

## A Baby – The Cross

12/07/25

About 132 million babies are born each year worldwide. This means about 4 babies are born every second. About 8 babies have been born since you have been reading or hearing this. In America, about 9,800 babies are born each day. That's about 408 babies born every hour. Every minute, about 6 or 7 babies are born in America if my math is still ok. That's a lot of babies. If we would put them all together, most of them would look the same except for skin and hair color. I like the one Dick Van Dyke Show where he thought they had the wrong baby when Laura gave birth to a son. It's hard to tell some babies apart – just my opinion. Thinking about babies should be something that we think about during the Christmas season. We are to celebrate the birth of Jesus in a manger that happened over 2000 years ago. We may bake a birthday cake for Jesus and celebrate His birth or go to a live nativity scene at a church. Most people don't even think about the birth of Jesus. Most people are too busy shopping or getting mad at the people around them. It's humbling to think that the little baby that was born in a manger was born to die. We all know that we are born to die at some point physically. As we have been looking into the Gospel of John, we have seen how everything Jesus did was part of a plan. His mission on this earth was planned before the world began and I think we need to spend more time thinking about a little baby that was born to die. This was not just a regular death, but a death on a cross. It was a painful physical death to accomplish spiritual freedom for us. Christmas and Easter actually go together because both was part of God's great plan for the gift of salvation for mankind. Just think about this, if there was no baby born in that manger, where would we be today? Let's take a closer look into the final part of God's plan and how it fits together with Christmas.

Let's turn to John 19: 16-24 where we read this, “<sup>16</sup> Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified.

### **The Crucifixion**

So they took Jesus away. <sup>17</sup> Carrying the cross by himself, he went to the place called Place of the Skull (in Hebrew, *Golgotha*). <sup>18</sup> There they nailed him to the cross. Two others were crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. <sup>19</sup> And Pilate posted a sign on the cross that read, "Jesus of Nazareth,<sup>[a]</sup> the King of the Jews." <sup>20</sup> The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it.

<sup>21</sup> Then the leading priests objected and said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'"

<sup>22</sup> Pilate replied, "No, what I have written, I have written."

<sup>23</sup> When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. <sup>24</sup> So they said, "Rather than tearing it apart, let's throw dice<sup>[b]</sup> for it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my garments among themselves and threw dice for my clothing."<sup>[c]</sup> So that is what they did. (NLT – [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com))

We've been looking at the Last Supper for the past few weeks and now we come to the last part of the trial. Pilate hands Jesus over to the Roman soldiers to be crucified. Jesus is taken to the place called The Skull with two criminals that are to be executed as well. A problem pops up during the crucifixion. Pilate puts up a sign fastened onto Jesus' cross which reads: Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews. Pilate wanted everyone to be able to read it, so he had it translated into three languages. One was Aramaic, the street language, the second was Latin, the official legal language, and the third was Greek, the universal business and cultural language of the day. The Jewish chief priests were not happy about the language of the sign. The priests wanted the sign to read that it was Jesus who said He was King of the Jews. How it was worded now, it looks like Roman agreed that Jesus was the King of the Jews. Pilate would not change the sign. We're not sure why Pilate would not change the sign. Maybe that sign was part of God's plan because that sign was actually very correct. That sign actually supported prophecy from the Old Testament. Here is some Scripture from prophets that would support the wording of the Roman sign:

Isaiah 9: 7 – His ever expanding, peaceful government will never end. He will rule forever with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David. The passionate commitment of the Lord Almighty will guarantee this!

Jeremiah 23: 5 – “For the time is coming.” Says the Lord, “when I will place a righteous Branch on King David’s throne. He will be a King who rules with wisdom. He will do what is just and right throughout the land.”

Daniel 7: 14 – He was given authority, honor, and royal power over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal – it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed.

Zechariah 9:9 – Rejoice greatly, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your king is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet he is humble, riding on a donkey – even on a donkey’s colt. (All Scripture from NLT)

The Roman sign on the cross that was in three different languages was telling the truth. Jesus is King and His rule is eternal. He is King over all nations on this earth. King Jesus’ rule cannot be destroyed. This King is righteous and yet He is humble. That little baby in a manger already had the title “King” before He was born as a human. Plus, Isaiah 9:7 tells us that God will guarantee this! We may vote for people during elections for political offices, but our true King is Jesus because He has power over “all” nations on this earth. Think about this: the cross verified Jesus Christ’s royalty. We not only celebrate a little baby at Christmas; we celebrate the King of all nations. The Wise men came to worship a King in a manger.

Let’s continue with John’s true story in John 19: 25-29, “<sup>25</sup> Standing near the cross were Jesus’ mother, and his mother’s sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene. <sup>26</sup> When Jesus saw his mother standing there beside the disciple he loved, he said to her, “Dear woman, here is your son.” <sup>27</sup> And he said to this disciple, “Here is your mother.” And from then on, this disciple took her into his home. <sup>28</sup> Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, “I am thirsty.”<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>29</sup> A jar of sour wine was sitting there, so they soaked a

sponge in it, put it on a hyssop branch, and held it up to his lips. (NLT – [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com))

Not only did the cross show the royalty of Jesus, but the cross also exemplifies Jesus' humanity. Just like a King being born in a little manger in a barn filled with barn animals shows Jesus' humanity, so does the cross. As Jesus is dying on the cross, He takes a minute to make sure His human mother is taken care of on this earth. Jesus has John take her in as widows had a tough time living in the days of New Testament. Jesus, the King of all nations, tells John to take care of His mother. The same mother who took care of Him when He was not physically able to as a human baby. Now, Jesus would not be able to take physical care of His mother. Not only that, but we also see that Jesus suffers from thirst. Even the Son of God suffered from thirst. Jesus tells the soldiers He is thirsty. So, they give Him a sponge filled with wine vinegar. Wine vinegar was used by the Roman soldiers so that they wouldn't have to drink the water in the areas they controlled. I have always been told not to drink water from Mexico. If I would visit Mexico, I would take my own water if I was able to because their water is not safe to drink. Wine vinegar was a very cheap wine, not like the wine Jesus made during His first miracle. I wonder if Mary thought about that wedding feast as she saw Jesus took that cheap wine from a sponge? The vinegar wine was also used to help with suffering. From what I read, wine vinegar only has about 0.5% alcohol in it. It is considered non-alcoholic today. This was the last drink Jesus would drink before He dies. The cross shows the humanity of Jesus just as the Jesus being born in a manger does.

Let's look at one more item in this story found in John 19: 30-37 where we read this, <sup>30</sup> "When Jesus had tasted it, he said, "It is finished!" Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

<sup>31</sup> It was the day of preparation, and the Jewish leaders didn't want the bodies hanging there the next day, which was the Sabbath (and a very special Sabbath, because it was Passover week). So they asked Pilate to hasten their deaths by ordering that their legs be broken. Then their bodies could be taken down. <sup>32</sup> So the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two men crucified with Jesus. <sup>33</sup> But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they didn't break

his legs. <sup>34</sup> One of the soldiers, however, pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out. <sup>35</sup> (This report is from an eyewitness giving an accurate account. He speaks the truth so that you also may continue to believe.<sup>[a]</sup>) <sup>36</sup> These things happened in fulfillment of the Scriptures that say, “Not one of his bones will be broken,”<sup>[b]</sup> <sup>37</sup> and “They will look on the one they pierced.” (NLT – [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com))

Not only did the cross show the royalty of Jesus, the cross exemplifies Jesus’ humanity, but the cross also shows the divinity of Jesus. Verse 30 is so important. Jesus takes a little drink of the Roman soldiers’ wine vinegar and then Jesus yells out that “it is finished”. Jesus’ life on this earth as human was finished. The work His Father had given Him to do was finished. The work of giving us the gift of salvation was finished. The work to provide the gift of the Holy Spirit to His believers is finished. The plan that was put in motion before the world began was finished. The mission for the Baby born in the manger was finished. Only God could say this and Jesus said it. What was finished for Jesus was the beginning for us. When Jesus had said these earthly words, He gave up His Spirit. “He” gave up His Spirit. Jesus was able to control His own natural death. We can’t control our own “natural” death. This is hard for us to wrap our minds around this because this is not human. This proves Jesus’ divinity. Jesus was in this world as a human, but He was still the Son of God. Jesus was born to a human mother, but not from the help of a human father. The Holy Spirit helped Mary to conceive a baby without human help. Jesus was born a human baby, but still was the Son of God. The Easter event and the Christmas event really does go together. The manger and the cross really does go together. That baby born in the manger was truly one of a kind. It is suggested that 108 to 117 billion babies have been born since the world began. Only one of those babies was on a mission for the cross. Only one of those babies was on a mission for us.

I would like to end by reading John 1: 1-18 because I believe we can have a better understanding of what it means when we read it with both the Christmas and Easter events in the back of our minds:

**1** In the beginning the Word already existed.

The Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

<sup>2</sup> He existed in the beginning with God.

<sup>3</sup> God created everything through him,

and nothing was created except through him.

<sup>4</sup>The Word gave life to everything that was created,<sup>[a]</sup>  
and his life brought light to everyone.

<sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness can never extinguish it.<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>6</sup>God sent a man, John the Baptist,<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>7</sup>to tell about the light so that everyone might believe because of his testimony. <sup>8</sup>John himself was not the light; he was simply a witness to tell about the light. <sup>9</sup>The one who is the true light, who gives light to everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. <sup>11</sup>He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. <sup>13</sup>They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

<sup>14</sup>So the Word became human<sup>[d]</sup> and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness.<sup>[e]</sup> And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

<sup>15</sup>John testified about him when he shouted to the crowds, "This is the one I was talking about when I said, 'Someone is coming after me who is far greater than I am, for he existed long before me.'"

<sup>16</sup>From his abundance we have all received one gracious blessing after another.<sup>[f]</sup> <sup>17</sup>For the law was given through Moses, but God's unfailing love and faithfulness came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God,<sup>[g]</sup> is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.

*NLT Life Application Study Bible.* Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.: Wheaton, 1996