

(1) Who were the wise men? How many of them visited the child Jesus? Where did they come from? Why do you think God used these men to be among the first to acknowledge the birth of Jesus and to worship him?

(2) What was the so-called “star” of Bethlehem? What have you been taught growing up? Did this “star” appear over the manger where Jesus was born, being the sign to the shepherds of where they might find him? If not, what sign did God give them? How does your answer reflect on the accuracy of most nativity scenes today?

(3) Where was Jesus born? I don’t mean what town, but where in the town? How should we understand Luke 2:7. What would have been the experience of Joseph and Mary as they arrived in Bethlehem? When did the Wise Men arrive in Bethlehem and how might we know? How does your answer to these questions alter some of the things you’ve been told about Christmas?

(4) What is your reaction to Herod’s command that the young boys in Bethlehem be killed? Why did he specify that all under the age of two be killed?

(5) What role did dreams, visions, and angelic visitations play in the Christmas story? What significance do you find in this?