

So why does Matthew put this in his Gospel?

- **Because God's wisdom is not the world's wisdom.**

God set up the beginning of Jesus' life, the single most influential person in the history of world, by breaking all the wisdom of the world's conventions.

When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, ...
Matthew 2:4,5

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.
Isaiah 29:14

...the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, **they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.**
Matthew 2:9-11

Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him...
1 Corinthians 1:20,21

...but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
1 Corinthians 1:23,24

Dan Wilvers- December 16th, 2018-Part 3



How Ancient Prophecy & a Bunch of Wise Guys Changed The Christmas Narrative *Matthew 2:1-12;16*

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."
³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

Who were the Magi? The Magi were the scientists, the mathematicians, of their country and were very powerful politically.

So how did these scientist-priests hear about a baby in Bethlehem?

Because of a celestial event? Seems like such an improbable story.

Until you remember-- In 539BC, in Babylon, the young Jewish man Daniel who was taken captive earlier by the Babylonians, was made chief of all the Magi -- the story is in Daniel 2:48

"...then the king (Nebuchadnezzar) placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men (or, magi)." Daniel 2:48

So what? Well the Magi more than likely possessed a copy Daniel's later writings, specifically his prophecies in Daniel 9.

²¹...while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man (an angel) I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice. Daniel 9:21

And Gabriel announces to Daniel: "A period of seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city to finish their rebellion, to put an end to their sin, to atone for their guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place. ²⁵ Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes.

Daniel 9:24, 25

This prophecy says from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem there would be seven, seven-year periods, and sixty-two more seven-year periods—or 483 years—**until the Messiah would appear.**

As for our starting point, the **Persian Emperor Artaxerxes** (who ruled from 464-424 BC) issued the edict to rebuild Jerusalem sometime during the Hebrew month of Nisan in the 20th year of his reign, or c. 445 BC

¹⁰I (Nehemiah) was cupbearer to the king. ¹ In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. ... ⁵"If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it." It pleased the king to send me; ... Nehemiah 1:10; and 2:1,5,6

Adjusting for the 360 day Hebrew Lunar calendar to our present day 365 day Gregorian calendar as well as adjusting for leap years and dropping a leap year every 128 years. One group's calculation determined that the prophecy would correspond to **April 6, 32AD.**



(483 years) will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Daniel 9:25

This seems so implausible because it's so specific for such a long shot. But the NT records that **Jesus public ministry began** in the 15th year of Tiberius Ceasar (Luke 3:1)

Tiberius reign began we know from history in 14ad. That puts us at 29 Ad. You add in the three years Jesus ministered publicly before his death that bumps you to 32 AD.

The Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England—confirm that the Sunday before Passover in the year 32 AD would be **April 6th.**

So when you read Matthew's account: After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." Matthew 2:1,2

Were they anticipating the "Anointed One" from a prophecy over 5 centuries old, written by one of their former Chief Magi?

Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Daniel 9:25