

**How many years ago was Jesus born?**

**what if it was year 10 cause you were so important and special that the whole wide world counted time after you? Doesn't that prove that Jesus is King of the world?**

Today we are going to talk about how important it is to know and read your Bibles so that you will not be surprised when prophecy comes true and you will be able to see through lies and be wise and follow the way of Jesus and not the way of the world. We will see how a young woman, who knew her Bible was able to be part of the greatest miracle of Christmas.

A young woman named Mary lived in a town called Nazareth.

One day, an angel named Gabriel came to her with amazing news:

**How many times is Gabriel mentioned in the Bible?**

*Gabriel is mentioned by name four times in the Bible: twice in the Old Testament book of Daniel and twice in the New Testament book of Luke. He appears to Daniel to explain his visions and to Zechariah and the Virgin Mary to announce the births of John the Baptist and Jesus, respectively.*

- *Daniel 8:16: Gabriel is sent to Daniel to explain his vision of a ram and a he-goat.*
- *Daniel 9:21-27: Gabriel appears to Daniel again to deliver the prophecy of the "seventy weeks" concerning the coming of the Messiah.*
- *Luke 1:11-20: Gabriel appears to the priest Zechariah to announce that his wife Elizabeth will have a son, John the Baptist.*
- *Luke 1:26-38: Gabriel appears to the Virgin Mary to tell her that she will conceive and give birth to the son of God, Jesus.*

Mary was going to have a special baby boy, and his name would be Jesus. The angel said Jesus was God's Son and would be the Savior of the world!

Mary was surprised but very happy. She was married to a good man named Joseph, who worked with wood. Joseph loved Mary and decided to help her take care of the baby.

**Did people in Mary's time have a BIBLE?**

**What type of Bible did they have?**

**When Mary got the news from Gabriel did this news surprise her?**

Yes, Mary was well-taught and knowledgeable in Old Testament prophecies, she knew her Bible, and she understood God's faithfulness and the details of the promised Messiah,

God's wisdom and his perfect plan, preparing her to accept Jesus as the fulfillment of **Isaiah 7:14**

Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

and other prophecies,

- Birthplace:  
Micah 5:2 foretold that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem, even though it was a small town, a prophecy fulfilled when Joseph and Mary traveled to Bethlehem for a census.
- Lineage:  
The prophecies predicted the Messiah would be a descendant of King David. The angel Gabriel told Mary that Jesus would inherit the throne of his father David and reign forever.
- Title and role:  
Isaiah 9:6-7 named the coming child as "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace," and stated he would govern with justice and peace. This prophesied a king and a savior, a role Jesus would fulfill through his death and resurrection

### **Evidence of Mary's Prophetic Understanding:**

The Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55):

This song, spoken by Mary to Elizabeth, directly parallels Hannah's prayer of praise in 1 Samuel 2,

**Mary Praises God**

**46 Then Mary said,**

**“My soul praises the Lord;**

**47 my heart is happy because God is my Savior.**

**48 I am not important, but God has shown his care for**

**me, his servant girl.**

**From now on, all people will say that I am blessed,**

**49 because the Powerful One has done great things**

**for me.**

**His name is holy.**

**50 God will always give mercy**

**to those who worship him.**

**51 God’s arm is strong.**

**He scatters the people who are proud**

**and think great things about themselves.**

**52 God brings down rulers from their thrones,**

**and he raises up the humble.**

**53 God fills the hungry with good things,**

**but he sends the rich away with nothing.**

**54 God has helped his people Israel who serve him.**

**He gave them his mercy.**

**55 God has done what he promised to our ancestors,**

**to Abraham and to his children forever.”**

## Hannah's Prayer

“The Lord has filled my heart with joy.  
I feel very strong in the Lord.  
I can laugh at my enemies.  
I am glad because you have helped  
me!

<sup>2</sup>“There is no one holy like the Lord.  
There is no God but you.  
There is no Rock like our God.  
<sup>3</sup>“Don’t continue bragging.  
Don’t speak proud words.  
The Lord is a God who knows  
everything.

He judges what people do.  
<sup>4</sup>“The bows of warriors break,  
but weak people become strong.  
<sup>5</sup>Those who once had plenty of food  
now must work for food.  
But people who once were hungry  
now grow fat on food.

The woman who was unable to have  
children now has had seven.  
But the woman who had many sons  
now is sad.

<sup>6</sup>“The Lord causes people to die,  
and he causes them to live.  
He brings people down to where the  
dead are,  
and he raises them to life again.

7 The Lord makes people poor,  
and he makes people rich.  
He makes people humble,  
and he makes people great.

8 The Lord raises the poor up from  
the dust.  
And he picks needy people up  
from the ashes.  
He lets the poor sit with princes.  
He lets them sit on a throne of  
honor.

“The foundations of the earth  
belong to the Lord.  
The Lord set the world upon them.  
9 He protects his holy people.  
But those who do evil will be  
silenced in darkness.  
Their power will not help them  
win.

10 The Lord destroys his enemies.  
He will thunder in heaven against  
them.  
The Lord will judge all the earth.  
He will give power to his king.  
He will make his appointed king  
strong.”

Mary's song demonstrated her deep knowledge of Scripture and God's pattern of exalting the humble and scattering the proud.

Recognition of God's Covenant: Her words reflect an understanding of God's faithfulness to His covenant promises to Israel, as seen in verses like Luke 1:50-55.

Focus on God's Deliverance:

Mary recognized that Jesus' birth fulfilled long-promised deliverance and salvation, a central theme in Jewish prophecy.

Around that time, the government made a new rule that everyone had to travel to the town where their families came from to be counted for a census.

the purpose of the census in Luke 2 was to make everyone, like Joseph and Mary, travel to their family's hometown (Joseph's family was from Bethlehem - **what King from the Old Testament was from Bethlehem?**) Yes, King David was from Bethlehem; **2 Samuel 7:12-16**

<sup>12</sup> “Your days will come to an end, and you will die. At that time I will make one of your sons the next king. <sup>13</sup> He will build a temple for me. I will make his kingdom strong forever. <sup>14</sup> I will be his father, and he will be my son. When he sins, I will use other people to punish him. They will be my whips. <sup>15</sup> But I will not stop loving him. I took away my love and kindness from Saul. I removed Saul when I turned to you. <sup>16</sup> But your family and your kingdom will continue forever before me. Your rule will last forever.”

Yes, traditional Christian belief, supported by Gospel accounts in Luke and interpretations of Matthew, holds that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was a descendant of King David, tracing her lineage through David's son Nathan to fulfill Messianic prophecies that the Messiah would come from David's royal line. While Matthew traces Joseph's line through Solomon for legal purposes, Luke traces Mary's biological line through Nathan, connecting Jesus to David on both sides, as Mary and Joseph were distant cousins

Nathan was a son of King David and Bathsheba, an older brother to Solomon, important in the lineage of Jesus Christ (especially in Luke's genealogy), and potentially the ancestor of the prophet Nathan who advised David; he's known for being in the royal line, a significant figure in Messianic prophecy, and distinct from the influential court prophet Nathan who was also a key advisor to David.

### Nathan, Son of David

- Family:
- Born to David and Bathsheba in Jerusalem, he was one of several sons, including Solomon, Shammua, and Shobab.

Census - to be counted by the Roman government for taxes and records, which led them to Bethlehem, the ancient city of King David, setting the stage for Jesus's birth exactly where the prophets said the Messiah would be born. It shows **how God used an everyday government event to fulfill his bigger plan for Jesus.**

Joseph and Mary had to go to a town called Bethlehem, which was a long way from Nazareth. The journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem normally was only 4 days, but because Mary was 9 months pregnant, it probably took about one week. Plus, they had to avoid dredged Samaria....



By the time they got to Bethlehem, it was crowded, and there was nowhere for them to stay. All the inns (like small hotels) were full.

Finally, someone let them stay in a stable, which is a barn for animals. It was a little smelly, with cows and sheep and hay, but it was a safe place. That very night, the special baby was born!

Mary wrapped him snugly in soft cloths and gently laid him in a manger, which was the animals' feeding box, used as a little bed.

Out in the nearby fields, some shepherds were watching over their sheep at night. Suddenly, a bright, shining angel appeared!

The shepherds were very scared, but the angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have wonderful news for everyone! Today in Bethlehem, a Savior has been born. He is Christ the Lord!"

Then, lots of other angels appeared, filling the sky with light and singing praises to God. When the angels left, the excited shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem right now and see this amazing baby!"

They hurried to the stable and found Mary and Joseph and baby Jesus, just like the angel had said. The shepherds were so happy that they told everyone they saw about the baby king, and everyone who heard the story was amazed.

What about the Wise Men (also called Magi)? Does this part of history ever baffle you?

who studied the stars saw a brand new, very bright star in the sky. They knew this star meant a great new king had been born. They decided to follow the star to find the baby and bring him special gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The star led them all the way to where baby Jesus was.

The birth of Jesus was a wonderful gift from God to the whole world, a sign of hope and love.



The Star of Bethlehem is described in Matthew 2:1-12, where it guides the Magi (wise men) to Jesus in Bethlehem, but it's often linked to Old Testament prophecies, primarily Numbers 24:17: "A star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel," foretelling a ruler from Israel. While Matthew doesn't directly quote Numbers, the star's appearance fulfills the theme of a royal sign, connecting to other Messianic prophecies like Micah 5:2 (predicting the Messiah's birthplace in Bethlehem) and suggesting a celestial sign for the Messiah's arrival.

The Bible does not specify the exact origin of the Magi, but states they came from "the East," which most scholars interpret as being from lands like Persia (modern-day Iran), Babylonia (modern-day Iraq), or Arabia. These wise men were likely astrologers who studied the stars and may have learned of the prophecy of the Messiah from Jewish scriptures.

- **Babylonia:** Some scholars argue for a Babylonian origin because of the strong tradition of astronomy and astrology in ancient Mesopotamia. The Jewish prophet Daniel also held a high position in the Babylonian court centuries earlier, which could have made a Babylonian connection likely.

Herod's Decree: King Herod, based on the time the Magi reported first seeing the star, ordered the killing of all male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding area who were two years old and under. This suggests a significant amount of time had passed since the star's initial appearance and their arrival.

The Purification Offering: According to the Law of Moses, Mary and Joseph were required to make a purification offering 40 days after Jesus' birth.

They offered **two turtledoves**, the offering for **the poor**, rather than a lamb, which they would have been able to afford if they had already received the Magi's valuable gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. This indicates the Magi arrived after the presentation in the temple.

The total value of the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh in today's money is estimated to be between one and several million dollars, depending on the assumptions made about the quantity of the gifts.

While the exact quantity of each gift is not specified in the Bible, a common assumption is that each wise man presented a typical gift befitting a king, often a chest containing around 50 pounds of the material.

Based on this, the estimated values are as follows:

**Gold:** At today's prices, a 50-pound (approx. 750 troy ounces) chest of gold would be worth over a million dollars (around \$1.25 million based on 2023 prices).

**Frankincense:** In the ancient world, frankincense was extremely valuable, estimated at around \$500 per pound in today's equivalent purchasing power. Today, its market value has declined significantly, to roughly \$15–\$42 per pound of resin.

**Myrrh:** Myrrh was even more valuable than frankincense and gold at the time, with an estimated ancient value equivalent to \$4,000 per pound today. Like frankincense, its modern market price is much lower, around \$15–\$37 per pound of resin.

wow - the gifts provided significant wealth for Joseph and Mary, which could easily pay for their escape to Egypt when the angel told them to escape Herod's plot to kill Jesus and provided for the family for many years.