

WORD OF THE WEEK

The Subject: Christmas - - Whose birthday is it?

Matthew 2:1-16 -- Jesus was born in Bethlehem -- there came wise men from the east -- saying, where is he that is born king of the Jews? -- Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes -- he demanded of them where Christ should be born -- Herod enquired of them diligently "what time the star appeared" -- the star came and stood over where "the young child" was -- when they were come into "the house", they saw "the young child" -- They presented him with gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. -- Herod slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from "two years old and under", "according to the time which he had diligently enquired" of the wisemen.

Jesus was no longer a babe in a manger when the wise men came. He was a "young child", approximately "two years old", living in a house (not a manger) with his parents. Only the shepherds came to the manger (Luke 2:8-16). Herod enquired of the wise men "what time the star appeared." Then according to that time, he slew all the children "two years old and under" so that he might be sure of slaying the "young child, Jesus". These were not birth or birthday gifts which the wise men brought. They were gifts of worship to a righteous king. Gold signifies purity throughout scripture. Frankincense was a sweet fragrance offered in the sanctuary (Ex. 30:34) with burnt offerings (Lev. 2:1,16) and as an emblem of prayer (Ps. 141:2) it represented the divine name (authority) of God (Mal. 1:11). Myrrh was used to embalm the dead (particularly the body of Christ - John 19:39) and was used along with frankincense as an acceptable sweet savory smell. The death of Jesus is a pure sacrifice. It is a sweet smell and acceptable to the Father. Where did this picture of Mary at the manger with the babe in arms (the nativity) originate? St. Francis of Assisi, a Romanist monk, placed this manger scene (the crèche) into the church. The ancient Madonna (Our Lady, the ruler) and child was worshiped in Babylon as "the mother with babe in arms" 2000 years before the birth of Jesus. This mother and babe was Venus and Cupid at Rome, Isis and Osiris in Egypt, Rhea and Tammuz at Babylon etc. This unresurrected "boy saviour" was called the "eternal boy" in pagan Rome. This is not the Jesus of the Bible who is the living God and by the mouth of Isaiah said, "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images (Isaiah 42:8). He will not share his glory with the Mary of the Bible, who said of Jesus, "My spirit hath rejoiced in God my saviour (Luke 1:47)", Mary was a sinner in need of a saviour. The babe of Christmass is unresurrected. Birthdays celebrate man and are heathen in origin. Only two are recorded in scripture: Pharaohs, where he hanged his butler (Gen. 40:20) and Herods where John the Baptist was beheaded (Mark 6:28). The birth of Christ could not possibly have been in December since the shepherds did not stay in the fields through the first rains which were in mid-October. The winters were bitter cold (Matt. 24:20) and were certainly no time for grazing sheep. This December 25th was, indeed, known far and wide in the ancient world as the very day of the birth of Adonis, the sun god of Babylon.

GRACE AND TRUTH MINISTRIES

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