

A Scriptural Walk Through The Nativity – or Tim Ruins Christmas



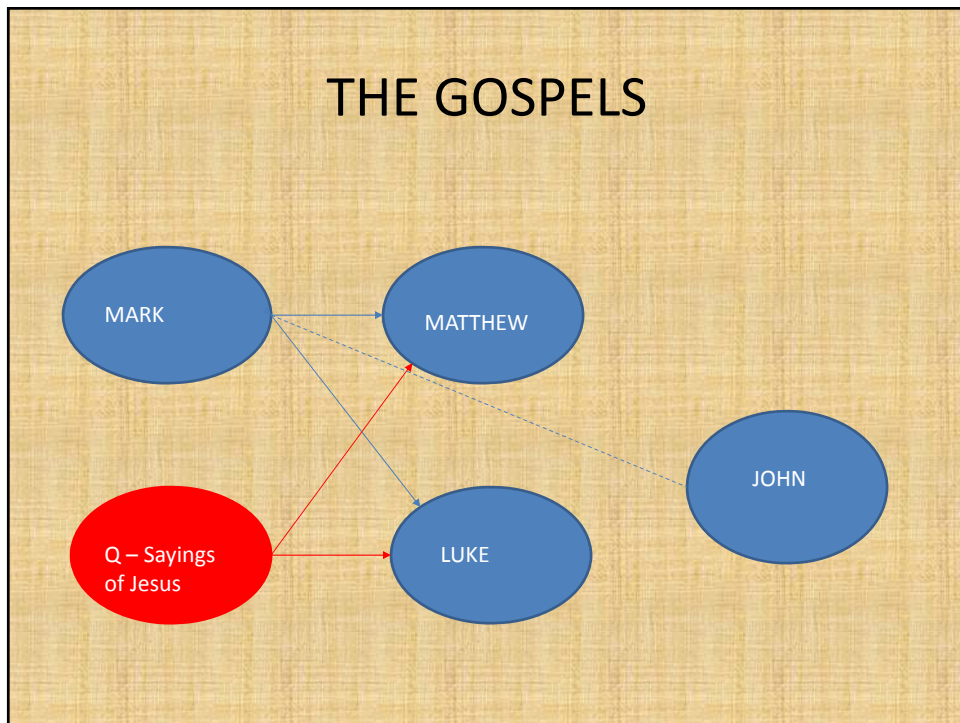
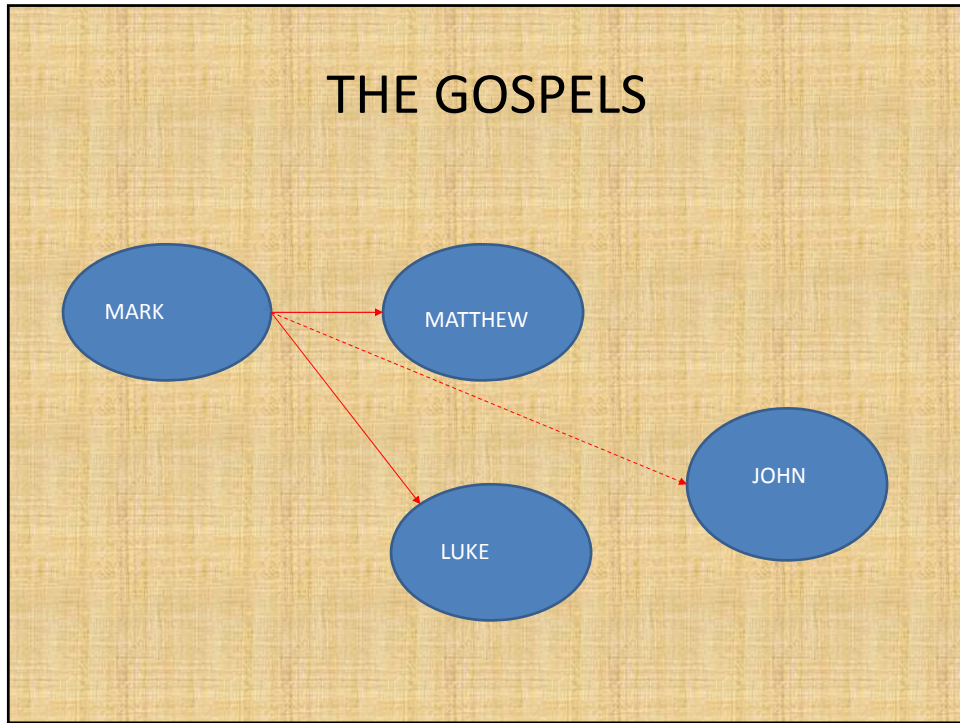
THE GOSPELS

MARK

MATTHEW

LUKE

JOHN



MATTHEW, LUKE AND Q

“This is how you are to pray:

Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come, your
 will be done, on earth as in
 heaven. Give us today our
 daily bread; and forgive us
 our debts, as we forgive our
 debtors; and do not subject
 us to the final test, but
 deliver us from the evil one.

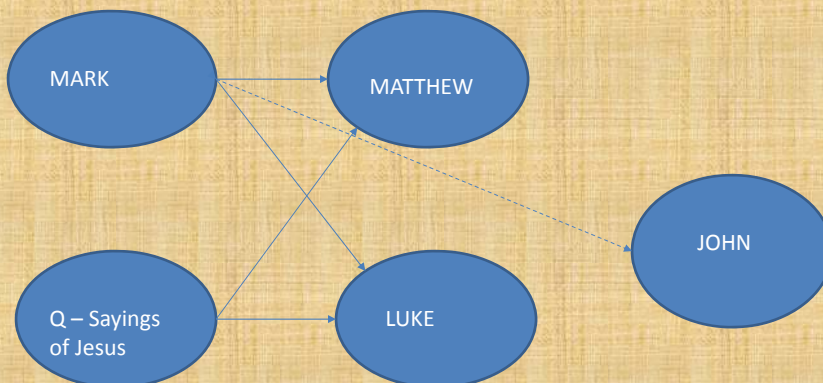
Matthew 6:9-13

He said to them, “When you
 pray, say:

Father, hallowed be your
 name, your kingdom come.
 Give us each day our daily
 bread and forgive us our sins
 for we ourselves forgive
 everyone in debt to us, and
 do not subject us to the final
 test. Luke 11:2-4

THE GOSPELS

Hebrew Scriptures



The Christmas Story

Which Gospels include narratives of the birth of Jesus?

- A. Matthew
- B. Mark
- C. Luke
- D. John

The Christmas Story

Which Gospels include narratives of the birth of Jesus?

- A. Matthew
- B. Mark
- C. Luke
- D. John

The Christmas Story

An Angel appears to Joseph to tell him of the impending birth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

An Angel appears to Joseph to tell him of the impending birth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

An Angel appears to Mary to tell her of the impending birth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

An Angel appears to Mary to tell her of the impending birth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Joseph and Mary live in Galilee, in the town of Nazareth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Joseph and Mary live in Galilee, in the town of Nazareth

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Jesus is born in Judea, in Bethlehem

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Jesus is born in Judea, in Bethlehem

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

At the time of Jesus' birth, Mary was a virgin

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

At the time of Jesus' birth, Mary was a virgin

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Jesus was born in a stable/cave surrounded by animals

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Jesus was born in a stable/cave surrounded by animals

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

The baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

The baby Jesus was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

The birth of Jesus was announced to nearby shepherds who visited the infant

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

The birth of Jesus was announced to nearby shepherds who visited the infant

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Three wise men came from the east to pay homage to the infant Jesus

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Three wise men came from the east to pay homage to the infant Jesus

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Magi from the east pay homage to the infant Jesus lying in the manger

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Magi from the east pay homage to the infant Jesus lying in the manger

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

King Herod plots to kill Jesus, so Jesus' parents escape with him to Egypt

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

King Herod plots to kill Jesus, so Jesus' parents escape with him to Egypt

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Joseph and Mary return with Jesus to Nazareth by way of Jerusalem

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

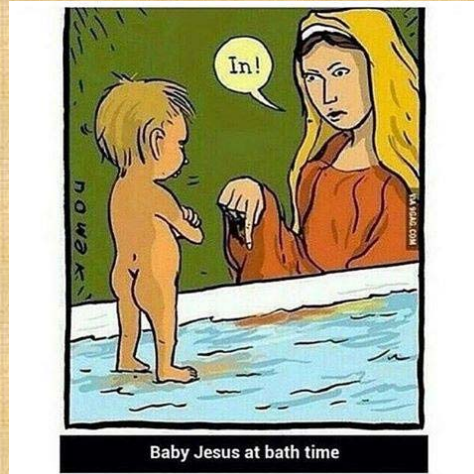
Joseph and Mary return with Jesus to Nazareth by way of Jerusalem

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither

The Christmas Story

Mary learns the ins and outs of raising a child with “special needs”

- A. Matthew
- B. Luke
- C. Both
- D. Neither



True or False?

In the New Testament, the gospels present a life of Christ or a historical Biography of Christ.

In the New Testament, the gospels present a life of Christ or a historical Biography of Christ.

FALSE. Written to various Christian communities to:

- convey the good news of salvation
- instruct them on how to conduct themselves in the way of Christ.

The Nativity – Story or Stories?



How do we approach the Gospels?

From the results of the new investigations it is apparent that the **doctrine and the life of Jesus were not simply reported** for the sole purpose of being remembered, but **were "preached" so as to offer the Church a basis of faith and of morals**. The interpreter (then), by tirelessly scrutinizing the testimony of the Evangelists, will be able to illustrate more profoundly the perennial **theological value of the Gospels** and bring out clearly how necessary and important the Church's interpretation is.

- "Instruction Concerning the Historical Truth of the Gospels", Pontifical Biblical Commission (April 21, 1964)

How do we approach the Gospels?

- The Gospels come from Apostolic **preaching**
- The earliest point of Apostolic preaching is **salvation**
- Salvation comes from **Jesus' death and resurrection**
- To that core message **sayings and healings** are added, often colored with allusions to Hebrew Scripture
- The gospels work **back** from the passion/death/resurrection, not towards them

Paul's Proto-Creed mid 50s

For **I handed on to you** as of first importance what I also received: that **Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the scriptures; that **he was buried**; that **he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the scriptures; that **he appeared** to Cephas, then to the Twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at once, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. After that he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one born abnormally, he appeared to me.

1 Corinthians 15:3-8



The Gospel of Mark



- Mark 1:1

“The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the son of God”

Christology – Who Jesus Is

Jesus the son of Joseph

- Is he not the carpenter, the son of Mary, and the brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? And are not his sisters here with us? (Mark 6:3)
- And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter said to him in reply, "You are the Messiah." Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him. (Mark 8:29-30)
- **Arianism** - denies that the Son is of one essence, nature, or substance with God

Jesus the son of God

- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. (John 1:1)
- Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, before Abraham came to be, I AM. (John 8: 58)
- **Docetism** - teaches that Christ only "appeared" or "seemed to be a man, to have been born, to have lived and suffered

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



• At the end of time

Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away, and that the Lord may grant you times of refreshment and **send you the Messiah** already appointed for you, Jesus, **whom heaven must receive until the times of universal restoration** of which God spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old. Acts 3:19-22

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



- At the end of time
- **At the resurrection**
The God of our ancestors raised Jesus, though you had him killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as leader and savior to grant Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins.
Acts 5:30-31

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



- At the end of time
- At the resurrection
- **At the baptism**
And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1:11

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



- At the end of time
- At the resurrection
- At the baptism
- **At the Incarnation**
Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, Luke 1:30-32

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



- At the end of time
- At the resurrection
- At the baptism
- At the Incarnation
- **At the beginning of time**
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son John 1:1, 14

When does Jesus, Son of Joseph become Jesus, Son of God?



- At the end of time
Acts 3:19-22
- At the resurrection
Acts 5:30-31
- At the baptism
Mark 1:11
- At the Incarnation
Luke 1:30-32
- At the beginning of time
John 1:1, 14

What are Jesus' final words?



- And at three o'clock Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which is translated, "**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**" Jesus gave a loud cry and breathed his last. Mark 15:34,37 Matthew 27:46, 50
- Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "**Father, into your hands I commend my spirit**"; and when he had said this he breathed his last. Luke 23:46
- When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, "**It is finished.**" And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit. John 19:30

Common Gospel Theme



- The Good News is proclaimed
- The proclamation leads to a two-fold response:
 - Some believe and come to worship
 - Some reject both the message and the preachers

The Nativity Stories as Gospel



The Nativity Stories as Gospel

- 1. Read one of the passages from Matthew on the left and the corresponding passage from Hebrew Scriptures on the right.
- 2. Identify and list points of similarity between the passages, discuss among your table.
- 3. How do the passages from Matthew illustrate the Gospel theme of proclamation and two-fold response?

The Nativity Stories as Gospel

The Story of the Magi

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come to do him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet:

"And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel."

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the child. When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage." After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

Matthew 2

At that time Balaam, was king of Moab; and he sent messengers to Balaam, in the land of the Ammonites, to summon him with these words, "A people has come out of Egypt! They have covered up the earth and are settling down opposite me! Now come, curse this people for me, for I know that whoever you bless is blessed and whoever you curse is cursed." So the elders of Moab and the elders of Midian, themselves experts in divination, left and went to Balaam, to whom they gave Balaam's message.

The LORD put an utterance in Balaam's mouth, and said: Go back to Balak, and speak accordingly. So he went back to Balak, and said:

Balak has led me here, from the mountains of Qedem: (eastern mountains) saying "Come, curse for me Jacob, come, denounce Israel." How can I lay a curse on the one whom God has not cursed? How denounce the one whom the LORD has not denounced?

The oracle of one who hears what God says, and knows what the Most High knows, of one who sees what the Almighty sees, in rapture and with eyes unveiled.

I see him, though not now; I observe him, though not near: A star shall advance from Jacob, and a scepter shall rise from Israel, That will crush the brows of Moab, and the skull of all the Settlers, Edom will be dispossessed, and no survivor is left in Seir; Israel will act boldly, and Jacob will rule his foes.

Numbers 22, 23, 24 (selected verses)

The Nativity Stories as Gospel

The Flight to Egypt

When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him." Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophets might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet:

"A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more."

When Herod had died, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." He rose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there. And because he had been warned in a dream, he departed for the region of Galilee. He went and dwelt in a town called Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled, "He shall be called a Nazorean."

Matthew 2

One of the sacred scribes told the king [of Egypt], that a child would be born to the Israelites, who, if he were reared, would bring the Egyptian dominion low, and would raise the Israelites; that he would excel all men in virtue, and obtain a glory that would be remembered through all ages. Which thing was so feared by the king, that he commanded that they should cast every male child, which was born to the Israelites, into the river, and destroy it; that besides this, the Egyptian midwives should watch the labors of the Hebrew women, and observe what is born.

A man whose name was Amram, his wife being then with child, betook himself to prayer to God; Accordingly God had mercy on him, and was moved by his supplication. He stood by him in his sleep, said "Know that I shall provide for you all in common what is for your good, for that child, on whose account the Egyptians have doomed the Israelite children to destruction, shall be this child of yours, and shall be concealed from those who watch to destroy him; and when he is brought up in a surprising way, he shall deliver the Hebrew nation from the distress they are under from the Egyptians. His memory shall be famous while the world lasts; and this not only among the Hebrews, but foreigners also.

Amram's wife bore a son and hid him for three months. But when she could no longer hide him, she took a papyrus basket, daubed it with bitumen and pitch, and putting the child in it, placed it among the reeds on the bank of the Nile. Then Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe at the Nile, while her attendants walked along the bank of the Nile. Noticing the basket among the reeds, she sent her handmaid to fetch it. On opening it, she looked, and there was a baby boy crying! She was moved with pity for him and said, go and summon a Hebrew woman to nurse the child. So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses; for she said, "I drew him out of the water.

Exodus 2, Josephus' Antiquities of the Jews

The Nativity Stories as Gospel

- There is no evidence that Matthew and Luke knew about each other's gospels
- There is strong evidence that Matthew and Luke had common sources (Mark, Q) and independent sources (Oral Tradition)
- There is nothing of Mark or Q in either birth narrative

The Nativity Stories as Gospel

- Both birth narratives are deeply influenced by Hebrew Scriptures, both in common elements (Bethlehem, Virgin Conception) and in unique elements (Gentile sages, similarity to birth of Moses)
- Both narratives use the context of Jesus' birth to convey the core Gospel message of Salvation and to "move the Christ moment" back in time at least to the time of Jesus' birth
- In doing so, the Evangelists shed further light on the answer to the question that so plagued Herod Antipas: "Who then is this about whom I hear such things?" Luke 9:9