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The Three Wise Men (Ken Walston – Kenna Outreach Ministries)

The myth and legend regarding the Three Wise Men, who came to see and worship the infant Yeshua on the night of his birth as the King of the Jews and Mashiach, has been made into a story of Christian Dogma and mistruth, concerning the "Nativity Portrait". The first staging of a Nativity Scene began with St. Francis of Assisi on Christmas Eve in 1223AD. It was strongly endorsed by all Popes ever since, and transcended throughout all Christian faiths as being factual.

The only "Gospel" account of this story is given in the Book of Matthew 2:1-12 (In particular, verses 1 and 11). Verse 1: "Now after Yeshua was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East (Magi) came to Jerusalem, saying, 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." Verse 11: And when they had come into the house, 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.

In Persian or Babylonian culture (which is where these men came out of) the Magi were astrologers, priests or scholars, not kings. It is speculated that two prophecies from the Tanakh (Old Testament) in Isaiah 60:3 and Numbers 24:17 were referring to the fulfillment of the Star announcing His birth and the source for the Magi to be guided to the place of His birth. This was the long-awaited fulfillment of the prophecy for the coming Mashiach. The significance of this Jewish Messiah being born was not only for Israel and the Jewish people, but for every nation and of all mankind. YAHWEH was bringing the promise of redemption and salvation to the whole world through the birth of the Son of God, Yeshua Adonai.

In examining this story closer, we must first notice that in verse 11 it states, "And when they had come into the *house*, they saw the *young child*…" This is significant because the depiction in the traditional story has been, that these three wise men show up right after His birth in a manger or a few days later in the manger as an infant.

Now in the city of Bethlehem in those days, most houses were made with an integrated animal shelter or "stable" area, often a cave or lower level, so that the occupants lived above where they kept the animals. So, it seems that because there was no room for them to occupy a house (or

Inn), He was born in one of the lower-level stables and later moved into an upper-level house. This would account for verse 11 when it says, “into the house”. As well, in mentioning, “they saw the young child”, shows that He was not an infant at the time of their visitation, but in fact a toddler, possibly 1 year to 18 months old. This may also explain why King Herod ordered all male children to be executed up to the age of two years in the vicinity of Bethlehem. This was because Herod had been told by his councilors that His birth had been around the time of the alignment of three planets forming as a bright star which had happened almost 2 years prior. The mythical image of a huge star with a bright vortex shining down on the exact spot where Yeshua was born is not capitulated with any eyewitnesses or documented evidence (Biblical or Roman Text), it’s a made-up contribution to the Wise Men story to give it supernatural essence. Nevertheless, a bright star was still over Bethlehem even as the Magi made their journey into the city which help guide them to the house Yeshua was at.

Another part which makes this a legend is the names that were given to the three Magi: Casper, Melchoir and Balthasar. None of these names or persons are mentioned or found in any Bible Verses or Hebrew Texts. The reference to only three Wise Men, is a myth that got started because only three gifts seemed to have been given, therefore, the assumption was made, that only three men must have been present at the time. In truth and reality, only three men would not have crossed an extreme desert by themselves for over 1000 miles, in a journey that would have taken approximately 2 to 4 months to sojourn. What had been the norm for centuries were caravans, traveling in groups of people for not only protection, but sharing resources. To make this journey would have taken much planning and resources to be stored with a huge number of animals (Camels) carrying all of the tents, food, water and other cultural paraphernalia. So, it would have been a very large caravan indeed. [*It must be noted that the Magi would not have started making plans for their departure and journey to Bethlehem until after they saw the star. This signified the approaching birth or the actual birth of Yeshua*.]

In reality, there would have been more Magi than three (maybe as many as six or seven), and each would have given Him gifts of the three types mentioned. The myth regarding the three Wise Men or Magi, ended up being given by tradition out of a 6th century Armenian Text which also called them kings. The Bible never calls them kings, just that they are Wise Men (Magi) from the East. Nevertheless, legend and tradition hold them to this account and have placed into the dogma that infiltrated the Middle Ages Christian doctrine.

This was at a time when a great upheaval and in-fighting for supremacy to standardize Church Doctrine was in place, and through this, would Canonize both mistranslation and interpretation of any truth to be mixed with this accepted legend. Many areas of the Bible have these kinds of

legends mixed into the stories told which need scrutiny and research before acceptance as truth. It is important that the gentile nations (people), understand the culture of the times in which these stories were written and the implications of their meaning to the cultural setting(s) and then later into the dogma that was being developed within church settings and doctrine.

The Canonization of the Latin Vulgate as the Catholic Church dogma and teachings, versus the Luther Bible in German and the King James Bible in English have mistranslations and interpretation dialects and linguistics between languages, that more legends were being in scripted and passed on, giving a false narrative into Biblical Truth. We are also being indoctrinated by outside texts and documents which do not come from a biblical source being used to justify and bring credibility to some of these legends (such as the story and accountability of the Wise Men).

The other thing that is not widely mentioned or given much attention too, is the order by Caesar Augustus (the Roman Emperor Octavian) and gladly carried out by King Herod for the taking of a empire-wide and national census. This was the reason why Joseph had to go to Bethlehem in the first place, which was where he was born. The census was to be taken at the birthplace of each head of household (Male), so this event would be a total disruption and displacement of thousands of people in order to achieve it. The common Israeli's believed that the decree by Rome was in order to get a better count of the population for tax purposes, but Herod had a much more sinister purpose behind it. He was searching out for the Messiah, whom he was told was somewhere already in Judea. Herod thinking that this person was already an adult, knew where the Messiah would be born according the Prophet Micah, Bethlehem Ephrathah (Micah 5:2), so he had spy's alerted in Jerusalem and at the gate leading down to the city of Bethlehem, looking for suspicious characters, possibly meeting the Messiah's profile and have him arrested. But, to his dismay, after encountering the Magi and learning that they were looking for a child who had just recently been born, his focus had to move immediately towards Bethlehem. Considering that such a census would have taken a year to organize and actually have started, Joseph, Mary and the baby Yeshua would have stayed in Bethlehem until they could register for it.

As well, regarding an Angelic Being coming to Joseph in a dream and telling him to take the young child and his mother and flee to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15), was given into the myth that it was right after His birth, which was not the case. In both verses 13 and 14 Yeshua is referred to as a "young child" and not a baby or infant. This verifies what the Magi found Him to be, which was a young child, living in a house, and not an infant in a manger. Myths and legends are hard to break when the religious zealots demand that millions believe something that is considered "The Infallible Word of God", and to not do so, is viewed as blasphemous and will conjure up the Wrath of God against you, It's Fear not Faith that always controls the masses.