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intensely specific about dates of events when such are relevant (Genesis 7:13; Exodus 12:41), yet no mention whatsoever is made in Scripture as to the date of Christ's birth. If God wanted this known, He would have revealed it, for *"The secret things belong to Jehovah our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law"* (Deuteronomy 29:29). That He did not inform Christians the day on the calendar that Jesus was born means He does not intend it to be known. God's secrets ought to be respected. Consider that the Almighty never disclosed the burial place of Moses (Deuteronomy 34:6), and, eventually, the archangel and the devil *"disputed about the body of Moses"* (Jude 9). It does not accord with godliness to insist on knowledge God does not want disclosed.

Fact: The Lord was born in Bethlehem. More than seven centuries before Jesus was conceived in Mary's womb, prophecy specified exactly which tiny village He would be born in: *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, 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"* (Micah 5:2). Just as there are over 40 places called "Springfield" in the United States, so Israel had more than one Bethlehem; one in Zebulun (Joshua 19:10-15) and the other in Judah, where King David was from (1st Samuel 17:12). Caesar Augustus ordered a worldwide census, requiring his subjects to register in their ancestral cities, so Joseph and Mary were there when she gave birth (Luke 2:1-5).

Fiction: Joseph and Mary were turned away by an innkeeper. No innkeeper is mentioned in the inspired narrative. Indeed, use of the word *"inn"* is rather imprecise. Jesus went on to use the words *"inn"* and *"innkeeper"* in the story of the good Samaritan (Luke 10:34-35), but neither word appears in the record of His birth. Rather, when Scripture says, *"there was no room for them in the inn"* (Luke 2:7), the Greek word rendered *"inn"* is translated *"guest chamber"* elsewhere in the New Testament (Luke 22:11). It is more likely that some distant relative ran out of spare rooms when everyone related to David descended simultaneously on Bethlehem than that the tiny village even had an inn.

Fact: Shepherds visited the Christ Child the night of His birth. *"There were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night"* (Luke 2:8), who received the angelic announcement (9-14), and decided to go see what they were told

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about. *"When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us'"* (15).

Fiction: Wise men visited Him the same night. Whereas the shepherds of the fields *"came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger"* (Luke 2:16), when the wise men arrived, *"they had come into the house"* (Matthew 2:11), which was a different setting. When these men did not inform King Herod where the King of the Jews was, he *"put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men"* (Matthew 2:16). Herod was not searching for a newborn to slay, but a toddler. The wise men and the shepherds did not visit Jesus together.

Fact: When the wise men visited, they brought Jesus three gifts. *"They saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh"* (Matthew 2:11). Joseph and Mary did not need a crib, a mobile, or a supply of diapers; they needed funds to flee to Egypt and live abroad until Herod the Great was dead (Matthew 2:13-21). Since they sacrificed two turtledoves when Jesus was presented at the temple (Luke 2:22-24), instead of a lamb and a turtledove (Leviticus 12:6-8), it is evident they were poor, so gold and other highly valued items would serve them well as refugees.

Fiction: There were three wise men. Three gifts can be carried by two men, twelve, forty, or seventy. It might have been three, but that is a presumption.

Fiction: The wise men were kings of the Orient. Solomon did foretell that *"The kings of Tarshish and of the isles will bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba will offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before Him; all nations shall serve Him"* (Psalm 72:10-11), but that was a general prophecy about Christ being honored, similar to the description of the New Jerusalem: *"the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into it"* (Revelation 21:24). Solomon's prophecy did not point to the visit by the wise men, who were *"magi"* as the Greek indicates, not kings. Whereas the magi were indeed Oriental, that is *"from the East"* (Matthew 2:1), the kings included in the psalm reigned in Tarshish,

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"WHAT MUST I DO TO BE SAVED?"

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

"THE ASSEMBLING OF OURSELVES TOGETHER"

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

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which was far to the West, and Sheba and Seba, which were points South.

Fiction: Christ's birth demands an annual celebration. Jesus had over three decades to make sure His friends knew His birthday (Luke 3:23), but it is not taught at all in the Word of God. However, before He died, He took care to institute among His disciples a memorial of His death, which included breaking bread to honor His body and drinking fruit of the vine to honor His blood (Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20). This breaking bread, by which Christians commune with Christ's body and blood (1st Corinthians 10:16), merits a weekly observance (Acts 20:7). While His birth is seriously important, its importance rests primarily in the fact that, by assuming a body of flesh and blood, God's own Son was able to suffer and die on behalf of sinful man (Hebrews 2:9, 14). Thus, it is His death that is remembered every Sunday.

GIVE ME THE BIBLE

KDNF 840AM

Sunday @ 9:00 a.m.

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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DECEMBER 7TH, 2025

CHRISTMAS FACT OR FICTION

Bryan Matthew Dockens

While so many are contemplating the incarnation of the Son of God this season, it is appropriate to separate reality from imagination.

Fact: Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. Some seven and a half centuries before Jesus' birth, the prophet foretold, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel"* (Isaiah 7:14). What was anticipated in prophecy became reality: *"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit"* (Matthew 1:18).

Fiction: His mother remained a virgin perpetually. Although Joseph waited to consummate his marriage to Mary until after she had delivered Jesus, they did enjoy conjugal benefits. *"Joseph... did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son"* (Matthew 1:24-25). Jesus had four brothers and not less than two sisters (Mark 6:3), so it is known his mother and step-father did their part to *"be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth"* (Genesis 1:28). If they had continued in abstinence after marrying, they would have sinfully tempted one another (1st Corinthians 7:2-5), which is contrary to the stated character of each, Joseph being *"a just man"* (Matthew 1:19) and Mary being *"highly favored"* of the Lord (Luke 1:28).

Fiction: He was born on December 25th. The Holy Spirit can be – Continued on page 2 –

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