

# The Infant Christ Was Taken Into Egypt

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The Infant Christ Was Taken Into Egypt (Mt. 2:14-15, 19, 21, 23).

The Infant Christ Was Not Taken Into Egypt (Lk. 2:22, 39).

Jesus Christ was a little boy living in a house when the so-called “wise men” visited,

And when they (*magi* from the East; cf. Mt. 2:1) had come into the house (SGD 3614), they saw the young child (SGD 3813) with Mary his mother ... (Mt. 2:11a; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Based on Herod’s best information, Christ could have been anywhere from one to two years old by the time it had been determined that all male children in Bethlehem and its surrounding districts were to be killed. So Christ would not have been a baby when he fled with his parents to Egypt,

Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and **he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem** and in all its districts, **from two years old and under**, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men (Mt. 2:16; emphasis added).

Unfortunately, many people have assumed that Christ was still a baby in his mother’s arms when Herod commenced killing the male children. This is very misleading and can contribute to inaccurate statements regarding how Luke’s account of Christ being taken to Egypt should be understood. Also, due to nativity scenes that take place every year, people are misled into believing the “wise men” from the East appeared when Christ was a newborn baby. This is untrue. They had to travel a great distance from a country in the East (cf. Mt. 2:12). They could not have arrived within a short period of time because they would have traveled overland using transportation common to that era and part of the world. Possibly by caravan or horse, but it was not be uncommon for the majority of people to travel on foot. By the time they arrived in Jerusalem, Christ was no longer a baby. Instead, he was a little boy.

With this brief background, Luke’s account can now be examined,

Now when the days of her (Mary’s) purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they (Christ’s parents) brought him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (Lk. 2:22; Ed. notes in parentheses).

According to the law of purification for a mother with a male child, she was to stay away from the sanctuary for thirty-three days following the circumcision of her son on the eighth day (Lev. 12:3-4). Therefore, Christ would have been presented at the temple

approximately forty-one days after his birth and the appropriate animal offerings would have been given (Lk. 2:24). After this ceremony was completed they would have returned home where Christ would have remained until they fled to Egypt as stated in Matthew's account. This could have been a year or more later.

It is important to note that Luke's account of Christ's early years ends with his presentation in the temple at Jerusalem when he was about forty-one days old and then between Luke 2:39 and 2:41 there is a space of about eleven years, ten and a half months with no account of Christ's activities. When Luke picks up the account of Christ's early years in verse 42, he is a twelve year old boy attending the Passover with his parents in Jerusalem. Therefore, Luke does not comment on Christ's parents taking him away to Egypt for protection from Herod for an extended period of time. However, Matthew fills in those details.

So there is no contradiction in scripture. Instead, Matthew's account covers Christ escaping to Egypt with his parents as a little boy, while Luke covers Christ and his parents during the first forty-one days of Christ's life, and then picks up the commentary after Christ and his parents have returned from Egypt and he is twelve years old.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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