

# H O U S E o f W I S D O M

P. O. B o x 2 7 6 5

B u r l e s o n, T e x a s 7 6 0 9 7

Email: woody@dtgministries.org

04 December 2012

## The Christmas Story - Allegorically (Mt 1:23-25; Lk 2:1-16)

Taken allegorically, in the story of the birth of the Son into humanity can be seen our own birthing of Christ in our own understanding. It is indeed a miracle of a spiritual birth too. (cf Rev 12:1-2; Gal 4:19)

**Matthew 1:20-23:** 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 [from] the Holy [Spirit].* 21. *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.* 22. *Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,* 23. *Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. [Greek]*

**Miracle of conception: Luke 1:30-35:** 30. *And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.* 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 [most High]: and the Lord God (most High) 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 [Spirit] shall come upon thee, and the power of the [most High] shall overshadow (fig. of protect) thee: therefore also the holy [one] which shall be born [out] of thee shall be called the Son of God. Most High: Mark 5:7: And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God?... Jesus is the literal Son of the Father. By combining these verses with those in Matthew, it is more readily seen that the spirit of the most High, the Father, spake and Mary became pregnant. **Psalms 33:6, 9:** 6. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth...* 9. *For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.**

**The name Jesus:** The Greek name Jesus comes from the Hebrew word *yehoshua* <sup>(3091)</sup>, which is a compound of two words, *Yahweh* <sup>(3068)</sup> and the verb *yasha* <sup>(3467)</sup>. *Yahweh* is the name of the supreme God. The proper meaning of *yasha* is *to be free*, rendered salvation in the interpretation of Jesus' name, or "Jehovah is salvation." Gesenius renders it as "whose help is Jehovah." However, in ancient Hebrew, when taking into consideration the structure of the basic root and the Hebrew letters, *Yehoshua* is *Yahweh saves*, and lends to the idea of a shepherd watches and delivers.

**Shepherds:** Literally, a shepherd watches over his flock and drives away or destroys predator animals that would kill a sheep. A "flock" can be likened to a group of people diligently studying and seeking meat in due season, and God sends a messenger (angel) to connect them with the bread of life. **Luke 12:32:** *Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.* David, at one time a shepherd, killed a lion and a bear who were taking a sheep. The lion, inwardly, is a symbol for pride, and the bear a symbol for an unchanging heart. It is these types of character traits from which the Savior is delivering us.

**Joseph:** In the account when Gabriel appeared to Mary, it is said that she is espoused to Joseph of the house of David (Lk 1:27), or in the lineage of David. Before Mary gave birth, they were required to register to pay taxes: **Luke 2:3-5:** 3. *And all went to be enrolled, each to his own city. 4. And 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 (implies family) and lineage of David, 5. to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child (RSV). “City of David,” in the Old Testament most often refers to Jerusalem and ancient Mount Zion, which in the time of David was where the temple was located. Bethlehem is the town in which Benjamin, the last son of Jacob, was born, and the birthplace of David (1 Sam 17:12), Joseph, who is in his lineage, and now Jesus.*

**Emmanuel:** Verse 23 above is a quote of Isaiah 7:14. Look at the context: **Isaiah 7:13-16:** 13. *And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David; is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? 14. Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. 16. For before the child (young man) shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhor shall be forsaken of both her kings.* The prophecy is spoken to the house (family) of David at a time when Israel was split, and ten tribes became Israel, and Judah and Benjamin became Judah, each with their own king. By the time of Jesus’ birth, Israel is totally gone, and Judah no longer has a king, as they are under Rome’s dominion. The name Emmanuel is a Greek word transliterated from the Hebrew. The Hebrew is the two word phrase *el im*, which properly means *strength or might with*. Most translate it as *God with us*. Another rendering is *mighty One with us* (cf Isa 1:24).

**Luke 2:6-7:** 6. *And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 7. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.* It must be noted here that Mary was very close to giving birth in the wrong city, and the prophecy would have failed. But God, knowing end from beginning, foresaw the requirement for Joseph and Mary to go to Bethlehem, where Jesus should be born.

**Accommodations:** The “inn” in those days would have been a small room attached to a private residence where a traveler could have a resting place while on a journey. There would have been pens and shelters nearby, or even attached, to house and feed the animals. A shelter in Bethlehem, being crowded with travelers come to register for taxes, could only be found in a stable. So our Lord was born in a stable and laid in a feed bin for livestock. While this is indicative of lack of means and the low of estate of the Savior’s birth, there is an excellent spiritual lesson here. Jesus is called the “bread of life;” He was born in Bethlehem, the “house of bread,” and was placed in a manger where livestock were fed. The Son of God, born of Mary was the “word of life” (1 Jn 1:1), the bread of which all humanity are admonished to eat. **Isaiah 55:1-2:** 1. *Ho, every one that thirsts, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfies not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.*

**Swaddling clothes:** Likely, as in the ancient Oriental custom, Jesus was washed with water, rubbed with salt and wrapped in cloth strips or a small blanket. In the Hebrew system, a man was to offer a sheep or goat without blemish (Lev 1:3) as a burnt offering. Parts of it were to be washed in water (Lev 1:9) and seasoned with salt (Lev 2:13). We are to wash and be washed by the water of the word (Eph 5:26). **Mark 9:49:** 49. *For every one shall be salted with fire, and every sacrifice shall be salted with salt.* Fire is a symbol for God’s word (Jer 23:29) and salt would be the seasoning, or the righteousness therein. Jesus told His disciples that they were the salt of the earth (Mt 5:13) and we have been salted from their writings. Paul admonished the Colossians to *Let your*

*speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.* (Col 4:6)

**Wise men: Matthew 2:1-2:** *1. Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judah 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.* Herod was concerned, thinking he might be replaced, and consulted with the priests and scribes as to the birthplace of the anointed One (Christ). The priests responded - **Verses 5-6:** *5. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judah: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6. And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule (properly - tend as a Shepherd) my people Israel.* The quote is from **Micah 5:2:** *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose [origin is from everlasting, from the days of eternity].* [Hebrew in KJ margin] This verse also solidifies the fact that Jesus was pre-existent before coming to Bethlehem.

**Guided by a star:** Traditionally, three wise men are always mentioned. Scripture does not say, but likely there were more than three, as long-distance travel in those days were in large groups to help protect caravans from thieves. The Greek word *magos* <sup>(3097)</sup> is of foreign origin and refers to the magicians, astrologers, etc. of the nations east of Judah (Media, Persia, Arabia). Likely these were men aware of Balaam's prophecy: **Numbers 24:17:** *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.* Apparently, the wise men had observed a new star and had been given special guidance by God to visit this king of the Jews. Stars have their own light and are said to share in the rule of the night (Gen 1:14-19). Consider the star as a symbol for light from God, east as a symbol of self, the wise men represent those who turn their back to self and seek to know and worship Jesus Christ. (A priest ministers in the tabernacle from east to west)

**Scepter: Psalms 45:6-7:** *6. Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter.* (quoted in Heb 1:8) *7. Thou love righteousness, and hate wickedness: therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.* A scepter is indicative of a king ruling (cf Es 4:11; 5:2; 8:4), and which in ancient times represented life or death. The word *Scepter* is also *rod*. Jesus refers to himself as the "morning star" (Rev 22:16), and He is a descendent of Jacob. **Isaiah 11:1-4:** *1. And there shall come forth a rod [sprout] out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: 2. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; 3. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth: with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.* In this context, a rod is for correction (Pr 10:13; 22:15). The Father sent His Son to correct our understanding of Himself.

**Three gifts:** It is interesting that the gold, frankincense and myrrh were expensive items which could be sold to finance Mary and Joseph's upcoming trip into Egypt. The wise men opened up their treasures and gave gifts of their means, symbols of the faith (gold) they had, and the spiritual gifts they received in return. Frankincense is a white power spice and was sprinkled on the show bread (Lev 24:5-8); Myrrh was one of the five components used in making of the holy anointing oil (Ex 30:23-24). The wise men were warned to not go back to Herod (Mt 2:12), and Joseph was warned in a dream (Mt 2:13) to flee into Egypt, because Herod would attempt to kill the child. These are examples of the "overshadowing" of the Father to protect His Son. Amen.