



Christmas:
What Really Happened?

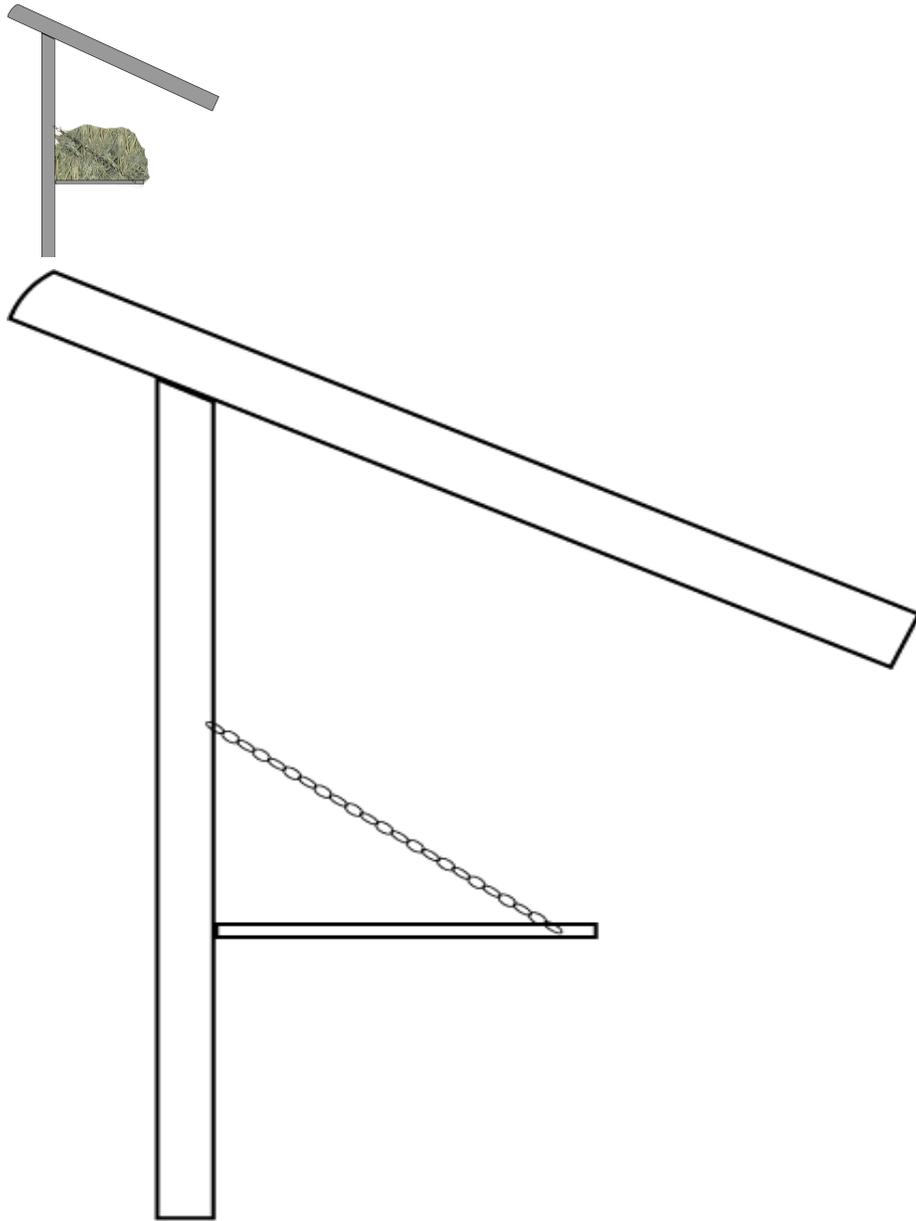


The image shows the Hebrew word 'Shalom' (שלום) in a stylized, hollow outline font. The letters are arranged from right to left: 'ש' (Shin), 'ל' (Lamed), 'ו' (Vav), and 'ם' (Mem).

“Shalom,” in Hebrew

The image shows the Hebrew word 'Yeshua' (ישוע) in a stylized, hollow outline font. The letters are arranged from right to left: 'י' (Yod), 'ש' (Shin), 'ע' (Ayin), and 'ו' (Vav).

“Yeshua,” in Hebrew,
meaning *Salvation*



Throughout the country, many who are called by the title Christian and many who do not go by that title will be festively celebrating the birth of a 'Christ child'. The description of this child is mostly unknown in the Scriptures. This celebration depicts a child born in a circumstance of elegant beauty and cleanliness, with brightly flickering lights and reverential cattle.

Tonight we will enter into a journey back in time at a true date to visit a scene of the birth of the Jewish Messiah sent unto the Israelis, a light to the Gentiles. As we enter this journey, all we know is from the Scriptural accounts that paint a vivid picture. This picture will be in striking contrast to the centrality of a Christmas tree and its gifts, shopping lists, and a host of other imaginative attempts to undermine the truth of this occasion.

Only Matthew and Luke record His birth. For the issue was THAT He was born, and that His birth was according to the Scrolls entrusted to Israel.



Herod, an Edomite from the line of Esau and of a race cursed by God was the king of Judaea at that time. He was cruel, godless, and a dictator.

Zechariah was the Israeli High Priest who held the highest position of Spiritual leadership. The High Priest's position was divided into courses at this time. One priest would fulfill the role of High Priest, and then another would take his place, although this was not according to the Torah (Teaching) of God. Zechariah's course was called Avia, meaning, "Yehovah is Father."

His good wife, **Elisheva**, was directly related to Aharon, the first High Priest. Quite in contrast with ruthless Herod, Zechariah and Elisheva were both righteous before Yehovah. They continually and blamelessly walked in all of the commandments and ordinances of Yehovah.

Zechariah and Elisheva desired to have children, but Elisheva could not. They waited; they hoped; they sought God—the God of Avraham, Isaac and Jacob. They both were now quite old. They were past the hope of having a child.

ZECHARIAH

It came time for Zechariah to officially act as High Priest before Yehovah; it was the course of Avia's turn. His function was to burn incense when he went into the Temple of Yehovah. As he entered the Temple, a whole multitude of very devout Jews were standing outside and praying, for it was the time of incense, the awesome Day of Coverings for the sin of the People of Israel. This day is called Yom HaKippureem in Hebrew.

A messenger of Yehovah appeared unto Zechariah. He stood on the right side of the altar of incense. No one was to be in this place except the High Priest who was burning incense. When Zechariah saw him, he was shaken, and fear fell upon him. The angel said to Zechariah, "Fear not, Zechariah! For thy prayer is heard! And thy wife Elisheva shall bear thee a son! And thou shalt call his name Yochanan¹." (The name Yochanan means Yehovah Favors.) "And thou shalt have joy and gladness! And many shall rejoice at his birth! For he shall be great in the sight of Yehovah. And he shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. And he shall be filled with the Holy Spirit—even from his mother's womb! And he shall turn many of the children of Israel to Yehovah their God. And he shall go before the Messiah in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers upon² the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous: to make a People prepared for Yehovah ready!

Zechariah said unto the angel, "By what shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is quite old." And the angel answered him. And he said: "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of Yehovah! And I am sent to speak these proclamations to thee! Thou shalt be unable to speak until the day that these things will be performed, because thou didn't believe my words that shall be accomplished at their time!"

The people outside were waiting for Zechariah. They were astonished that he took so long in the Temple. When he came out, he couldn't speak unto them. They figured he had seen a vision in the Temple because he motioned to them and didn't talk.

1 The name *Yochanan* is turned into *John* when it is put through several languages. While *John* has no meaning in any language, *Yochanan* does have a meaning: *Yehovah favors*.

2 The word *upon* often has the connotation of *against*. This is true in Malachi:
Malachi 4:6 And he shall turn the heart of the fathers *upon* the children, and the heart of the children upon their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.
The flavor is *against* in this text, showing a *necessary* split between father and son. Without the split, there could be no turning in Israel.

Zechariah had other functions to perform. When the days of his responsibility were completed, he went home, and was unable to speak. Zechariah believed, for he and his wife tried again to have a child. She became pregnant! She hid herself five months. She said, “This is how Yehovah dealt with me in the days in which He looked on to take away my reproach among the people!” (In those days, a woman was greatly ashamed and grieved if she could NOT have a child.) Elisheva was very happy because she would now have a child in her old age.



In the sixth month of Elisheva’s pregnancy, the angel Gabriel was sent from Yehovah unto a city in Galilee. The name Galilee means the wheel, and there was a cluster of cities in the shape of a wheel surrounding the Sea of Galilee. Gabriel went to the city called Netsaret (known today as Nazareth).

A very devout Jewish virgin girl lived in Netsaret. She was espoused to a man named Yoseph. (To be espoused was to be married, yet to not yet be living together while they both prepared for marriage.) Yoseph was a descendant of King David, and the Jewish girl’s name was Miriam.

The angel came into her room. He said, “Shalom to thee! Thou art much favored! Yehovah is with thee! Thou art blessed among women!” When she saw him, she was shaken—at what he said rather than at his being in her room. She tried to figure what kind of a greeting this was—not the word shalom, since she used that all the time, but the rest of the greeting.

The angel said unto her, “Fear not, Miriam. For thou hast found favor with God! And thou shalt be pregnant in thy womb! And thou wilt bring forth a son. And thou shalt call His Name Yeshua. (The name means *Salvation*.) He shall be great! And He shall be called the Son of the Highest! And Yehovah Elohim shall give the throne of His father David unto Him! And He shall reign over the House of Yaakov (Jacob) to Hider!³ There shall be no end of His kingdom.”

³ *Hider* indicates two things: Yehovah Himself Who has hidden Himself from view so that folks can come to faith, and the period of time beyond what has been *revealed*, and that is therefore

Miriam then said unto the angel, “How will this come about, seeing that I have not been with a man?” The angel answered. And he said unto her, “The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee. And the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee! The Holy One who shall be born from thee shall be called Ben Elohim. (This means *Son of the Gods*⁴). Thy cousin Elisheva—she has also conceived a son in her old age! And this is the sixth month for her. She was called barren, but with God nothing shall be impossible!” And Miriam said, “Behold the slave-girl of Yehovah. Be it unto me according to thy word.” And the angel departed from her.

Miriam was excited. She packed a few things, and went off into the hill country as fast as she could—into a city of Judah to the house of Zechariah. She met Elisheva with “Shalom!” As soon as Elisheva heard Miriam’s “Shalom,” Elisheva’s baby jumped in her womb!

Elisheva was filled with the Holy Spirit. She shouted loudly, “Thou art blessed among women! And the fruit of thy womb is blessed! And from where hast thou come to me like this? For the mother of my Lord has come to me! For just as soon as my ears heard the voice of thy “Shalom,” the baby jumped in my womb for joy! Blessed is she that believed those things that were told her from Yehovah! For there shall be a performance of those things that were told her from Yehovah!”

And Miriam said, “My soul has magnified Yehovah! My spirit has circle-danced in God my Savior! For He saw the poverty of His slave-girl. All the generations shall bless me from this day forward! He has done great things with me! He is mighty! And His Name is Holy! His Grace is upon those who fear Him in every generation, generation! He wrought miracles via His Arm! He scattered the arrogant in the plot of their heart. He threw rulers off their thrones, and set low-class folks on high. He filled the hungry with good, and he sent the rich off empty. He has strengthened Israel His servant! And He remembered His Graces for him just as He said to our fathers, to Avraham and his Seed, to Hider!”

Miriam stayed with Elisheva about three months. She then went

hidden from readers of the Bible. Thus, *to Hider* means *until the planet ends*, as well as *to Yehovah*.

4 The term *Gods* is what *Elohim* literally means. It is a reference to Yehovah as all the Gods that really exist, and also directly speaks of Yeshua. Yet, Yeshua will be called Son of Elohim! Thus, some who knew that He is the Messiah didn’t know that He was also Elohim Himself.

This day becomes most important with great ‘gaiety’ and great personal investment of time, money, and thought, along with frustration. Most never take the same amount of time and thought to search the Scriptures during the rest of the year. Such ‘holy days’ also distract from the Israeli Holy Days that focus on the power of God, His relationship to Israel, the great and imaginative miracles He will do for Israel, Jewish and non-Jewish Saints, and Gentiles who prove to be friends during that greatest of future times, the Tribulation and the Millennium that follows. The greatest Gathering in all the history of the world will be far greater than all the supposed landings of Santa Claus; the gifts that Yehovah will give to folks will exceed all the gifts of all Christmases in history. Learning about these things that Yehovah will do is far more exciting for those who are willing to receive the Love of the Truth.



back to her own home.



Elisheva’s time of pregnancy came to term. She brought forth a son. Her neighbors and her family heard how Yehovah had showed great mercy on her, and they rejoiced with her. A male child had to be circumcised on the eighth day, and they came together for that.

In those days, the child was named at the time of circumcision. They called him Zechariah after the name of his father. However, his mother answered. And she said, “Not so! He shall be called Yochanan!” They said unto her, “None of your relatives are called by that name.” They turned to the child’s father, expecting him to agree with them.

They used sign language to him to find what the actual appropriate name was to be; they must have thought that he was also deaf because he couldn’t speak. He asked for a writing tablet. He wrote, saying that the child’s name is *Yochanan*. They all were shocked at his reply. At that very moment, Zechariah’s mouth was opened, and he could speak again because his tongue was no longer restrained. He then spoke up! And he commended Yehovah! All who lived around them—all their neighbours feared. News of what happened and what was said spread throughout all the hill country of Judaea. All they that heard laid up the information in their hearts, saying, “What manner of child shall this be?”

The hand of Yehovah was with the child. Yochanan’s father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit. And he prophesied, saying:

“Blessed be Yehovah God of Israel!

For He has visited and sent redemption to His People!

*He has lifted up for us the ram’s horn of Salvation
in the House of David His servant*

Just as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets who are of old,

*To save us from the hand of our enemies and
from the grip of all who hate us,*

*To perform Grace with our fathers and to remember
the Covenant of His Holy One,
The Covenant of the oath that He swore to Avraham our father.
For He will rescue us from the hand of the oppressor!
And He has caused us to serve Him without fear!
We will continuously walk in holiness and in
righteousness before Him all the days of our lives!
Thou, child—thou shalt be called the prophet of the Most High!
Thou wilt walk before Yehovah!
And thou wilt prepare His ways!
Thou wilt give the knowledge of Salvation to His People!—
The forgiveness for their sin—
By causing the light of morning to rise for us from on high,
From the source of the Graces of our God,
To give light to those who dwell in darkness and in death's shadow,
And to straighten out our direction in the steps of Peace!”*

Yochanan grew. And he became quite spiritually strong. He lived out in the deserts from the time of his youth until the day that he showed himself to Israel to serve the God of Israel.



Miriam was pregnant by the Holy Spirit, but her betrothed-husband did not know this. When he saw that she was pregnant, he had no idea who the father was. He thought that the only thing to do was to

tree:

Long before the Christian era primitive people worshiped trees, as well as other natural objects. In the Nordic regions, for example, the people paid tribute to their god Odin by tying fruit and cakes in the shapes of animals to the boughs of sacred oak trees. When St. Boniface, an English missionary, arrived in Germany in the 8th century, he converted many of the natives to Christianity. He is believed to have substituted the evergreen for the sacred oak and to have associated the evergreen tree with Christmas celebrations.

Hanukkah falls at times at or near December 25, always falling on the 25th day of the Jewish month. The Christmas lights may have originated from Hanukkah, according to one encyclopedia. Messiah did celebrate Hanukkah! There is no mention regarding Christmas in the Scriptures, and nearly all other symbols of Christmas seem to come from idolatrous, pagan, and fairy-tale origins.

A people practicing one religion will take in or over a people of another religion. They will then adapt some of their pagan customs to their own customs.

In the case of Christmas, many describe and sing about Santa Claus as if he has attributes of God. For example, “He knows when you are sleeping, he knows when you’re awake; he knows when you’ve been bad or good, so be good for goodness sake!” His ability to cover every home shows that he is nearly omnipresent (present everywhere at once), and therefore he must be a god!

Some condemn the paganism of these holy days, but they choose to “Christianize” them by giving new meanings to each part. They will describe the gifts as being like the Gift of Jesus to the world and especially a practice that imitates the astrologers bringing gifts to the Messiah, and the lights on the tree as being a symbol of the Light of the World. They really perpetuate mystical legends and Christianized idolatrous practices by this means, while justifying themselves by saying that they do not desire to deprive their children or relatives of a valuable and festive season that others enjoy.

Christmas often teaches children to seek after and desire those worldly possessions that are similar to those things their friends receive.

As each of you chooses to celebrate the birth of Yeshua and to pass your wealth unto others in the form of gifts, if you choose to use the great pagan symbol of a tree decked with ornaments, remember (though it will be far from your thoughts) the summertime birth of one born into poverty, whose birth prompted a covetous murderer to murder many innocent boys. Try to think about a mother who spent the best years of her life with a secret about this child's Father. Many of her neighbours did not know this secret. They 'knew' that she had become pregnant outside of marriage, and they saw her son as illegitimate. Try to think about a man who was righteous, who married a woman with a reputation of being an adulteress. Try to think on a child, the Child of the Most High, who was considered a bastard by many, though not by all. The most devout and Godly knew Miriam's secret.

The Secret of Yehovah is with them who fear Him!

An Additional Note

If one does research in a larger encyclopedia such as Britannica, one can find some very interesting information about Christmas. For example, the name derives from Old English, *Christes Mæsse*, or Christ's Mass. Though the origins are uncertain, the encyclopedia explains that it is commonly held that "the day was chosen to correspond to pagan festivals that took place around the time of the winter solstice when the days begin to lengthen, to celebrate the 'rebirth of the sun.'" Thus, the term Yule came into use. "It is held by some scholars that the birth of Christ as 'Light of the World' was made analogous to the rebirth of the sun in order to make Christianity more meaningful to pagan converts." One encyclopedia states this: "Many early Christians decried the gaiety and festive spirit introduced into the Christmas celebration as a pagan survival, particularly the Roman Saturnalia. They considered the birth of Christ a solemn occasion."

The term *mass* indicates "a true sacrifice, in which the risen Christ becomes bodily present on the altar as a Victim who is offered anew by the Church to God the Father as expiation for the sins of humanity." (This isn't Biblical.)

One encyclopedia offers this explanation regarding the Christmas

put her away, to write her a bill of divorcement.⁵ Yoseph was a righteous man; he didn't want to make Miriam, the woman he loved, a public example, ruining her reputation and her life.

While he struggled over this decision, the angel of Yehovah appeared unto him in a dream, saying, "Yoseph! Thou son of David! Do not fear to take Miriam thy wife unto thee. For He Who is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit! She shall bring forth a son! And thou art to call his Name Salvation (Yeshua)! He shall 'yoshia' (shall save) His People from their sins!" Now, all this was done so that what was spoken by Yehovah through the prophet Isaiah will be fulfilled saying,

"Behold the pregnant virgin! And she shall bear a son! And thou shalt call His Name Immanu-El," which means, 'God is with us!' (Isaiah 7:14)

Yoseph awoke. He did as the angel of Yehovah had told him.



As it happened, in those days, a decree was made and sent out from Caesar Augustus that all the inhabited land was to be taxed. Such a taxation was first made a while before this when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. So, everyone went to be taxed since the penalty for avoiding the taxation was very severe. Each person had to go to his own home-city for this taxation, making matters more difficult. Yoseph also left the Galilee area, leaving the city of Netsaret where Miriam and he were living, to go to Judaea unto the city known as the City of David, known also as Beit Lekhem, the House of Bread, known today as Bethlehem.

Yoseph was of the House and lineage of King David. He went to be taxed with Miriam, his espoused wife, who was now very large from

⁵ The only legitimate reason given in the Teaching of Yehovah for divorce is *fornication*: sexual intercourse between two unmarried folks, a male and a female. All other offenses that were akin to adultery were death-penalty offenses. Yet, a woman or a man could not be put to death for adultery without the other person who had participated in the adultery. Since Israel was occupied by Rome, and since Roman law permitted adultery and did not mandate a death penalty, the Roman law was the law of the land of Israel. Thus, there was no question about putting her to death. He would have to divorce her if he did anything. That was his dilemma.

the child in her womb. We do not know if they went by walking, by riding an animal, or by riding in a cart. After they had arrived, and while they were in Beit Lekhem, Miriam came to full term and went into labor. They therefore sought shelter at an inn, but there was no room because of the crowds coming to pay their taxes.

Finally, the only place they found was near a feed trough. (No shelter was mentioned.) This birth was in poverty and dire circumstances.

Yoseph helped as he could to birth the child. While a field wasn't a clean place, there may have been some hay. (Most animals were out with the shepherds and cowboys. There may have been some animals around—perhaps a cow or goat that someone milked—we do not know.) There were flies and bugs that were normal to the area since it was during the warm season. When the child came forth, it was up to Yoseph to tie off the navel and clean the child. (Miriam was smart. Because she was close to term, she would have brought provisions to wrap the baby—swaddling rags—if He came while on the trip. She knew this was the Messiah. She would have brought the best she had. So, Miriam wrapped the baby in soft rags and placed Him in the feed trough. It was lowly surroundings for the birth of the Messiah of Israel. Miriam brought forth her firstborn son.

Now, there were shepherds staying out in the field with their flocks in the same area of Israel. It was during the warm and dry season of the year (which could be any time from May to September). They kept watch over their flock by night. A messenger of Yehovah came over by them. And the brightness of Yehovah shined around them. They became terrified!

The Messenger said to them, “Don't fear. For behold, I bring you a very joyful proclamation that will be to all peoples! A Savior Who is the Messiah of Yehovah is born to you in the city of David! And this is a sign unto you: Ye will find the baby wrapped in swaddling rags, lying in a feed trough!”

Suddenly, a huge number of the army of the heavens was with the messenger! And they were commending God! And they were saying, “Importance is to God in the highest! And peace is among men with whom He is pleased on the land!” Even these angels were looking forward to the time when this Messiah will reign as King of all kings in the land

Then Herod became extremely angry when he saw that the wise men had fooled him. He ordered men to go and slay ALL boys two years old and younger who were in Beit Lekhem and in all the cities surrounding Beit Lekhem. Because of the information the wise men had given him about the time of Yeshua's birth, Herod killed all boys close to that age and younger in the area, hoping to kill Yeshua with them. This horrible mass-murder of Jewish children fulfilled what Jeremiah had prophesied:

A voice in Ramah is heard—weeping; crying; great mourning. Raquel is crying because of her sons. She refuses to be consoled, for they do not exist!



After the death of Herod, the angel of Yehovah appeared in a dream to Yoseph who was in Egypt, saying, “Arise! And take the young child and his mother. And go into the land of Israel. For they who sought the young child's life are dead.” Yoseph took the young child Yeshua and his mother. And he came into the land of Israel. When he heard that Archelaus reigned in Judaea in the place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And again being warned by Yehovah in a dream, he went back into Netsaret in Galilee. This fulfilled the prophecy that Yeshua was to be called Notsri, or, The Branch, from which the name Netsaret was taken.



And the child Yeshua grew. And He became spiritually very strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon Him.



prophet wrote: ‘And thou, Beit Lekhem of the Land of Yehudah (Judah), art thou not small among the thousands of Yehudah? For a Ruler will go forth from thee Who will feed my People Israel!’”

Herod secretly called the astrologers. He interrogated them concerning the time that the star appeared. (He wanted to know how old the baby would now be. He would later use this information for violent plans.) Herod sent them to Beit Lekhem. And he said, “Go and search diligently for the young child. And when you all have found him, bring me word again so that I also may come and worship him.”

When the astrologers had heard the king, they departed. And again, the star that they saw in the east guided them—not to Beit Lekhem where Yoseph, Miriam, and baby Yeshua had been, but rather to Netsaret where they presently were, since much time had passed. The star guided them until it came and stood over the house where the young child Yeshua was staying. When the astrologers saw the star, they rejoiced and greatly celebrated. (They had not seen it since they last saw it in the far east.)

When they came into the house, they saw the young child with Miriam his mother. They fell down, and worshipped him. They opened their treasures and presented gifts unto him. They gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. These gifts were indications of other things: gold (a picture of incorruptibility—something or someone that does not decay or die), frankincense (an incense used on the Bread of Faces in the Tent of Appointment and the Temple), and myrrh (used to cover the smell of death).

Yehovah warned the astrologers in a dream that they should not return to Herod. So, they departed into their own land another way.

When they had departed, the angel of Yehovah appeared to Yoseph in a dream, saying, “Arise! And take the young child and his mother! And flee into Egypt! Remain there until I bring thee word! For Herod is about to seek the young child to destroy him!” Yoseph got up and took the young child and his mother by night. And they fled into Egypt. (This journey took several days.) They stayed there until the death of Herod. Going to Egypt set the stage for the future fulfillment of what was spoken by Yehovah through the prophet Hosea, saying, “I called my son out of Egypt!”

of Israel!

The messengers then departed from them into the heavens. The Shepherds said to each other, “We will now indeed go to Beit Lekhem! We will see this that has occurred, all that Yehovah made known to us!”

They came as quickly as they could. They found Miriam and Yoseph just as the messengers had proclaimed, with the newborn baby lying in a feed trough. (The text doesn’t mention any stable.) When the shepherds had seen, and had witnessed the baby who was born to be the Chief Shepherd, they spoke to many, and broadcasted the information that was told to them concerning this child. All the people that heard it wondered at those things that were told to them by the shepherds. Miriam, however, kept all these things in her mind and thought deeply concerning them. The shepherds returned to their sheep, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.



On the eight day the child was circumcised. Yoseph and Miriam named him Yeshua, the name that the angel told Miriam before He was conceived in the womb.

Then Miriam underwent the good and healthful days of purification. She remained separated from the congregations of Israel for seven days, because she had a male baby. For thirty-three more days, she could not touch anything pertaining to the Temple, nor come into the area of the sanctuary; she was unclean⁶ according to the Teaching (Torah), and would cause anyone or anything that she touched to become unclean

⁶ Being *unclean* has nothing to do with being dirty or being sinful. Instead, it refers to a *type*, a picture of something far more important. *Uncleanness* meant that a person could not participate in any congregating of Israel, but this did not explain the type, the picture. That requires more thought. Uncleanness itself does picture a condition where a person is not fit to stand before Yehovah. The most obvious form of uncleanness is caused by *sin*. Miriam didn’t sin, but Yehovah’s Teaching, the Torah, explained things like sin in ways that children could understand. Children can understand being unclean. Since every child that is born is born with the tendency and nature to sin, every child born is unclean, and thus the mother is unclean when she births the child. Neither one sinned, but both are reminded that humans are born unclean.

until after this time.

After her purification, Miriam and Yoseph brought Yeshua the baby to Yerushalaim to the Temple to present Him to Yehovah. For it is written in the Torah, the Teaching entrusted to Moshe, that every male that opens the womb (thus, the firstborn) shall be called holy (meaning the property of) to Yehovah. They then were commanded to offer a sacrifice according to what is stated in the Torah of Yehovah. This Teaching of Yehovah required that a lamb of the first year and a young pigeon or turtledove be brought for a sin sacrifice unto the door of the Tent of Appointment or Temple and to the priest to make a covering for her. She would then be clean. (Miriam hadn't sinned; all newborn children require a sin sacrifice.)

The Torah teaches that if a woman who just gave birth was too poor to bring the normal sacrifice at the birth of a child, she could bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons: one for the ascension sacrifice and the other for a sin sacrifice. Miriam and Yoseph were poor and could not bring a lamb, so they brought either two turtledoves or two young pigeons for the sacrifice.

There was a Khasidic Jewish man (a man who has great zeal in his faith) in Yerushalaim whose name was Shimon. This man was righteous and very pious. He was waiting for the Consolation of Israel! The Holy Spirit rested on him. The Holy Spirit had revealed unto Shimon that he would not die before he had seen Yehovah's Messiah. He came into the Temple at this time because of the Holy Spirit.

When the parents brought in baby Yeshua to do for him according to the justice of the Torah, Shimon took baby Yeshua up into his arms. And he blessed God. And said: "Yehovah, permit, na, Thy servant to depart in peace, according to Thy word! For my eyes have seen Thy Salvation [Yeshua] that Thou established before all the peoples—a light to the Gentiles and the Glory of Israel Thy People!"

Yoseph and Miriam his mother marveled at those things that were spoken concerning the baby Yeshua. Shimon blessed them. And he said unto Miriam his mother, "Behold, this baby is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel, and for a sign of fierce fightings that will expose

the deep thoughts of the minds of many. And a sharp sword shall pass through thy being!" Thus Shimon prophesied concerning the great pain Miriam would have, watching her son be rejected and die, and what Yerushalaim would experience because of Yeshua.

There was a prophetess named Khanna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. (Khanna's name means Favor.) Khanna was now very old. She had only lived with a husband seven years from the time that she was a virgin. After just seven years of marriage, her husband died. She had now been a widow for eighty-four years! She did not go outside from the Temple area, but served Yehovah with fastings and prayers night and day.

Khanna came in as Shimon finished prophesying. She gave thanks unto Yehovah in the same manner, and spoke of Him to all them that looked for the redemption of Yerushalaim (Jerusalem), a city that was now in the grip of the Romans. When Yoseph and Miriam had performed all things according to the Teaching of Yehovah, they returned to Galilee and to Netsaret, their village.



About a year and a half elapsed, and the child was now a toddler. During this time, astrologers from the east journeyed to Yerushalaim. Upon arrival, they began asking, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? We have seen his star in the east, and we have come to worship him!" By reading the stars, they had learned that the Messiah had been born! They did not know that Messiah had been born in Beit Lekhem. They did not know Yoseph, Miriam, or baby Yeshua, or where they were living. They therefore asked folks in Yerushalaim, "Where is he? Where is the child born who will be King of the Jews?"

When Herod the king learned about this, he was troubled. Therefore, all Yerushalaim was also troubled with him. (Herod was a very violent man.) Herod gathered all the chief priests and the scribes of the people together. He demanded that they tell him where the Messiah was to be born according to the Hebrew scrolls. They said unto him, "The Messiah is to be born in Beit Lekhem of Judaea. For this is what the