

A different perspective to the story of Joseph and Mary  
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By studying the intricate connections to policies of the nations leadership, we can discover the methods and purpose to the events that are written in the ancient texts. In the book of Josephus Antiquities (18:1:1-2) it is written that Cyrenius, a Roman Senator of great dignity came into Syria, sent by Caesar to be a judge of that nation and take account of their substance. Coponius, a man of the equestrian order, was sent with him, to have the supreme power over the Jews, independent of Herod's kingdom.

But the Jews took the report of taxation heinously that this was no better than an introduction to slavery. Yet they left off opposition by the persuasion of Joazar, who was the son of Beethus the High Priest. So, persuaded by Joazar's words, men traveled to their estates and gave an account without any dispute. As Coponius was exercising his office of procurator of the taxes, the Jews were celebrating the feast of unleavened bread, which we call the Passover.

The book of Luke covers this period, that in those days, there was a decree from Caesar Augustus that all of the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. All men went to be taxed in their own city, and Mary brought forth her firstborn son, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. (Luke 2:1-5)

The taxing required that all landowners attend to their taxation in the city of their property of inheritance. Joseph was of the lineage of David, whose property was in Bethlehem, about 5 miles South of the Jerusalem Temple. They performed all things according to the Covenant Laws of the Lord. The child was circumcised on the eighth day, and then Mary continued her 33 days of cleansing and then redeemed the child at the Temple. (Gen 17:12, Exod 13:13, Lev 12:4, Luke 2:22-39) The family returned to Nazareth, to reside in their city of employment, but they returned to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the Passover. (Luke 2:41)

This birth is the prophetic image of the original Passover Exodus from Egypt, which Israel celebrates as the time of rebirth, where the nation was brought into a new manner of life on the seven days of Passover. The prophecies were of the light to reveal salvation to the Gentiles, and to praise the people of Israel. (Isaiah 49:6, Luke 2:32)

In that period of years, the lunar date of Passover places the birth of the Messiah to be on or near April 2<sup>nd</sup>, which is quite a difference from Constantine's assigned celebration of December 25<sup>th</sup>. The common holiday in December is actually derived from the birthday of the Persian King Mithra, which declared himself as the invincible sun god. Mithra's traditions following Baal worship inspired the Romans tremendously with lighted ornaments in the trees around the temple as lighted by the sun at night, and offering gifts to the gods that were placed under the trees. The trees were planted in groves, that were part of the ornamental flower gardens to the worship of Ashtar, the Zidonian goddess of fertility that is now celebrated as Easter. (Kings 11:1-8, 18:19)

In former times, Gideon was commanded to throw down the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove by it: the grove was a fertility symbol for Ashtar. (Judges 6) Also, Solomon appeased his foreign wives with altars, sacrifices, and incense to their gods. For this, God removed the Kingdom from Solomon's seed and gave it to his servant. (1-Kings 11) Remarkably, the forbidden celebrations have overwhelmed the three Holy Feasts that are clearly commanded in the Laws of Moses. (Lev 23, Deut 16) Modern doctrines now invoke the parable image of the woman riding the back of the scarlet beast. (Rev 17:1-5) The prophecies stated that the dogs would return to their own vomit, and many will follow the wide road, but few will take the straight and narrow way. (Deut 12:32, Matt 7:14, 2-Peter 2:21-22)

As God prepared Israel to take the land of Canaan, Moses wrote: take heed that following their traditions does not snare you with the abominations they do with their gods. Whatsoever God has commanded, observe to do it: and do not add to, nor diminish from it. (Deuteronomy 12:30-32)

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