

UNTO US A CHILD IS BORN **Text: Matthew 2:1-18** —Bill Turner

10 Amazing Facts About the Birth of Christ

- 1. A child w/ only 33 years to live is being hunted by armed soldiers w/ orders to kill**
 - a. The child's name, unknown to them, is Jesus...
 - b. The Tyrant who orders the slaughter of the innocents is so Obsessed w/ power
He will even kill children to Keep It
 - 2. So Herod stands on his balcony overlooking Jerusalem and awaits confirmation that this newborn king is dead...**

—Why is This Child a Threat? —Why are Assassins Hunting down a Child?
 - 3. This is part of the greatest story ever told / from the greatest book ever written...
/ of the Greatest Love Ever Given / and the greatest war ever waged...**
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10 AMAZING FACTS ABOUT THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

(1) THE BIRTH OF JESUS WAS PROPHESED CENTURIES BEFORE

- 1. (Isaiah 9:6) For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given...**
 - a) Notice this Prophecy!
 - b) How can a child be called Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace?
- 2. (Isaiah 7:14) The Lord would give you a sign: a Son, born of a Virgin who would be called Emmanuel ...**
- 3. There was a time when skeptics claimed the prophecies of Jesus were modified to fit the NT record...**
- 4. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1946 blew that theory up**
 - a) These O.T. Hebrew manuscripts were discovered buried in the caves of Qumran and had been written long before the birth of Jesus.
 - b) Physical Forensic Evidence that every one of the 750+ prophecies were written and recorded over 2 centuries before Jesus was born.
- 5. The Birth of Christ Fulfilled these prophecies in every detail—and the world has never been the same since! (Matthew 1:20–23)**

(2) A ROMAN EMPEROR HELPED FULFILL A PROPHECY

- 1. One of the many messianic prophecies actually named the small village Jesus would be born in (Micah 5:2).**
- 2. How interesting that at the very timing of Jesus birth—the most powerful man in the world gave an empire wide decree to make it happen!**
- 3. Caesar Augustus gave an Empire wide decree to fulfilled a centuries old prophecy! (Luke 2:1-5)**
- 4. God moved Heaven and Earth for Jesus to be born...**
 - a) —and you think these world leaders are in control? THINK AGAIN!

(3) THERE WAS NO ROOM FOR THE KING OF KINGS

1. **Due to the Emperors decree for a census across the entire empire, there was no room or lodging for the King of Kings to be born! (Luke 2:4-7)**
 - a) **Greek:** “A stall, a stable for animals”. **O.T. Hebrew.** “crib, or feed trough for animals”
2. **Think of this Divine Humility—that Jesus Left the Glory of Heaven...**
 - a) Not as an Angel—but as a child!
 - b) not in a palace with riches—but in a Manger with animals!
 - c) Not in Glory—but in Humility!

(4) MYSTERIOUS MAGI GUIDED BY A STAR FIND THE NEWBORN KING

1. **When Alexander the great was approaching Jerusalem to destroy it, he received a delegation of priests from Jerusalem...**
 - a) Showing Him a scroll of Daniel—Alexander the Great Read About Himself in Bible!
2. **When Jesus arrives he did not get a delegation of Priests from Jerusalem, who later rejected Him and tried Him as a criminal...
But Jesus did receive a delegation of Magi, from the east...**
3. **These are Wise Men from the East – Magi as they were called (Matt 2:1–8)**
 - a) We don’t know much of who these men were...
 - b) But We know something of the Magi of the east from the book of Daniel
 - c) Because Daniel was gifted by God to discern dreams and prophesy of future events
 - d) He was appointed as the administrator of the Magi in Babylon and spent the rest of his life in Babylon.
 - e) Daniel may’ve been in his 80’s when he was called to advise the king of the writing on the wall the night Babylon fell to Cyrus the Great of Persia.
 - f) I have No doubt the ancient Magi of Babylon knew the prophesies from Daniel which might explain why these Magi are searching for the Newborn King
 - g) His Prophecy of the 70 weeks pinpointed the time & place of the Messiah! (Dan. 9)
4. **And They Follow a Star... (Matt 2:9–10)**
 - a) Copernicus spent the rest of his life researching the Star of Bethlehem
 - b) Sir Issac Newton researched the Star for decades
 - c) Some believe it was a **Comet**, or a **Conjunction of planets** or possibly a Deep space **Super-Nova** (exploding star).
 - d) But if you line up all the data points given in the text—it points to a miraculous event
 - e) God Guided them for a purpose because the star stood still above Jesus!

(5) THESE MYSTERIOUS MAGI WORSHIPPED THE NEWBORN KING!

1. **The Magi were like scholar priests and advisers to Kings... (Matt 2:9-11)**
 - a) but over time they advanced in status beyond advisors to kings...
 - b) to became king makers who convened to decide who was heir to the throne¹

¹ MAGI, Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible, Tenney, Vol. 4

2. So Imagine these men who held counsel to appoint earthly kings are now humbly worshipping the newborn king!
3. In Ancient Times No One Approached a King without a Gift...
and these 3 gifts carried great spiritual significance...

- a) GOLD: A Gift Fitting for a King
- b) FRANKINCENSE: Gift Fitting for a Priest
- c) MYRRH: A symbolic gift that is used in Burial.

(1) Myrrh was actually used at Jesus burial and was in the tomb when He rose from the dead three days later!

4. All Three Gifts point to Jesus as the Everlasting King and Eternal Priest who has Power Over Life and Death!

(6) JESUS' LIFE WAS IN DANGER AS SOON AS HE WAS BORN

1. Herod was given the official title '*King of the Jews*' by Caesar Augustus
 - a) Now Magi from the east are asking "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." (Mt 2:2)
2. It is hard to imagine a child being a threat to tyrannical world rulers...
—But this is no ordinary Child!
3. The child with only 33 years to live is being hunted... (Matthew 2:12–18)

(7) THE BIRTH OF JESUS WAS AN EXISTENTIAL THREAT TO THE RULERS OF MEN AND THE RULERS OF DARKNESS

1. Notice the conflict in the spiritual realm (Revelation 12:1-5; 7-9; 13-17)
2. The enemy has made war on God's children ever since (Ephesians 6:12)
3. Which is Why God equips us with the Armor of God

(8) THE CREATOR OF SPACE AND TIME ENTERED SPACE AND TIME

1. Not in Power – but in Poverty / Not in a Palace – but in a Manger
/ Not as an Angelic Being – but as a Human Being
2. The Word Became Flesh – Fully Divine and Fully Human (John 1:1-3; 14)
3. Jesus never laid aside His Divine Nature bc He could not deny the Truth
—He laid aside—not His Divine Nature—but his divine privilege.

(9) BIRTH OF CHRIST CHANGED THE COURSE OF HISTORY & ETERNITY

1. Jesus split history & our calendar in 2: The world before, and After Christ
and the world has not been the same since...
2. The world before was fiercely dominated by the Empire of Rome...

"There was oppression—for those who were not friends of the Caesar... what was man for but to serve Cesar? There was persecution of men who dared think differently, who heard strange voices or read strange manuscripts. There was enslavement of men who's tribes came not from Rome, disdain for those who did not have the familiar visage. And most of all there was contempt for human life. What, to the strong, was one man more or less in a crowded world

Then, all of a sudden, there was a light in the world, and a man from Galilee saying, render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. And the voice from Galilee, which would defy Cesar, offered a new kingdom in which man could walk upright and bow to no one but his God... so the Light came into the world and the men who lived in darkness were afraid, and they tried to lower a curtain so that man would still believe that salvation lay with the leaders.

But it came to pass for a while in diverse places that the truth did set men free, although the men of darkness were offended and they tried to put out the Light.²

3. Jesus Changed the Course of History—and the course of Eternity!

To Change YOUR HISTORY and YOUR ETERNITY!

- a) Because of the Way Time Works—You Cannot Change Your Past.
- b) The Events of the Past are Set in Stone or Concrete—
once they are done they cannot be changed.

4. But Because of Jesus Blood shed at the Cross—He Changed Your Past, Your Present and Your Future — by His Grace!

- a) **Your Past** Sins are Forgiven!
- b) **Your Present** Mindset is changed by Hope and strengthened by His Spirit,
- c) **Your Future** is Assured by Remaining in Christ (**Romans 8:1**)

5. Romans 8 Begins with No Condemnation and Ends with No Separation for those in Christ—How can we be in Christ? (Gal 3:26-27**)**

(10) GOD'S LOVE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO EARTH AND MOVED HEAVEN AND EARTH FOR YOU

- 1. He Created the Worlds—but was born in poverty
- 2. He is Eternal—But Entered Time
- 3. He Thirsted—but is the water of life
- 4. He was weary—but He is our Rest
- 5. He Paid Tribute—but He is the King of Kings
- 6. He was sold for 30 pieces of Silver—Yet Redeemed Us from Sin
- 7. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter—Yet He is the Good Shepherd
- 8. He was put to death—Yet He Raises the Dead³

CONCLUSION:

- 1. This is Why Wise Men Still Search for Jesus Today!
- 2. Still Worship Him, Give Gifts to Him,
- 3. Still Listening, Learning and Obeying Him
(**Jeremiah 29:11**)

² Journalist Vermont Royster, 1949, cited in 'Killing Jesus', O'Reilly and Dugard, p.3-4

³ Author unknown, I can't remember where I found this excellent list of contrasts.