in the party. Caring parents would search the most dangerous place first and waste no time at it. Mary and Joseph did not understand when Jesus asked them if they did not know that he had to be in his Father's Temple. Just how dumb does Luke think they were?

Then we are told that Jesus obeyed them perfectly after that. That doesn't seem likely after what Luke just reported about

him.

John says that the Baptist said that one is coming after him who ranks before him because he existed before he did. This person is Jesus. The words were said to the Jews. They would have taken John to be saying that Jesus was older than he was. Therefore that is what he meant. The contrast between coming after and coming before indicates that John did mean that. Yet the Church says he meant not that Jesus was older but that Jesus was God and as God was before John and older in the sense that God is older for God existed always. But the Gospel never says that Jesus was God. And we know from the first three gospels that John had serious doubts about Jesus. The plain sense of John's words is that he meant that Jesus had greater power and rank than him because he was older and more experienced and that the two were the holiest men on earth when Jesus could outdo him just by being older. Suppose the Bible does not give a clue here as to what it means. The Christians put an interpretation on it that fits their own presuppositions. But all it can be is an interpretation and there is no evidence for it and yet this interpretation is the real word of God to them. They make their fantasies into the word of God. They do this a lot, an awful lot.

The trouble is that Luke contradicts himself by saying Jesus was born after John!!

## Conclusion

The Christmas story is sheer humbug.

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