

Knights Reflection, January 2024

As a follow-up to John Martin's request in December, we have another, albeit anonymous, request of the same nature of explanation. Tonight, about the "missing years" of Christ's life. Overall, the answer is quite the same as "why Adam and Eve are painted/depicted with navels" --- the answer in that case -- facts unimportant to the message are, well, **unimportant**.

First, let's look at how our Church looks at the "Facts". Well, they don't, they teach us that what we know and believe is based upon "FAITH" and not fact!! Are there "FACTS" in our faith – YES; but they are meaningless as they would lead us to be like someone worshipping objects. WHY, because all "Facts" are disputed and defending "Facts" will have us giving honor to them instead of God.

Previously, last week I discussed that there was no alphabet for a written language until one was established by the Hebrews around 1400 years before Christ. Even before the Hebrews left Egypt, their simple Alphabet and Aramaic Language was known by the Egyptians. An alphabet later improved by adding vowels by the Phoenicians and eventually enhanced by the Greeks into an universally understood language. Moses then used the original Hebrew Alphabet/Language to write the first five books of the Bible in the mid 1200's BC. So, if we were to ask about whether or not "facts" existed in the recording of some three or four thousand years of Mankind's history; **YES**, there is! The fact that the descendants of Abraham lived in Egypt for three hundred years during this time is recorded in Egyptian Hieroglyphics throughout the land. Likewise, with the Arabic and Greek languages being developed during the Hebrew's 40 years wandering in the desert, the Hebrew entry into the promised land was also recorded. Bear with me as this may seem off-track; but, important to the facts. The world was ruled by the Egyptians before Christ's time and the Romans during His life. In being a ruler of the known world from a central location – how do you exert power? Simple -- through a regional chain-of-command, and how do you manage/enforce your will – through the written word. Ever heard *"let it be written – let it*

be done" (from the Lips of the Pharaoh and from the lips of Pontius Pilate), **YES**, everything was recorded. In Christ's time, all this recording was returned to Rome. So, **YES**, the facts of Christ's lifetime and thousands of years before and after existed. However, for the sake of many not wanting the facts to prove our faith – does it all still exist or is it willingly shared as proof --- probably not. Does the Catholic Church have much of it stored away – **YES**, but again, not used to be the proof of our FAITH.

So, let's look at some of the facts affecting Christ's life, not particularly about Jesus personally; but FACTs about the Hebrew World at the time Jesus lived.

- Was Jesus born some 2023 years ago, in Bethlehem, in December, during the Roman Census, an only child, with parents from Nazareth, born not in the Village but outside of the Town, did local residents somehow know about the birth and visit, was Jesus circumcised in Bethlehem including the ado in the Temple caused by Simeon and Anna? - **YES** – documented by the *Romans and the Temple records (with it not being known how many days it was until they registered – the days of the 23rd. to the 27th, as optional dates)*.
- Did King Herod try to kill Jesus by killing all newborns, did the Wise Men visit, did the Holy Family move to the Nile River in Egypt, and return to Nazareth after Herod's death? – **YES** – documented by both the Romans and Egyptians.
- Were the Holy Family devout Jews in Nazareth, live an obscure life yet devoted enough in faith to bring Jesus to Jerusalem for His Bar-Mitzvah, did Jesus remain for several days preaching in the Temple, was this preaching at a learned level enough to raise attention of Temple Officials and Guards? - **YES** – documented in Temple & Roman records.
- So tonight, some five minutes later, we get to the QUESTION about the gap in the time of the recorded life for Jesus from this point of Bar-Mitzvah to His Baptism at the Jordan River by His cousin John the Baptist. The Mitzvah age for a Jewish Youth is 13 years old (12 then and now for girls) and formal schooling ended. After the Ceremony the young man could read in the synagogue and was considered to be free from parental control. In general, they had two major choices, (1) follow their Father's or Family Trade or (2) join/follow a Rabbi in the furtherance of their Faith. This furtherance of Faith consisted of

following a "Teacher" called a Rabbii. At the time of Christ, you were allowed to "Read" the scriptures after your Bar or Bat Mitzvah; but, you were not allowed to "Comment" or as we would call-it "Preach" until the age of *Thirty* as a fully ordained Rabbii.

- Thus, after He is lost (and found) in the Temple after His Bar Mitzvah, the Gospel writers resume the account of Jesus after his Baptism at around the time he was Thirty. John the Baptist in being only six months older than Jesus is recorded as "Preaching" for about two years before this meeting; thus, the reason he was preaching in the Desert, -- as he was not old enough to preach in the synagogues. The gospels then record Jesus as immediately leaving His Baptism for the forty days of "Temptation of the Devil" -- as beginning point of His ministry by selecting His Apostles and "Teaching in the Synagogues".
- Therefore, "Church Tradition" holds that during these 17 years, Jesus was dedicated to the care of Joseph and Mary as He studied and prepared for the onset of His ministry. There was no hurry, both Jesus and God knew that the Ministry of Christ as our Savior was only going to need a few years and how it would end. Again, although there is proof --- **our FAITH simply does not require it.** (12/13/2023)