

Christmas Is:

I. An Intrusion

Jesus' birth encroached upon the personal lives of all the cast:

A. Mary

1. Impregnated by the Holy spirit

- a. The Holy Spirit penetrated her womb. **Matthew 1: 18**, *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.”*
- b. This is planned parenthood God’s way – Jesus is the only child who planned His own birth. He was pre-existent (John 1:1,14)
- c. At Bethlehem, He who made man was made man!

2. Indictment of her reputation.

- a. Omnipotence invaded her very reputation, social standing, and romantic dreams of living a happy “typical” lifestyle. (of living in a rose covered, picket fenced, pie in the window carpenter's home in the suburbs of Nazareth)

3. Intrusion on the very well being of her baby - stable M.D.

B. Joseph

1. Indistinguishable origin of the child. Intimacy absent

- a. **Matthew 1:20**, *“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. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from*

their sins.”

2. Indefensible position of his spouse.

- a. **Matthew 1:19**, *“Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.”*
- b. Joseph was a righteous Jew: In taking action to end his betrothal with Mary, he was in the right before the Law (Deut. 22:13ff) But he had a higher standard of concern.
- c. Plans for a conventional Jewish wedding abandoned.

3. Incompatibility of his business affairs.

- a. **Matthew 2:13**, *“Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, ‘Arise and take the Child and His mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him.’”*
- b. What happened to his tools, business? - not even time to settle business affairs.

4. Impending destruction of his child.

- a. Herod = descendant of Esau (Herod was an Idumean). This is a picture of the struggle between Jacob and Esau (spiritual vs. world)

5. [Concerning the flight to Egypt] Joseph had to adjust his concept of a Savior.

- a. If his son were to be the Messiah of Israel, how would going to Egypt help the situation?
- b. If Jesus were to be a deliverer, could He not deliver them from Herod, or any other who raised themselves up to intervene?

6. Inconvenience of his stability. Give up the right to live where he desired.

- a. **Matthew 2:19-23**, "*But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Arise and take the Child and His mother, and go into the land of Israel; for those who sought the Child's life are dead. And he arose and took the Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.' But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he departed for the regions of Galilee, and came and resided in a city called Nazareth, that what was spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.'*"
- b. Archelaus was Herod's son – equally wicked. When he was to be crowned the Jews sent a party to Rome in protest. Caesar Augustus only allowed him to have half of his father's kingdom (Judea)
- c. Remember that Joseph and Mary had already been given gold, frankincense and myrrh by wise men.
- d. If indeed Joseph still had financial independence in his pocket, then we must see that God designed a plan where Jesus was born in animal pen purposely.

C. Shepherds

1. **Interrupt a well deserved night's sleep. Luke 2:15**, "*And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds began saying to one another, 'Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.'"*
2. **Intrude on the new-born baby's family. Luke 2:16,17**, "*And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.¹⁷ And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child.*"
 - a. Mary not ready for visitors?
 - b. Joseph still re-arranging animal stalls.
3. **Involve themselves in telling the news. Luke 2:17,18**, "*And when they had*

*seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. And **all who heard it wondered** at the things which were told them by the shepherds.”*

- a. Told all. Including Joseph and Mary?

4. Indicate the results of seeing the Messiah.

- a. **Luke 2:20**, “*And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.*”
- b. Went back to work with a new attitude – praising God.
 - (1) What they saw was never in doubt, but the sight confirmed that it was true all along.
 - (2) glorifying = δοξαζο, dox-ad'-zo, Greek Stg 1392; from Greek 1391 (δοξα)- to render (or esteem) glorious (in a wide application) (make) glorify (-ious), full of (have) glory, honor, magnify,
 - (3) praising = αινεο, ahee-neh'-o, Greek Stg 134; from Greek 136 (αινοσ), ah'ee-nos, Greek Stg 136; apparently a primary word; properly a story, but used in the sense of Greek 1868 (επαινοσ); praise (of God) :- praise.
- c. Simon and Anna praised Him as well (Luke 2:30)

D. Innkeeper

1. Indigent request

2. Indulgent involvement

3. Inconvenient solution.

- a. Yes, you can deliver your son in the animal shelter.
- b. The fact that there was no room for Him in the inn foreshadows the Jews response to Jesus who "*came into His own*" (John 1: I 1). Now Jesus stands at another door. (Rev. 3:20).

E. Jesus

1. As the first-born He had privilege to inherit all of His father's kingdom.
2. The shepherds were only "on their way to Bethlehem" for several hours, and the wise men for several months, but Jesus had been "on the way to Bethlehem" for all eternity!
3. When Adam sinned in the Garden, Jesus already had His "bags packed" for Bethlehem (Gen 3:15).
4. On that "holy night," when "God reduced Himself to the span of a woman's womb," God came to where we were, that He might finally take us to where He is.
5. This newborn Babe of Bethlehem was the everlasting God come "down from His glory."

II. An Inconvenience

A. Inaugural Request to Mary

1. **Innocence lost.** Give up your reputation to a vision of God.
 - a. ²³ BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN. [παρτηενος, par-then'-os, Greek Stg 3933, of unknown origin; a maiden; by implication an unmarried daughter: - virgin.]
2. **Invaded privacy.** Carry the illegitimate child.
 - a. for that which has been conceived [γενναο, ghen-nah'-o, Greek Stg 1080; from a variation of Greek 1085 (γεννοσ); to procreate (properly of the father, but by extension of the mother); figurative to regenerate: - bear, beget, be born, bring forth, conceive, be delivered of, gender, make, sprig.] in her is of the Holy Spirit [ηαγιοσ, hag'-ee-os, Greek Stg 40; from hagos (an awful thing) [compare Greek 53 (ηαγνοσ), Hebrew 2282 (*chag*)], sacred (physical pure, moral blameless or religious, ceremony consecrated) :- (most) holy (one, thing), saint.]

Mary's response:
I am the LORD's handmaiden

B. Inappropriate Response of Joseph


1. **Impeccable integrity observed**
2. **Innate wisdom ignored.** Obey unquestionably God's revealed will.
Matthew 1:24, “Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto, him his wife”
3. **Intuitive instincts obeyed**
 - a. **Matthew 1:25**, “And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.”

Joseph's response:
Joseph rose and did as the angel bid.

C. Incompetent Reputation of the wise men

1. **Do not return and validate their investigative perception.**
 - a. Matthew 2:1,2 Worship – describes the attitude of men before Jesus.
 - b. Jewish priests were within five miles of Jesus and ignored Him. Gentiles sought Him, Jews did not.
 - c. Priests knew Scripture and pointed others to Jesus but did not seek Him. Quoted Micah 5:2 but would not let it influence them.

- d. Star not always visible to magi (2:9). By the time they arrived Joseph had already moved Mary and Jesus to home.
- e. **Matthew 2:7-9**, “*Then Herod secretly called the magi, and ascertained from them the time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, ‘Go and make careful search for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, that I too may come and worship Him.’ And having heard the king, they went their way; and lo, the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them, until it came and stood over where the Child was.*”
- f. Gave gifts = indicated in the ancient East submission and allegiance. Luther (and others) say symbology in gifts: gold (royalty); incense (divinity); myrrh (passion and burial). But they also were the means by which Joseph and Mary would live after their flight.


 The wise men's response:
Fools for Christ



III. An Incentive

A. Incarnate Reality

1. **God revealed in flesh. Philippians 2:5-7**, “*Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 'but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.*”
 - a. The God-man as God >
 - >1 John 11:32-36 (wept), 41-46 (rise)
 - b. The God-man as Man>
 - c. Jesus = “Savior” from Hebrew Joshua [Jehovah is salvation] – HUMAN NAME

- d. Christ = “Anointed” – Greek equivalent of Messiah – OFFICIAL TITLE
- e. Immanuel = “god with us” – WHO HE IS

"It seems to me that since the "Fall,"
without even thinking it odd,
That man has had no trouble at all,
Believing that he can be God.

How he would do this I cannot conceive,
Tho' he certainly thinks he can;
And yet, he cannot bring himself to believe,
That God can become ... a man."
Johnny Heart (BC Comic strip)

Two things He was unable to do as God:

1. Be tempted by Satan - Heb 4:14-16
2. Die

DID ANYONE ACKNOWLEDGE HIS KINGSHIP?

YES!!! THE MAGI (GENTILES)

2. **God revealed as faithful** (kept His promise) – **Matthew 1:22** “*Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, '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.'*”
 - a. If only 50 prophecies in the O.T. (instead of 333) the law of probabilities dictates that the probability of chance fulfillment is 1 in 1, 125,000,000,000,000 (trillion).
 - b. Isaiah 7:14 - Savior to be born of a virgin (parthenos) girl
 - c. Hosea 1 1: I - Sojourn in Egypt

- d. Isaiah 9:1-2 Live in Galilee
- e. Isaiah 1:1 - Live in Nazareth
- f. Jeremiah - 31:15 - Massacre in Bethlehem (Mat 2:16)
- g. Isaiah 53:4 Healing ministry
- h. Psalm 78:2 - Teach in parables
- i. Zechariah 11: 12 - Betrayed by disciple
- j. Zechariah 13:7 - Be smitten
- k. Isaiah 53:12 - Die between two thieves
- l. Psalm 34:20 - Side pierced
- m. Hosea 6:2 - Rise third day

Finally, it's the story of the CROWN of a KING. After His Death, Jesus was buried, and rose again from the dead. Then, He ascended to Heaven and today, He occupies a place of sovereignty at God's right hand. Both at the beginning and the end of His earthly life, Jesus was proclaimed to be a King. "Where is He that is born King of the Jews?" the wise men asked. "This is the King of the Jews," read the inscription which Pilate placed over Jesus' head on the cross. He didn't look like a King on either occasion, but those who surrendered to His sovereignty at His Birth and at His Death discovered that He is "King of Kings," and that He will share His reign with those who trust Him. In fact, twice during His public ministry, He was offered a crown; once by Satan during the temptation in the wilderness (Matt. 4) and once by the people when they tried to make Him a monarch by force (John 6).

B. Inbred Righteousness

1. **Christianity is Christ** - if Christ is only a man then Christianity is only a religion.

Camelot (Lerner and Lowe) King Arthur confronted by Lady Gwainevre's (queen) infidelity with Sir Lancelot, Law demanded burning at the stake, but his love was still strong. His son Mordred (illegitimate) speaks, "Arthur what a magnificent dilemma! Let her die, your life is over; let her live and your life is a fraud. which will it be Arthur? Kill the queen or kill the Law?" Arthur - "*I can't!*" Mordred, "Well, you're human after all aren't you Arthur!" "**Human and helpless**"

C. Incarnate Revelation

1. It is He that we should have devotion for - (2 Cor. 11:3) - The basics - back to the basics.

2. Christ came to us as the Word, to assure us that God wants to communicate to us. He cares so much about creation that He wants to reveal Himself on the most intimate level possible. HE CARES
3. Christ came as a light which illuminates the darkness of our understanding, It is through His example that we gain the richest insight into how we best can live our lives.
4. Christ comes in the flesh & blood, just as we are flesh and blood. Christ wasn't just some illusion of deity, or an academic concept, or a cold belief system with which we would have had a different time identifying.