

AWAY FROM THE MANGER **Luke 2 and Matthew 2**

It's interesting to note who wasn't at the manger and why they weren't there.

I. FAMILY WASN'T THERE

- They were too holy

- A. ASK: Why weren't Mary and Joseph's relatives there when Mary delivered?
- Jewish custom would dictate the offer of hospitality especially to travelers from one's own family line.

B. ANSWERS

1. Hospitality was not offered because Joseph married Mary even though she was pregnant before the wedding. - See Matt. 1:18-25
2. They were shunned from relatives homes because people assumed that Joseph and Mary had slept together before being married - See Luke 3:23 and John 6:42

- C. ACKNOWLEDGE: Because of their pious prejudice, they missed the Messiah who came in that manger

II. THE INNKEEPER WASN'T THERE

- He was too busy

A. SITUATION

1. Hundreds of people had flocked into Bethlehem to register for Caesar's census - Lk. 2:1-4
2. His business was so good that he had no vacancies - Lk. 2:7b
3. Most of his guests were likely Roman census officials who had no families to host them

- B. SUCCESS: These Romans were paying him well

- C. SADLY: He was working when he could have been worshipping

III. BETHLEHEM'S CITIZENS WEREN'T THERE

- They were too preoccupied

A. CONCERNED - Luke 2:3

1. Registration would require the payment of a tax
2. Many were no doubt concerned about how much the tax would be and if they could pay it

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2.

B. CRITICAL: None of the Jews residing in Bethlehem liked the Roman taxes and the politicians who fleeced them.

C. CONSUMED: They were so self-absorbed that they missed the Savior's birth

IV. JEWISH PRIEST'S WEREN'T THERE

- They were apathetic

A. THEIR INQUIRY - Matt. 2:3-4

- No doubt feeling somewhat important when they were summoned by the king

B. THEIR INFORMATION - Matt. 2:5-6

- They knew exactly what Micah 5:2 predicted about the place of Messiah's birth

C. THEIR INACTIVITY

- They are totally uninterested in discovering if what the Magi say is true and therefore do not go to Bethlehem

V. KING HEROD WASN'T THERE

- He was too threatened

A. HE IS TROUBLED - Matt. 2:3

- Hearing that a new king has been born

B. HE IS TRICKY - Matt. 2:8

- Indicating an interest in worshipping Christ when his real interest is eliminating Him

C. HE IS TERRIBLE - Matt. 2:16-18

- Killing all the babies in Bethlehem in an attempt to kill the Christ-child

CONCLUSION

What about you?

- Are you too holy so that you don't recognize your need for a Savior?
- Are you too busy making money that you've missed the Messiah?
- Are you too preoccupied with worries and concerns to come and see the Prince of Peace?
- Are you too apathetic and hard-hearted to consider the reality of Jesus' birth
- Are you too threatened by what you might lose or need to give up if you come and worship God in the flesh?

Will you come to manger and worship the Messiah?

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