

CHARITY MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH BIBLE STUDY

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 2022

THE BIRTH NARRATIVES ACCORDING TO GOSPEL OF MATTHEW AND LUKE

1. Does Matthew or Luke's narrative portray King Herod's search for the baby Jesus throughout the region?

ANSWER: Matthew's Narrative

Matthew 2:7-8 NIV

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

2. Which two people in Luke's synopsis witnessed the baby Jesus in Jerusalem?

ANSWER: Simeon and Anna

Luke 2:22-38

22 When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. 25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called **Simeon**, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 36 There was also a prophet, **Anna**, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

3. What Scripture passage in Matthew and Luke states Mary is pledged to be married to Joseph?

ANSWER: Matthew 1:18 and Luke 1:27

- **Matthew 1:18 NIV** "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."
- **Luke 1:27 NIV** "to a **virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph**, a descendant of David. **The virgin's name was Mary.**"
- **Luke 2:4-5**
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.

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4. Which gospel according to Matthew or Luke share that the birth of Jesus is detected by the Magi (Wise men)? Which gospel according to Matthew or Luke say that the birth of Jesus is detected by shepherds?

ANSWER: Matthew 2:1-2 NIV; Luke 2:8-12

- **Matthew 2:1-2** *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi^{1a} from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*
- **Luke 2:8-12** *And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹² This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.*

5. Can you name one difference you found in Matthew's birth narrative that wasn't in Luke's?

ANSWER: Participants can share their findings.

- Matthew (Chapter 2) talks about Herod, the wise men (2:7-8), the massacre at Bethlehem (2:16), and the flight to Egypt (2:13-14). More details of Joseph (1:18-24). Mary and Joseph lived in Bethlehem (2:1). No mention of Jesus's circumcision. Jesus was born in a house (2:10).
- Luke (Chapter 2) talks about Caesar (2:1-2), the shepherds (2:8-12), Jesus' presentation at the Temple (2:22-38), and Jesus' childhood in Nazareth (2:51). Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem (2:4). Jesus was born in a manger (2:7). The baby Jesus named and circumcised (2:22). More details of Mary (2:26-56). Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem (2:4).

6. Can you share one similarity found in Matthew's birth narrative that was also found in Luke?

ANSWER: Participants can share their findings.

- Baby Jesus was born during the time of Herod (Matthew 2:2; Luke 1:5).
- Baby Jesus was born of a virgin (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:34).
- Baby Jesus was conceived in her from the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35).
- The names of the parents are Mary and Joseph (Matthew. 1:18; Luke 1:27).
- Joseph was a descendant of King David (Matthew 1:1; Luke 1:27; 2:4).

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7. Would you agree that Matthew introduces Jesus as a Moses-like deliverer born into royalty and Luke introduces Jesus as a humble Samuel-like servant, who grows up as insignificant, unimportant and vague? Please support your findings as related to both styles.

ANSWER: Participants can share their findings.

- Matthew begins the chapter with the genealogy to share the importance of the lineage through God's chosen people (the Children of Israel). This is the group that Moses led out of Egypt, from slavery to a land of milk and honey. Matthew emphasize Jesus' importance to Judaism by modeling his birth and ministry on Moses' birth and mission: Jesus is the new Moses who has been appointed by God to free his people from bondage and to give the (new) law. **Matthew 22:36-40 NIV** *“Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?”* ³⁷ *Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’^[a] ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’^[b] ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”*
- Luke's account reflects on Mary being chosen of God, even though, she comes from a poor background. **Luke 1:48, NLT:** *For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed.* Luke dives deep in trenches about Jesus being born in unsettling times where taxes were due and no room in the inn for Mary to have the baby. Luke reflect the humble origins of Jesus and with n threat to Caesar and is more closely related to the Temple and priesthood than the throne. Jesus is the man of humble origins, is no threat to Caesar and is more closely associated with the Temple and priesthood than with the throne. **Luke 2:46** *After three days they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions.* Jesus was about 12 years old at this time. Like Samuel, Jesus is at the Temple. From a tender age, his words astound the wise, and he grows in favor with God and man. Luke associate Jesus with the poor. Unlike Matthew, Luke has Jesus visited by shepherds not Magi's.

8. Why did King Herod try to kill Jesus shortly after His birth?

ANSWER:

- It is stated that King Herod or Herod the Great was a cruel, power-hungry ruler who destroyed anyone he feared was trying to take the throne from him. He killed several of his family members because he thought they were plotting against him. Herod's goal was to destroy the baby Jesus as he feared that in time Jesus would take over his throne. After the birth of Jesus, King Herod the Great was **not** successful in attempting to destroy the baby Jesus (Matthew 2:16–18). However, he ordered the killing of all male children age two and younger. The name given to this killing of babies in Bethlehem and surrounding regions is the Massacre of the Innocents. Joseph was given the charge to flee to Egypt with mother and baby Jesus in a dream by an angel (Matthew 2:13). He and the family were to remain there until Herod's death.