

A Historical Study On The Book Of Luke
Teaching #18: The Historical Details Of The Birth Of The Messiah/Christ - Part 1
Luke 2:1-4

The Meaning of Messiah/Christ

The word **Messiah** or **Christ** means the one anointed by God to be the Savior of the world and King of Israel.

- As Savior, he would bring **peace with God**.
- As King, he would bring **peace on earth**.

Let's look at **five prophecies** from the Jewish Scriptures about the coming of the Messiah/Christ.

Five Prophecies About The Messiah/Christ

PROPHECY #1: Isaiah 9:6-7

*For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and **peace** there will be no end. He will **reign** on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.*

The Jewish Scriptures foretell of a Messiah/Christ who will come from the family tree of David and reign eternally as king, bringing eternal peace on earth.

Mary would be the one to give birth to this King.

Luke 1:31-33 – The angel Gabriel quoted Isaiah 9:6-7 to Mary saying,

"You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

In addition to being a **King**, the Messiah/Christ would also be a **Savior**.

PROPHECY #2: Zechariah 23:5-6; 33:15-16

Zechariah 23:5-6

*"The days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a **King** who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord Our Righteous **Savior**."*

Zechariah 33:15-16

'The days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. " "In those days and at that time I will make a righteous Branch sprout from David's line; he will do what

is just and right in the land. In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. This is the name by which it will be called: The Lord Our Righteous **Savior**.'

PROPHECY #3: Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! See, your **king** comes to you, righteous and victorious, lowly and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey. I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the warhorses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. **He will proclaim peace to the nations**. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River [Euphrates] to the ends of the earth.

The King who will bring peace on earth will also bring peace with God.

PROPHECY #4: Isaiah 53:5-6, 11

But he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed for our iniquities; **the punishment that brought us peace was on him**, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all... my righteous servant will **justify** many, and he will bear their iniquities.

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, **since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.

We looked at the meaning of Messiah/Christ and four prophecies about his birth. Let's now look at a fifth prophecy...the location of the Messiah's birth.

PROPHECY #5: Micah 5:2

Micah 5:2

"But you, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times [from times of eternity]."

The prophet Micah provided the **LOCATION** of the Messiah's birth.

The angel Gabriel provided the **REVELATION** of the Messiah's name

Luke 1:31

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him **Jesus**.

Jesus means salvation.

Jesus came to save us.

Matthew 1:21

Name him Jesus, for he will **save** his people from their sins.

John 3:16-17

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

The time came for the birth of the Messiah/Christ. Let's examine the historical details surrounding the birth of the Messiah/Christ.

Historical Details Of The Messiah's/Christ's Birth

The birth of Jesus the Messiah/Christ is a historical fact.

His birth happened at a **REAL TIME**, with **REAL DATES**, where there were **REAL PEOPLE** who held **REAL POSITIONS**.

When we read the Bible, we are reading **REAL RECORDED HISTORY**.

We are reading **HISTORICAL FACTS**.

Let's examine some of the details Luke provides about these historical facts.

DETAIL #1: The TIMING Of The Messiah's Birth

Luke 2:1

In those days [the days of Zechariah, Elizabeth, birth of John, Joseph, and Mary] Caesar Augustus (around 4 BC)...

Caesar Augustus

Caesar means ruler, emperor, leader – it is much like the term Pharaoh in ancient times or President and Prime Minister in modern times.

Augustus means highly respected, honored, esteemed

Caesar Augustus, whose real name was Gaius Octavius, was the ruler of the Roman Empire from **27 BC to 14 AD**. He is responsible for establishing peace to the known world at that time and for building roads and cities throughout the Roman Empire.

Gaius Octavius was given the name Caesar Augustus by the Roman Senate in AD 27.

Caesar Augustus was the grandnephew of Julius Caesar. He was adopted by Julius Caesar and succeeded Julius upon his death. Caesar Augustus co-ruled Rome with Marc Antony but defeated Marc Antony (who was married to Cleopatra), assuming total control of Rome.

In the days of Caesar Augustus, Rome **CONTROLLED** the land of Israel and **RULED** the people of Israel.

Why was Rome controlling the land and ruling the people?

In **Deuteronomy 28-29**, God told the people of Israel that if they responded in obedience to the law of Moses, they would be blessed more than any nation on earth, but if they rebelled to the law in disobedience, they would be cursed. One of the curses would be that the land of Israel would be overtaken by other nations and they would be ruled by them. Israel continually rebelled to the law and, consequently, other nations controlled the land and ruled the people. These nations included Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

Remember, Israel was to be a light to the nations. The law would protect them from worshipping the false gods of the nations and becoming intermingled with the corrupt cultures of the nations. The law was also designed to provide for their well-being. If they obeyed the law, they would be blessed and would be a blessing to the nations. If they disobeyed, they would be cursed and overtaken by the nations. The people of Israel rebelled to the law and experienced the curses. One of these curses was the nation of Israel was overtaken by Babylon, Persia, Greece, then Rome.

This period of time takes place during the old testament period and is not a part of the new testament.

Rome controlled the land of Israel and ruled the people of Israel during the time of Jesus' birth.

This is a historical fact.

For a map of the Roman Empire during the time of Jesus, [CLICK HERE](#)

For a summary of the Roman Empire during the time of Jesus and Paul, [CLICK HERE](#)

DETAIL #2: The CENSUS at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.

Luke 2:1-3

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree [an executive order: many decrees were ordered by rulers as recorded in the Jewish Scriptures. For example, see Ezra chapters 5-7; Esther chapters 1-4 and 8-9, Daniel chapters 2-4 and 6] that a **census** [population count] should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius [or Cyrenius] was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.*

Luke provides historical accounts, historical people, and historical places in Luke and Acts. Sometimes, critics of the Bible attack Luke and the other writers of the historical documents contained in the Bible, questioning their information and accuracy.

It is important for us to know that the writings of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, and James are real historical documents that have been collected and preserved as any other ancient piece of literature. Should a historical account have some information that may be slightly off, or if there are different accounts of the same event, this in no way discredits the reliability of the documents. For example, if a sports writer provides an account of a game and says the score was 32-31 when it was actually 32-21, it doesn't mean there was no game and everything else is wrong in his account of the game. If other sports writers provide information on the same game, mentioning the score was 32-21, then we can be assured the score was 32-31. By no means do we say the first sports writer should be discredited as a writer simply because he recorded the score inaccurately. What we can be assured of was that there was a game.

It is the same with the writers of Matthew-Revelation. The writers all agree there was a game – the birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. Though they may be attacked by critics concerning some of the details of the events they write about, what cannot be attacked is the historical reliability the writers provide that Jesus was born, lived, died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven.

When it comes to the Bible, the Bible eventually proves itself accurate, normally through archeological discoveries, relating to history, and the critics eventually are proved wrong. **I would not place my trust in the critics who were not around when the writers wrote and who do not have all the historical evidence that is yet to be discovered through archeology. Archeology continues to prove the reliability of the Bible.**

How does this relate to Luke?

Luke is often criticized for his account of the census issued by Caesar Augustus. There has been some controversy about the timing of his account of Quirinius and the census. However, as always, the historical accounts of the Bible always prove to be true. If you would like to study further the reliability of the account of Luke concerning the Census and Quirinius, below are several resources:

VIDEOS

[Darrell Bock \(Professor at Dallas Theological Seminary\) Explains The Census](#)

[Darrell Bock Explains Luke's Contradiction With Josephus](#)

[Sean McDowell and Titus Kennedy Discuss Luke's Account And Josephus's Account of the Census](#)

[Archeological Evidence For Census and Quirinius](#)

[John Ankerberg](#)

[Historical Reliability of Luke 2 – The Census of Quirinius](#)

[The Roman Census and the Birth of Jesus](#)

ARTICLES

[Luke's Accuracy](#)

[Luke's Historical Reliability](#)

[Is Luke's Account of the Census Inaccurate?](#)

[Biblical Archeology – A Brief Defense of the Census #1](#)

[Biblical Archeology – A Brief Defense of the Census #2](#)

[When Did The Luke 2 Census Occur?](#)

[Is Luke Wrong?](#)

[Did Luke Make A Mistake?](#)

[Luke's Account of the Census and Quirinius](#)

Let's return to Luke 2:1-3, **DETAIL #2: The CENSUS at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.**

Luke 2:1-3

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius [or Cyrenius] was governor [Greek word means to rule, lead, or command. Quirinius may have been a military commander who carried out the census in parts of Israel who later became the Governor] of Syria [Rome placed Judea under the jurisdiction of Syria].) And everyone went to their own town to register.

Census

According to the UK Gov Website:

“The Romans conducted censuses every five years, calling upon every man and his family to return to his place of birth to be counted in order to keep track of the population. Historians believe that it was started by the Roman king Servius Tullius in the 6th century BC, when the number of arms-bearing citizens was counted at 80,000. The census played a crucial role in the administration of the peoples of an expanding Roman Empire, and was used to determine taxes. It provided a register of citizens and their property from which their duties and privileges could be listed.”

Source:

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/2011census/howourcensusworks/aboutcensuses/censushistory/censustakingintheancientworld>

The Census also helped determine the number of people living in the Roman Empire and how many were citizens and how many were not citizens.

Luke mentions two census, one in Luke 2:1-3 and one in Acts 5:37.

Census #1 – Luke 2:1-3 (around 8 to 4 BC)

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was **the first census** that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.*

It is likely the Jewish people did not comply with the census (because of taxation that would be placed upon them) until around 4 BC, though it was initially ordered in 8 BC.

Census #2 – Acts 5:37 (around 6-7 AD)

Quirinius

During the period of the Roman Empire they had **provinces**, or divided up areas of land. These provinces were ruled by **governors** appointed by the Roman Senate. One of the provinces was Syria that was governed by Quirinius. The Greek word used by Luke for governor [*hégemoneuó*] also means to lead, command, or rule. It is likely at this time in history, Quirinius was a military leader or a high Syrian official who oversaw the taking of the Census. At this time, Judea was placed under the oversight of Syria.

So far, we have looked at two details concerning the timing of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.

- **DETAIL #1: The TIMING Of The Messiah's/Christ's Birth**
- **DETAIL #2: The CENSUS at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.**

Let's now look at DETAIL #3.

DETAIL #3: The JOURNEY to Bethlehem at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.

Luke 2:4-5

*So Joseph also went up [meaning the lower elevation of Nazareth to the higher elevation of Bethlehem] from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to **Bethlehem** the town of David [depending on the route they took, it was between 70 and 90 miles] because he belonged to the house and line of David [David was born and raised in Bethlehem]. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*

Luke is providing historical details of how Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem for Jesus, the Messiah/Christ, to be born in Bethlehem.

[Click Here](#) for a map of Israel during the time of Jesus.

Below is a map of Joseph and Mary's journey from Nazareth and Bethlehem.



Nazareth, located in the lower elevation of Galilee, was about 70 – 90 miles from Bethlehem depending on the rout Joseph and Mary traveled. Bethlehem was located in the Judean hills and was about 100 feet higher in elevation than Jerusalem. So Mary and Joseph would have traveled up the Judean hills to Bethlehem. This would have been about a week’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, especially because Mary was pregnant. Others may have made the journey in about 5 days. This explains why there was no room for them in the inn. Joseph and Mary would have arrived much later to Bethlehem than the average traveler.

Nazareth did not have a good reputation.

It was a town consisting of many fisherman and Roman soldiers. There was much immorality in Nazareth. This is why Nathaniel emphatically asked, **“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.**

John 1:45-46

*Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” **“Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?” Nathanael asked.***

Peter, a fisherman, lived about 50 miles from Nazareth in the area of Bethsaida and Capernaum. He stated to Jesus that he (Peter) was a sinful man.

Luke 5:8

*Peter said, “Get away from me **I am a sinful man.**”*

Joseph and Mary were living in Nazareth. We can deduct, especially from the question asked by Nathaniel, that Nazareth did not have a good reputation because of the immorality in the city from the soldiers and fisherman.

Though Joseph and Mary were living in Nazareth, remember, the prophet Micah said the Messiah/Christ would be born in Bethlehem.

Micah 5:2

*“But you, **Bethlehem** Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times [meaning everlasting or days of eternity].”*

Micah described a time when a ruler over Israel would come from God and would be from eternity...an eternal one. Through the sending of this eternal King, this eternal Ruler, God would bring peace on earth.

Micah 5:2 (Berean Standard Bible)

*“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come forth for Me One to be ruler over Israel—One whose origins are of old, from the days of **eternity**.”*

Micah 5:2 (New King James Version)

*“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah [Israel had split into two kingdoms – Israel the Northern Kingdom and Judah the Southern Kingdom], Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From **everlasting**.”*

There were two Bethlehems, one in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Bethlehem of Galilee-see Joshua 19:15 for the mention of this Bethlehem) and the other in the Southern Kingdom of Judah (Bethlehem of Ephrathah-see Genesis 35:1-20). During the time of Micah’s prophecy, Israel had been divided into Israel (Northern-10 tribes) and Judah (Southern-2 tribes). This split occurred around 975 BC. This division took place after Solomon was King (1 Kings 11:11-13, 29-39). **Bethlehem was in the Southern Kingdom of Judah.**

The ruler to come would be born in the Bethlehem of the Southern Kingdom Judah. This is why Matthew writes: **After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea** (Matthew 2:1). Judea was located in Judah, the Southern Kingdom. Matthew was identifying the Bethlehem of Jesus’ birth.



What is Ephrathah?

We first discover Ephrathah-Bethlehem in Genesis 35:1-20 (see also Genesis 48:7). Ephrathah was synonymous with Bethlehem.

What do we know about Bethlehem?

Bethlehem

- Bethlehem is a small town located about 6 miles southwest from Jerusalem in the hills of Judea.
- It is about 100 feet higher in elevation than Jerusalem.
- Bethlehem is the birthplace and childhood of David (1 Samuel 16:1-4; 17:12-15)
- David is the:
 - son of Jesse (Ruth 4:9-22)
 - grandson of Obed (Ruth 4:9-22),
 - and great-grandson of Boaz and Ruth.
- The story of Boaz and Ruth took place around the area of Bethlehem (Bethlehem is mentioned 5 times in Ruth).
- Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, was from Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1, 16-22). See also Matthew 1:5-6.
- David cared for sheep in Bethlehem (1 Samuel 17:15).
- Bethlehem is where Samuel anointed David to be King of Israel (1 Samuel 16:1-13)
- Bethlehem was so small and unimportant that it was not listed in the towns of Judah (Joshua 15:20-61, nor is it listed in Nehemiah 11:25-30).
- God chose the most insignificant town in Judah (Bethlehem) to be the birthplace of the most significant person (Jesus) in the history of the world.
- Bethlehem is called "house of bread" *Beth* means house and *lehem* means bread.
- Bethlehem had grain fields and it was known for the bread that was made from the grain.
- Boaz provided grain for Ruth from one of his fields (Ruth 2).
- He also provided bread for her lunch (Ruth 2:14).
- So, it is highly likely the area was named Bethlehem because of its grain and breads made from the grain.

Jesus refers to himself as the **Bread of Life** in **John 6:32-35**. So the **Bread of Life** was born in the **House of Bread!**

Jesus said in **John 6:32-35**,

*“Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” “Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.” Then Jesus declared, “**I am the bread of life.** Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.*

When Jesus was in the upper room with his disciples, he said in **Luke 22:20**,

*And **he took bread**, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “**This is my body given for you;** do this in remembrance of me.”*

The bread symbolized Jesus giving himself for our sins and establishing the new testament through his death. By new testament, I am not referring to books of the Bible but to a new way of relating to God, grace. Through his death, Jesus established the new testament of grace where a person relates to God through grace not through law, meaning we relate to God through the finished work of Jesus on the cross and not any personal works. Through Jesus, we are eternally forgiven of all sins, eternally righteous, and have eternal life. We now relate to God as our loving Father where we are assured of and experience eternal closeness with him.

After the death and resurrection of Jesus, Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20 and Ephesians 5:1-2 about Jesus giving his life.

Galatians 2:19-21

*For through the law I died to the law so that I may live to God. I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So the life I now live in the body, I live because of the faithfulness of the Son of God, **who loved me and gave himself for me.** I do not set aside God’s grace [as Peter did], because if righteousness could come through the law, then Christ died for nothing!*

In the context of these verses, Peter, the disciple of Jesus, had abandoned (set aside) grace for righteousness and returned to the law for righteousness. Paul confronted Peter, telling him that righteousness comes through the faithfulness of Jesus who loved us and gave himself for us. Righteousness does not come through one’s faithfulness to the law but through Jesus’ faithfulness to us when, as the **Bread of Life**, he gave himself for our sins. Through faith in Jesus, we are declared righteous by God.

The reason Jesus gave himself for our sins is so we could receive righteousness. Righteousness is needed for salvation because God will remove on judgment day all the unrighteous ones (sinners, ungodly, wicked) from the earth (Psalm 1:4-5; 37:20, 28-29, 34; 104:35; Proverbs 11:21, 23; Daniel 12:2-3; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 13:49; Revelation 20:11-15). Jesus took our sinfulness on himself at the cross (Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21), and now freely offers us his righteousness as a gift (Romans 3:21-25; 5:17). This righteousness is received by faith in Jesus. By receiving the gift of righteousness through faith in Jesus, we are removed from judgment and have peace with God and eternal life (Romans 5:1-2; 8:1).

Paul also writes in **Ephesians 5:1-2** about Jesus, as the **Bread of Life**, giving himself for our sins.

Therefore, be imitators of God as dearly loved children and live in love, **just as Christ also loved us and gave himself for us**, a sacrificial and fragrant offering to God.

So the **Bread of Life** (Jesus) was born in the **House of Bread** (Bethlehem) to give himself for our sins because he loved us and wants us to have eternal life.

Paul's writing about Jesus giving himself for our sins takes us back to the upper room where Jesus said the bread symbolized his body given for himself for us.

We are examining the historical details concerning the birth of Jesus and are on:

DETAIL #3: The JOURNEY from Nazareth to Bethlehem at the time of the Messiah's/Christ's birth.

Luke 2:4-5

*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. He went there to register [for the census] with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*

Joseph Belonged To The House And Line Of David

Joseph had royal blood flowing through his veins! The blood of King David, Israel's greatest king.

Joseph's family tree was traced back to David (See Matthew 1:1-16), and David was from Bethlehem.

Therefore, Joseph belonged to the house and line of David.

Registering For The Census

Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem to comply with and register for the census decreed by Caesar Augustus. Critics try to discredit the Bible by saying that no one traveled to their home towns to register and that Mary, being close to giving birth would have not traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem at that time. Yet the critics are once again proved wrong.

FIRST: Luke is providing a real historical account of the events happening during the time of Jesus' birth. He is accurate throughout Luke and Acts concerning people and places and kings and rulers. There is no reason to believe he would not be accurate regarding the account of Joseph and Mary traveling together to Bethlehem to register for the census.

SECOND: Archeological discoveries provides evidence people returned to their birthplace for a census.

For further insight into the return of Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem for the census, see the resources below.

Videos

[John Ankerberg](#)

Articles

[Evidence Joseph Had To Go To Bethlehem](#)

[The Census And Joseph and Mary Returning To Bethlehem](#)

THIRD: There was probably a deadline to comply with the census or be subject to Roman punishment. Therefore, Mary and Joseph had no choice but to travel to Bethlehem when they did.

FOURTH: It is possible that Joseph was not going to leave Mary behind in Nazareth, so he brought her with him. And it is possible Mary insisted on traveling with Joseph, because she was confident, as was Joseph, in the prophecy of Micah 5:2. This leads to fifth reason as to why Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem.

FIFTH: Joseph and Mary knew the prophecy in Micah 5:2 concerning the Messiah being born in Bethlehem. Therefore, they likely saw that God was purposely directing them to Bethlehem through the census for the purpose of fulfilling the prophecy of Micah 5:2.

They knew **Proverbs 21:1** that says:

The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Joseph and Mary saw the census as the power of God to turn Caesar Augustus' heart toward conducting a census so that prophecy could be fulfilled.

Joseph and Mary also were familiar with **Proverbs 3:5-6**, which reads,

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He shall direct your paths.

When Joseph and Mary left Nazareth for Bethlehem, it was a journey of trust. They were trusting God to provide for their needs and guide their steps as Mary was expecting to give Birth to Jesus.

Confident in both Micah 5:2, Proverbs 2:21, and Proverbs 3:5-6, Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem, assured they would safely arrive and the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Pledged To Be Married

Luke states that Joseph and Mary were pledged to be married **after** the birth of Jesus, while Matthew states Joseph took Mary home as his wife (Matthew 1:24-25) **before** the journey was made to Bethlehem. This seems to be a historical problem. The solution is that Joseph and Mary were probably married legally in Nazareth prior to their journey to Bethlehem.

Remember, Mary was pregnant. So to remove any public shaming from Mary (see Matthew 1:19), they were legally married **before** traveling to Bethlehem. However, their large Jewish wedding would be **after** the time of the birth of Jesus. Matthew is referring to the legal wedding, or civil wedding, while Luke is referring to the large Jewish wedding, or religious wedding.

In Part 2 of our next study, we will continue to examine **The Birth Of The Messiah/Christ - beginning with Detail #4.**

DETAIL #4: The BIRTH of the Messiah/Christ.

Luke 2:6-7

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 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 available for them.

Thanks for being a part of the Bible study!

All verses are NIV unless otherwise noted.

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