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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.