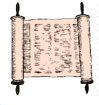




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# MANGER SCENE CONFUSION

*Every year in November and December, the world becomes excited about December 25<sup>th</sup> and the supposed birth of the Savior. All kinds of Christmas decorations will be exhibited until well after the event. One of the more popular exhibits will be the manger scene depicting an adoring Mary, Joseph, shepherds, angels, kings (magi), animals, all gathered around a little baby in a manger. A quick check of the Scriptures written about this event will begin to confuse a person if they look into those writings too carefully. What is the real truth of the matter?*

*By Jerry Healan*

Your news media, along with the clergy will excitedly proclaim it even though they will also admit that the Savior wasn't really even born on this date. Does it matter? Didn't the Savior, Himself, proclaim that the Yahweh is spirit and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth? (Jn. 4:24)

The Scriptures reveal that there is a great deceiver in the world, and he is very subtle. How does one deceive? Through lies, falsehoods, confusion, of course! Even though more and more people are becoming skeptical concerning there even being a Creator Elohim, and the viability of the Scriptures because of the teachings of science concerning evolution, etc., there are still myriads of people who at least go through the ritual of Christmas observance along with its manger scenes, and other practices. After all, the merchants still need Christmas sales to keep their sales records in the black.

The serpent has even long ago had to admit that the Savior was born into the world, but being the master of deception that he is, he causes man to put together a manger scene, and Christmas plays of confusion in

order to keep the people focused on physical things rather than the powerful spiritual truths, and lessons that are contained in the Scriptures.

## THE MANGER

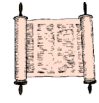
What is the spiritual lesson concerning the manger? I am sure that there are more lessons than I will be able to bring out here, but I do hope that I can at least bring some of the truth forth.

In Luke chapter two, Miriam, Yahshua's mother brings him forth, wraps him in swaddling clothes and places Him in a manger. (v. 7) What is a manger? Isn't it a crib where farmers place food for their animals? What was the purpose for Yahshua to be placed in a manger? For Yahweh, nothing is without purpose or reason. There is a purpose and reason for everything that He does.

Isn't it interesting that Yahshua was born in Bethlehem, Judah? Bethlehem is a combination of two Hebrew words *bayith* (house, tent, temple, family) and *lechem* (bread). Yahshua told the people of His day that He is the true bread from heaven, "33For the bread of Elohim is he which cometh down



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from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

<sup>34</sup> Then said they unto him, Master, evermore give us this bread. <sup>35</sup> And Yahshua said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst....<sup>48</sup> I am that bread of life. <sup>49</sup> Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. <sup>50</sup> This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. <sup>51</sup> I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world," Jn. 6:33-35, 48-51.

The true bread from heaven was born in Bethlehem, the house, tent, temple, family of bread!

Yahshua called His followers His sheep, "Then said Yahshua unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of **the sheep**....I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for **the sheep**," Jn. 10:7, 11.

Thus, the true bread from heaven was born in the house of bread and placed in a manger which is a crib for fodder, or food for animals. He came to provide food, bread for His sheep.

Are you beginning to see some of the hidden things that should be searched out and addressed rather than focusing on a corrupted, physical manger scene?

### THE DOOR

In the above verses, Yahshua proclaims that He is the door. He was born in Bethlehem-Judah. Both Joseph and Miriam were

descendants of the patriarch Judah. The name Judah is יהודה in Hebrew. Notice the dalet (ד), which is equivalent to our letter "d". In Hebrew, all letters not only represent letters to make words, but they are also numbers, and pictures, or hieroglyphics. The dalet (ד) is the picture of a "door."

If we remove the dalet (ד) from the name Judah (יהודה), what we have left is יהוה, Yahweh! Yahshua is the door that this letter represents. He is the door to Yahweh, "Yahshua saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. <sup>7</sup> If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him," Jn. 14:6-7.

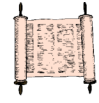
Yahshua told the people, "All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him," Mat. 11:27.

Yahshua is the Mediator between heaven and earth, between the Father and us, "<sup>5</sup> For there is one Elohim, and one mediator between Elohim and men, the man the Messiah Yahshua; <sup>6</sup> Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," 1 Tim. 2:5-6.

Yahshua is the Mediator of a new and better covenant, "But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also **he is the mediator** of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises," Heb. 8:6. "And for this cause **he is the mediator** of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the



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transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance,” Heb. 9:15. “And to **Yahshua the mediator** of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel,” Heb. 12:24.

Yahshua is the door to the Father. He had to come and be the Mediator (a door) to a new and better covenant based solely on the Word of Yahweh, because the covenant of Moses was based upon two promises, Yahweh’s Word, which never fails, and Israel’s word, the word of men, which always fail.

It is through Yahshua that the heavens and earth can be brought back as one again, “<sup>11</sup>Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: <sup>10</sup>That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in the Messiah, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him,” Eph. 1:9-10.

Are you beginning to see that there is more to the story of His birth than meets the eye?

### SWADDLING CLOTHES

When He was born, Yahshua’s mother wrapped Him in swaddling clothes. (Lk. 2:7). The Greek word for “swaddling clothes” is *sparganoo*. It is defined as: from *sparganon* (a strip; **from a derivative of the base of 4682** meaning to strap or wrap with strips); to swathe (an infant after the Oriental custom). (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance) Furthermore, #4682 is the Greek word *sparasso*, which is defined as: to mangle, i.e. convulse with epilepsy. It is vari-

ously translated as; rend, tear.

Is this not a prophecy in the beginning of His life as to what would happen to Him at the end of His life? Wasn’t His flesh stripped with a cat-o-nine tails? “Then Pilate therefore took Yahshua, and scourged him,” Jn. 19:1.

Isaiah prophesied, “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of Elohim, and afflicted. <sup>5</sup>But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with **his stripes we are healed**,” Isa. 53:4-5.

Peter confirms Isaiah’s prophecy, “Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: **by whose stripes ye were healed**,” 1 Pet. 2:24.

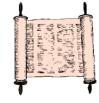
### POVERTY

The manger scene confuses things because the Magi, or kings are shown around the child presenting gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The plays also depict Joseph and Miriam fleeing to Egypt immediately after His birth, but such is not the case.

Yahshua’s parents were impoverished when He was born to them. In Luke, He is circumcised on the eighth day, but the parents are still in the environs of Jerusalem after the days of Miriam’s purification because she went to the temple to perform the prescribed offering in the Torah, “And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called YAHSHUA, which was so named of the



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angel before he was conceived in the womb. <sup>22</sup>And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to Yahweh; <sup>23</sup>(As it is written in the law of Yahweh, Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to Yahweh;) <sup>24</sup>And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of Yahweh, **A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons,**” Lk. 2:21-24.

What did the law of Moses decree? “Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If a woman have conceived seed, and born a man child: then she shall be unclean seven days; according to the days of the separation for her infirmity shall she be unclean. <sup>3</sup>And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. <sup>4</sup>And she shall then continue in the blood of her purifying three and thirty days; she shall touch no hallowed thing, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying be fulfilled. <sup>5</sup>But if she bare a maid child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her separation: and she shall continue in the blood of her purifying threescore and six days. <sup>6</sup>And when the days of her purifying are fulfilled, for a son, or for a daughter, **she shall bring a lamb of the first year for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon, or a turtledove, for a sin offering,** unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest: <sup>7</sup>Who shall offer it before Yahweh, and make an atonement for her; and she shall be cleansed from the issue of her blood. This is the law for her that hath born a male or a female. <sup>8</sup>And **if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons;** the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin

offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean,” Lev. 12:2-8.

Notice this again! She was supposed to bring a lamb for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering. But if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she can bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons. The offering that Miriam gave was a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons because she didn’t have the means to bring a lamb! This means two things, #1 Joseph and Miriam were impoverished, and #2 the kings (magi) from the east had not yet arrived, because they brought gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Had Joseph and Miriam been in possession of the gold, they would have had the means to provide a lamb for the burnt offering.

Once they had performed these purification rites, and the prescribed sacrifices, what do the Scriptures say happened? “And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, **they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth,**” Lk. 2:39.

What? No flight into Egypt? Let’s continue.

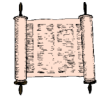
### THE KINGS

The book of Matthew records, “Now when Yahshua was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup>Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him,” Mat. 2:1-2.

Now, let’s think about this for a moment. The kings came from a far place in the east,



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probably around the environs of ancient Babylon. They saw the star in the east announcing Yahshua's birth. The trip from where they were to Jerusalem would have been a long trip. They couldn't have been there on the night of Yahshua's birth, or even 30 days later. After they had seen the star, they would have had to prepare for the trip, assimilate the gifts, etc. Wouldn't it take a while to plan the trip, get packed up, and then leave?

Matthew should read, "Now Yahshua, having been born in Bethlehem of Judaea...." The way it is worded, it promotes the idea that this is on the night of His birth, and it isn't.

The wise men arrived in Jerusalem, met with Herod, who stalled for time because he called for the chief priests and scribes and demanded where the Messiah would be born (Mt. 2:2-5).

After they gave him the information, he called for the wise men once again, "Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, **enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.** <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also," Mt. 2:7-8.

Furthermore, the star appeared to them to lead them where the child was, "When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding

great joy," Mt. 2:9-10.

Why did they need the star to guide them? Hadn't shepherds of the field seen angels who told them the news? When they came and found the child, didn't they make His birth known to many in Bethlehem? (Lk. 2:8-18)

But notice what else happened, "And when **they were come into the house**, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh," Mt. 2:11.

Joseph, Miriam, and the child weren't in a stable now, they were in a house. Remember that they had to resort to a stable with a manger because there was no room at the inn. (Lk. 2:7)

### THE FLIGHT

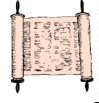
The wise men were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod because he would seek to destroy the child so they took another route back to their homeland (Lk. 2:12).

Joseph was also warned in a dream to flee to Egypt because Herod would seek to destroy the child (Lk. 2:13-15).

When Herod realized that he had been made to look like a fool, he sent his troops in to destroy the children, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and 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 wise men,**" Mt. 2:16.



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Herod had cross examined the wise men quite thoroughly. He found out that the wise men had seen the star somewhere around two years before or maybe a little less.

Do you now see how the serpent has confused the issue by putting it all together in a neat, but confusing, and deceptive package? Isn't it strange that Christianity continues to promote the confusion and deception, rather than getting to the truth of the situation?

Christmas with its manger scene looks good, sounds good, feels good and seems good, but there is a way that seems right to a

man, but the end thereof are the ways of death (Prov. 14:12-16:25). Lies, deceit, falsehoods, and confusion serve to kill, to murder. That is the way of the serpent Satan. But the truth of Yahweh, Yahshua and His Word sets us free. Will you be set free from these things, or will you continue on the path of death? May Yahweh bless you to choose truth, freedom, and life!

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