

The Infancy and Childhood of Jesus

Luke 2:21-40 and Matthew 2:1-23

Though Christian tradition and art have frequently portrayed both the shepherds and the magi visiting the newborn **Yeshua** simultaneously, they are never associated or mentioned in the same breath within the *Gospels*. **Luke** shows no hint of knowing about the wise men, and **Matthew** never mentions the shepherds. When the wise men come to visit **Jesus** in a house, they saw the child with His mother (**Matthew 2:11a**). Only **Mattityahu** describes Joseph and Mary's escape to Egypt to avoid the murder of their son at the hands of Herod the Paranoid (**Mattityahu 2:13-18**), and then their return to Nazareth where **Jesus** spent His childhood growing up (**Matthew 2:19-23**). The shepherds worshiped **Messiah** in a manger (**Luke 2:16**); but, the magi worshiped **Christ** in a house (**Matthew 2:11**). Consequently, the accounts of the shepherds and the magi are separated by at least two years.

Except for the escape to Egypt, it is important to note that the *Gospels* have no record whatsoever on **Christ** as a child. For **Mark** and **John** it is **Messiah's** adult public ministry, ending in His death and resurrection, which make up the *Gospel*. Nowhere in the *Gospels* does the adult **Jesus** refer directly to His own childhood in His teaching. **Matthew** and **Luke**, however, contain stories about **Yeshua's** birth and infancy.

Yet the four *Gospels* stand in stark contrast with those that come to us from the mid-second century onwards - the apocryphal stories about **Jesus'** so called "missing years" before His baptism.¹²⁴ For example the false gospel of Thomas was discovered in 1945. It was part of the popular genre at that time, written to satisfy a hunger among early believers for more miraculous and anecdotal stories of the childhood of **Christ**. In this false gospel, **Yeshua** supposedly breathes life into birds made from clay, curses a boy who becomes a corpse, and curses another boy who falls down dead and whose parents become blind.

As believers we should restrain from this kind of desperate search. **God** has not left us as orphans. **He** has given us everything that we need for victorious living today. As Rabbi Sha'ul said: **Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror**. Once we are in heaven, **we shall see the Lord face to face** and understand more of this life than we do at this time. **Now we know in part**; but *then* we shall know fully (**First Corinthians 13:12**). **ADONAI** is not holding anything back on us. What we don't know now, will be revealed to us at the proper time. **He** has provided for us fully and completely.