

Jonathan T. Pennington, Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, pp. \$ It is an exciting time to be a student of the Gospels. Consider the advances of the past three or four decades. George Ladd impressed an entire generation.

Chapters 1 and 2 are about the birth narrative. Matthew gives two full chapters to the origin of Jesus. His earthly origin, and his divine origin. But his primary point in these two chapters is this: Jesus is the fulfillment of the prophets. He is the fulfillment of the OT. He is the Son of David. He is 14 as we saw in the Genealogy b. His genealogy is proof that Jesus is qualified to be the promised Messiah. He is promise of Abraham and the Son of David. His birth is not natural, and yet He is born of a woman. Chapter one tells us that Jesus is both God and Man. He is the God-Man and is uniquely qualified to be the Savior. Now we are in chapter two, and Jesus is a toddler, not a baby anymore. And we see two responses to this Savior-King. Herod and the Wise Men. Some people love Him and some people hate Him. Some people respond to Him, and others want to kill him. But the main purpose of these 12 verses is that Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy. So the main point of this passage has to be v. Observations from Herod the King. A little bit about Herod: The Romans installed local rulers in these areas, and eventually Herod became the ruler of Jews. It is Herod the Great, believe it or not. Because Josephus gives us two whole book scrolls on the life of Herod the Great. And that is more primary material than anyone else. Kind Herod was a paranoid tyrant who ended up killing three of his sons on suspicion of treason, putting to death his favorite wife of his ten wives! Herod is an illegitimate worldly king. He is the opposite of Jesus. Instead of using is power to serve people; He uses people to protect his power. Instead of serving people; he uses people. Herod represents worldly leadership and power. Jesus comes lowly lying in a feeding troughâ€¦ vi. If you want to win you do everything in your power to get to the top. You cheat if you have to, you lie if you have to, you use others at their expense if you have to. But it is not this way among you! The world has its way of operating, but it is not this way among you! Jesus is the opposite of Herod. He is terrified and wants to kill Jesus. The right king would have rejoiced to see the King of Kings, but King Herod wants to kill him. He sees Jesus as his mortal enemy. Herod is more interested in saving his throne than saving his soul! Herod hears of these wise men who have come to worship a king, and he is immediately threatened. Herod and others are troubled by the news of a king 2: Herod is like the new Pharaoh. I think Matthew makes the connection between Herod and Pharaoh. Herod is like the new Pharaoh just like Jesus is like new Moses. Moses only foreshadowed what Jesus would do. Jesus is the True and Better Moses. Jesus is the True and better Deliverer. Jesus is the True and Better Savior. This world is hostile! Evil is all around us! Jesus is born into a hostile environment! We will look at this more in the next section, but soon after the Wise Men leave Herod commits a mass murder on a whole village. He kills all the baby boys under the age of 2. Jesus was born into a war zone. All is not well in this world we live in. Our hearts should ache for those who lost their little ones, and loved ones. We should weep with those who weep. Not only is evil seen in humanity, horizontally; evil is seen vertically, towards God. There exists in all of us, a hostility toward God. By nature, are opposed to God. We are not by nature indifferent to Jesus, we are antagonistic towards Him! We do not appreciate His rule in our lives, by nature! We would rather not hear His Word. We are dead to Him. We are immune to Him. He represents the highest threat to our sinful desires. We would not ignore Him; we would destroy Him. This explains wars, fights, everything. Tim Keller gives an illustration that is helpful. And if you ever watch how that works, this is how it happens. You were in love and what made you in love with that person was certain characteristics. But when you decide to get angry, you take all those characteristics that you loved, and you read them through your anger and turn them in to flaws. You read the things you used to love, the very same traits, as imperfections and weaknesses. He used to love the fact when he was in love with her that she was a detail person. Always checking up, always checking up. Now he see it as a lack of trust, now he sees it as a critical spirit or nagging. He does whatever he wants. You see it as reckless. You have enmity in your heart when you despise Him. So when the angels pronounce peace in Luke chapter 3, they are pronouncing the end of hostility. When Matthew records what Herod did, he is showing the

hostility and evil that Christ came to conquer. Through Jesus, you can have peace with God, and with one another. Vertical peace, and peace on earth. One of the school teachers in the Connecticut massacre told Diane Sawyer the heart wrenching story of huddling her kids together in her room, moving a bookcase over the door as a barricade. Well the good guys did come. And in our story, the Ultimate Good Guy cameâ€ 1. Herod represents evil and hostility. In a world of hostility and evil and grief and painâ€the Good Guy Cameâ€ 1. How do we make sense of suffering and evil and sin and death? The cross of Christ. Jesus is born into this world to be a Savior. Mercy and Justice collide at the cross. Sin is exceedingly evil. The Son of God has to die because of it. This massacre is exceedingly evil. And on the cross, God the Father condemns it.

Chapter 2 : Matthew, the Gospel of the Church - About Catholics

Reading the Gospels Wisely is an important text for biblical students and scholars. Pennington's overt commitment to the Bible as the inspired word of God marks his text as a trustworthy resource for conservative scholars.

More Options About "Pennington has a wide knowledge of the specialist literature, and he skillfully distills what matters most for the task of reading the Gospels wisely. What comes across is a powerful sense that the Gospels are not only historical but also life-changing. Andrews; Ridley Hall, Cambridge In this work, Jonathan Pennington examines the theological and ethical aims of the Gospel narratives, helping students see the fruit of historical and literary study. He contends that we can learn to read the Gospels well from various vantage points, including those of premodern, modern, and postmodern habits and postures. This textbook can stand on its own as a guide to reading the Gospels as Scripture. It is also ideally suited to supplement conventional textbooks that discuss each Gospel systematically. Most textbooks tend to introduce students to historical-critical concerns but may be less adequate for showing how the Gospel narratives, read as Scripture within the canonical framework of the entire New Testament and the whole Bible, yield material for theological reflection and faithful practice. Pennington neither dismisses nor duplicates the results of current historical-critical work on the Gospels as historical sources. Rather, he offers critically aware and hermeneutically intelligent instruction in reading the Gospels in order to hear their witness to Christ in a way that supports Christian application and proclamation. This text will appeal to professors and students in Gospels, New Testament survey, and New Testament interpretation courses. Jonathan Pennington has a wide knowledge of the specialist literature, and he skillfully distills what matters most for the task of reading the Gospels wisely. He is especially concerned that we read the Gospels in ways that are appropriate to the sort of texts they are. What comes across is a powerful sense that the Gospels are not only historical but also life changing. Andrews; Ridley Hall, Cambridge "Reading the Gospels can be tricky, but it is important to read them with a full appreciation of their theology. How refreshing it is, however, to find a book with a new approach, one that reads the Gospels as literature and sees their importance theologically. This book is like a cool drink of water in what is too often the desert of Gospel studies. I believe this is the best introductory book on the Gospels. Both students and professors will find it to be invaluable. This learned yet lively volume attempts to transcend past miscues and cash in on lasting insights going back to patristic times. Pennington shows how the fourfold canonical Gospel ought to be read: Few works explain more. Pennington PhD, University of St. Andrews is associate professor of New Testament interpretation and director of research doctoral studies at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author of Reading Reviews Named to the "Top Ten List of Books Every Preacher Should Read" by Preaching Magazine "A book that has been needed for a long time--a book that assists preachers and others in understanding how to read the gospels as gospels. His book includes very helpful chapters on both academic discussions. He concludes with a study of how the Gospels are the archway into the canon. Pennington has produced an excellent, refreshing introduction for those who are interested in the Gospels. Pennington has written an attractive midsize book that covers the whole spectrum of issues relating to Gospel interpretation. He analyzes issues in significant detail and draws from and interacts with the most recent trends in Gospel scholarship. His historical and theoretical chapters take us just a little deeper into questions, or lead us a little further along the paths of contemporary discussion, than most introductory treatments of the Gospels. The same can be said of his practical chapters. They offer substantial, systematic guidelines for reading, applying, and preaching the Gospels, often highlighting processes other books neglect. This is a rich, detailed, and satisfying guide to reading the Gospels in an erudite and considered manner. While this book would be of value as a textbook for a class that surveys the Gospels, it will also serve the general reader as an introduction to the application of Theological Interpretation to the study of the Gospels. Long, Themelios "Reading the Gospels Wisely is not the kind of book you rush through. Whether or not you agree with everything Pennington recommends, you will greatly benefit from his careful, balanced approach to the books of the Bible that most clearly unveil King Jesus. The book is well written. Well-implemented examples and illustrations, from the Kentucky Derby to

Fiddler on the Roof, abound. The writing itself is executed with excellence--words are well chosen, sentences are well crafted. Reading the Gospels Wisely will be most useful to pastors and students. Pastors will grow in understanding how to read the Gospels in a theological-canonical-narrative way that complements not replaces the grammatical-historical exegesis with which many will have been trained. Students will be helped especially by the clarity, accessibility, and distillation of so much of the specialized work that has been done on the Gospels over the past few generations. Like a good dialogue partner, I found myself at times nodding in agreement with Pennington, at other times scratching my head in confusion, and even still wanting to throw the book across the room out of frustration and disagreement! That is a good thing! Gupta, Crux Sola blog "[The] discussion of hermeneutical and theological issues draws upon a wide range of scholarly works from Plato and the church fathers through the rise of historical criticism, to modernism and postmodernism, as well as contemporary scholars. Teachers of a course in biblical interpretation will want to consider requiring students to read this book. This would be quite useful for a pastor getting ready to preach through the gospels. It provides both a decent survey of the history of New Testament Gospel scholarship, a fine account of the most pertinent current issues, footnotes leading to further reading, and solid discussion of hermeneutical theories as they impact the reading of Gospel narrative. Pennington wears his learning lightly, intersperses the scholarly discussion with humorous examples and asides, and, as a former pastor, knows what the terminus of the discussion has to be: Pennington writes with great clarity and practical helpfulness. He provides general principles and then through judicious biblical examples shows how these principles make a difference to how the texts are to be understood and thereafter preached. His major argument is that the four Gospels must stand as the capstone of Christianity, theologically, pastorally, and personally. He is particularly good on how to connect narrative to application in the sermon. His case is well made, and I found myself inspired to read the Gospels once again with fresh and eager eyes. Reading the Gospels Wisely is an invaluable contribution to Gospel studies, and in my opinion ought to be a standard introduction to the interpretation of the first four books of the New Testament. Not only does Pennington adeptly introduce topics integral for the study of the Gospels. He eruditely demonstrates that a proper reading of Scripture, including the Gospels, ought to give credence to its narrative, theological, and ethical character, its christological focus, and the importance of all of these in the history of interpretation. Emerson, Presbyterian "As a supplement to a traditional introduction to the Gospels, [this book] has three primary virtues. First, Pennington draws attention to a number of important issues that may not be covered as thoroughly in traditional introductions and provides well-reasoned arguments in support of his conclusions. Second, Pennington provides a helpful model for interpretation of the Gospels. Third, Pennington continually reminds readers of why they are studying the Gospels in the first place. His advice on how to interact with ordinary people while attaining advanced training keeps the reader alert to the danger of becoming puffed up in oneself instead of focusing on building up the body of Christ. Reading this book with wisdom will better equip many for that work of edification, and it would make excellent reading for classes focused on introducing or interpreting the Gospels. Pennington is an effective teacher and storyteller himself. He leads the reader through a well-defined study, deftly constructing his case, and continually reminding the reader of each step that has been completed. One of his strengths is his lavish use of relevant illustrations. Pennington expertly employs these stories aptly to illustrate a point and help guide his reader to the importance of understanding story in the Gospels. Not only is this book helpful for pastors and teachers of the Gospels, it is also beneficial for any student of the Word of God. His Gospel expertise has enabled him to make a fine contribution to kingdom work. Wicker, Southwestern Journal of Theology "An eloquent and persuasive case for the Gospels to reclaim a central place in the life of the church. Pennington reconnects the church and the academy, erasing the disjuncture between Scripture and the people. Ricci, Pneuma Review "Pennington is to be applauded for his excellent contribution to scholarship on the Gospels. His text is accessible, his writing is clear, and his organization is logical. Reading the Gospels Wisely is an important text for biblical students and scholars. His step-by-step method for approaching, analyzing, and explicating the text of the Gospels is a helpful tool that is balanced by his encouragement to be flexible in both interpretation and exposition. Pennington has a solid understanding of theology and that shows. But Pennington also encourages us to look at the gospel stories as what they are--stories. He shows us how to

examine the stories carefully and how to ask questions. Of course context is extremely important to understanding the meaning, and he gets into context very well. We need to examine the stories well in order to get all that the author intended.

Chapter 3 : Jesus, King of the Jews - Wikipedia

Book review of Reading the Gospels Wisely by Jonathan Pennington (Baker,). BUY THE BOOK. If any of the following statements are true of you, then you should pick up a copy of Reading the Gospels Wisely (RGW).

Click here to join! All Scripture references are from the Gospel of Matthew unless other wise noted. It stood first in the oldest biblical codices probably because of its churchly concerns. Each section ends with these words or something similar: This arrangement has as its prologue, the infancy narrative Ch. The climax is recorded in the passion, death, resurrection and great commission. There are some similarities. When Matthew was written Jerusalem and the temple had been destroyed. The twelfth benediction was introduced into their liturgy which read: It is at this point that the Church begins to function independently. The law is not abandoned. The law says you shall not murder. I say you shall not be angry with your sister or brother! Matthew has the only gospel account of the final judgment and it deals with corporal acts of mercy. I was thirsty and you gave me to drink. Following the sermon on the mount we have the mission discourse The author has Jesus teaching outside of the house to Jews who do not understand him. The narrative material of the fourth section Peter comes to Jesus on the water Peter was martyred thirty years before this gospel was written. Why the interest in him? He alone is singled out as recognizing Jesus as the Messiah and individually blessed In the tax story he is given a coin to provide for him alone and Jesus. From Pentecost on he is the community leader and spokesperson. One historian has aptly said that they threw out the baby with the bath water. The fifth discourse deals with eschatology, the passion and the great commission. We thought you might also like:

Chapter 4 : Book Review: Reading the Gospels Wisely - Servants of Grace

In exploring how to read the Gospels wisely, we must first confront both the joy and the angst of having four different accounts of Jesus's life. Pennington reminds us that the Church has rejected the solutions of Marcion (who advocated using only Luke) and Tatian (who constructed one big Gospel by cutting and pasting the four together).

The account is short and straightforward; but it does include a reference to an Old Testament prophecy which will be important in the interpretation. But it is a story that is tightly connected to its context; it not only builds on the information revealed in the previous passage about the birth, but it also lays the foundation for the crisis to follow. At the outset it will be helpful to explain the historical sequence of the narratives. But we know that Herod died in the spring of 4 B. Herod probably set the age of two years old in order to be sure he killed the one who was to be king, thinking that the wise men had been traveling for some time. So the sequence would be: Jesus was born somewhere late 5 B. For chronological details like this, see Harold W. We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. As soon as you have found him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. Observations on the Text The story falls into several parts: If you are looking at the sentences in these sections, the structure is pretty simple. The first two clauses tell us this was after Jesus was born and during the time of Herod. The rest of the section is the direct quotation. As noted in the last lesson, this quotation is the most important interpretive part of the first section: We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him. In the second section vv. The third section is simply the scheme of Herod vv. But note again it simply says that Herod called them [the Magi] to find out the time the star appeared, and then sent them to Bethlehem. But what is added to his action is the direct quotation that they should inform him where the child was. The final section vv. In this section the individual acts will have to be explained. The Subject Matter of the Story It is clear enough to see that the story traces the quest of these Magi to find the one who was born king of the Jews. What this all means will depend on understanding who the Magi were, but an initial guess would lead you to the idea that they are important people from the east who are acknowledging that Jesus is the promised king. The narrative then underscores the truth that Matthew is presenting, that Jesus is the promised Messiah, and that this truth was a real threat to the reigning king because he was evil but a source of joy to the nations. But there is more here than a visit to a child who would be king someday. These Magi worshiped him. That was the intent of their coming. And so the narrative also reminds us that this child Jesus was far more than a future king. Only if He is divine could He be worshiped. He is not specifically mentioned, but the presence is obvious. The prophecy had recorded exactly where Messiah should be born, and the dream warned them to return home a different way. The supernatural element moving in the lives of the Magi is the true cause of their actions. We should say at the outset that the tradition that these men were three kings, and that their names have been preserved for us, has no foundation in biblical history at all. You will probably find that these were a priestly caste of very wise men from Mesopotamia, somewhere in the east, perhaps Persia or Babylonia--we are not told. They were famous for their learning, and for their wisdom. Anything out of the ordinary was taken by them to be some kind of an omen. Now they had seen a star that could not be identified. How then did they know to come to Jerusalem? The straight answer is that we do not know, but can only speculate. These types of wise men were diligent to discover what signs and omens meant. And if they had recourse to the holy books of Israel, which they very well could have had in the east since Babylon remained a center of Jewish studies, they might have come across the prophecy of Balaam, an early prophet from the east who had predicted that a star would march forth in Israel Num. It may be that they saw the phenomenon, searched their collections of books, talked to various scribes of the different religions, and learned that Israel was the place. If they had inquired about it further, they might have discovered that this one who was to be born would be special, worthy of worship. Then, when they came to Israel, where would they have gone looking for a king but to the palace? Of course it is also possible that the Lord simply revealed these things to them when they saw the star, and then confirmed the revelation when the star appeared over the house where Jesus was. Now then, what about Herod? This is Herod the Great, who ruled from 37 B. Any study of Herod

will immediately show that the man was a ruthless and paranoid tyrant. He would easily kill his own sons, or one of his wives, or the high priest, if he thought any of these were in any way conspiring against him. And so the thought of a king being born was an immediate threat. Especially if it was the promised Messiah, the king of the Jews. Herod, you see, was not Jewish. He was Idumaeen--an Edomite, a descendant of Esau and not Jacob. He had tried to ingratiate himself to the Jews by marrying into the Hasmonean family the line of Jewish kings [the Maccabeans] that had reigned for a hundred years , and by building the temple in Jerusalem. But he could not be trusted; and he himself trusted no one. So if you learn a little more about this character you will appreciate more why he and his court were thrown into a panic. There could also be a little history behind the disturbance as well, for the wise men may have come from a land that was antagonistic to Rome, and so their visit raised a lot of questions. A short word about the house may also be helpful, primarily because of traditional pictures and scenes of the wise men, the shepherds, and the animals all gathered around the manger. Most people realize that such a grouping just puts all these elements of Christmas together. But if you have time to trace through some of the material, there is some clarification. People often lived in caves, and expanded their building out in front of the cave. Inside the cave-home the few animals they possessed would be kept way in the back in the cave, or down in a lower level of the cave, to keep them from wandering off; and the people would live and sleep in the room or rooms at the front. When Joseph and Mary came to the town it was all very crowded because all the relatives were there to be taxed. And when they came to the lodging, perhaps the home of a close relative, the sleeping places for guests as well as family were all taken. There was no room--except in the back where the animals were. While this seems to us a shame, in some ways it would have been better for Mary--it was at least private and warm. After Jesus was born, there was probably more room in the house proper since the people who came to be taxed would have left. So the Magi could come to the house and find Mary and the child in the living quarters. But the critical word to define in this story is the word worship. They came to worship Jesus. And after they received confirmation from the Bible and from the Star, they knew this was of God, and so they came and worshiped him. The word for worship in the text does not help us much in knowing what they thought, what they said, or what they did. But a general study of acts of worship would lead us to conclude that they bowed down and worshiped him because they believed he was divinely sent or even divine. Perhaps they considered him another divine monarch. We do not know. But the passage emphasizes that they received the sign from heaven, heard the word from Scripture, were led to the exact place by the star, and naturally bowed and worshiped him. Worship includes submission, adoration, and homage. The evidence of their worship came in the gifts they gave, gifts fit for a divine king. By recording this event Matthew certainly has in mind that the natural response to Jesus is not simply homage as to a king, but worship to the Lord of heaven and earth. The picture of Messiah will continue to grow with each successive narrative. You might also want to consider why gold, and incense, and myrrh were brought to Jesus by the Magi. Biblical commentaries often see symbolic meanings in the specific gifts; they say that gold was a gift for a king but in the Old Testament gold was also the proper setting for the sanctuary where God dwelt among His people , the incense was for deity as the sacrifices in the Old Testament were sprinkled with it , and the myrrh was a preparation His suffering. Matthew makes no such points out of the gifts, and so we should be cautious about reading something into the text that has little support elsewhere in the Bible. It is easy to get carried away with symbolic interpretations--but you must learn not to do this unless there is some pretty good support for it. There is a lot of symbolism in the Bible, and so if the items were well known symbols like oil, or the dove you can do something with it; or, if the text itself makes something of it, that too is the basis for doing it. But there is little that is convincing for the symbolic interpretation of these elements--they are used in too many ways in the Bible. So we probably should simply say that these were costly gifts, and so they were certainly appropriate for a king. They speak of the homage of the Magi. And, they would have been welcomed by Joseph and Mary who were very poor. The Old Testament Citation The scribes and teachers of the law knew exactly where Messiah was to be born, for they knew the Scripture very well. The scribes probably had most if not all of it memorized. The prophet Micah foretold that from the little town of Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, there would come the ruler who would be the Shepherd of Israel. If you go back and read a bit of the context of Micah 5: But the prophecy quickly advances to tell how God

would later deliver Israel from the oppressing nations. He would one day bring from this least-expected place of Bethlehem a ruler. Here we learn something of the way prophecy is written: In fact, there may be centuries between the fulfillment of one verse and the next.

Chapter 5 : The Gospels | The Bible Project

In Reading the Gospels Wisely Jonathan Pennington examines the theological and ethical aims of the Gospel narratives, helping students see the interpretive fruit of historical and literary study.

Although this gospel never appeared as a part of the canon, it was never officially declared to be heretical. This gospel differs from the canonical gospels in several notable ways. The gospel also states that Mary was a virgin. This gospel was well known by the church fathers, who claimed it had recently appeared on the scene. It was translated into many languages and declared to be apocryphal in the fourth or fifth century. In fact, much of the doctrine of Mariology, the theology and study of Mary, is rooted in this book. Author and Date The author identifies himself as "James," presumably the son of Joseph, at the end of the gospel. He also claims that the Lord God gave him the gift and the wisdom to write this history and that he withdrew into the wilderness until the commotion surrounding the death of Zacharias ceased. However, few scholars believe that it was really written by James, mainly because of the supposed date of the gospel. James was put to death in 62 CE. However, some of the passages in this gospel are very similar to passages in Matthew and Luke, which were probably written in the 80s CE. Most scholars think this infancy narrative was written sometime during the second or third century. There are several references to this gospel in Greek manuscripts, but most of these references occur after the tenth century. Saddened, he checks the records to see who else has no children and finds that he is the only righteous man without descendants. This makes him really sad, and he goes into the desert to pray for forty days and forty nights. Apparently, he neglected to inform his wife, Anna, about his journey. Believing he is dead, she begins to mourn both her widowhood and her childlessness. It seems to her to mock her "even a lowly bird can easily reproduce. She redoubles her efforts to pray. Shortly, an angel stands before her and calls her by name. The angel tells her that the Lord has heard her prayer and that soon she will conceive and that the whole world will know about her child. Her child will minister to the Lord all the days of its life. At this point, the angel directs her attention to the arrival of her husband, who has been summoned to return home. He also was told that his wife would conceive. Needless to say, they have a happy reunion. Within nine months, Anna has a girl child they name Mary. She is very precocious, and is walking by six months of age. When his daughter was a year old, Joachim has a great feast and invites all the priests, scribes, and elders. The priests blessed Mary. When she was three, the "undefiled" daughters of the Hebrews accompanied her to the Temple. The high priest receives her and blesses her. He says, "The Lord has magnified her name in all generations" and the Lord God sent grace upon her. All of Israel loves her. Mary remains in the Temple receiving food from "the hand of an angel. They are fearful that she will some day defile the Temple by having "relations" with someone. So, they gather all the widowers and ask the Lord to choose one among them to be husband to Mary. Joseph is at that assembly. The high priest takes the rods of all the men and prays mightily. When he finishes, he returns the rods to their owners. The high priest decrees that Joseph has been chosen to take "into thy keeping the virgin of the Lord. But the priest convinces him to take her. He takes her home, but then leaves to return to his work building homes. When Mary is sixteen she receives the vision of the angel and is told that she is "blessed among women. When she was six months along, Joseph comes back home. He is not happy that she is pregnant and dresses himself in sackcloth, a sign of repentance. Mary insists to him that she is still a virgin. Joseph leaves her alone while he thinks over his options. That night he has a dream that affirms everything Mary told him. Then he glorifies God, who has given him such grace. When the priests discover that Mary was "great with child," they bring her and Joseph before the tribunal. Joseph was given charge over Mary on the condition that he would not "touch" Mary and would not allow anyone else to touch her either. Despite the obvious pregnancy, Joseph maintains his innocence and the counsel gives him "treated" water to test him. He drinks the water with no ill effects, so they give Mary the water, too. She is also unharmed. Since God has not punished either of them, the priests end the inquiry. Mary and Joseph return home together, cleared of all charges. When it comes time for the census, Joseph knows that he has to go to Bethlehem to enroll his sons. He worries what to say about Mary "is she his wife or his daughter? Mary knows that her time has come, but Joseph can only find a cave for

her to birth the child and searches for a midwife from Bethlehem. As he walks along, he noticed that the birds were suspended in mid-air. Then he notices that everything is frozen in time – people, children, fish, animals, everything – and they are all looking up. It last for just a moment and things return to normal. Just when things return to normal, a woman comes walking along. Joseph asks if she knows of a midwife. She accompanies Joseph to Mary, and the baby is born. After the child is born the midwife examines and confirms that Mary is, indeed, still a virgin. The midwife understands the significance of such a momentous occasion and gives "glory to the Lord. They both pray that the living God would forgive any doubts they might have had. An angel comforts them. In anger, Herod then orders the slaughter all children under the age of two. Upon hearing this, Mary put Jesus into an ox stall and Elizabeth takes her son, John, up into the hill country. Unable to find a hiding place, Elizabeth prays to the Lord and a cleft in the mountain opens up for her and the child. When officers come to Zacharias searching for the infant John the Baptist, he denies knowing the whereabouts of his son and the officers murder him at daybreak. All bewailed his death. They never found his body, but his blood had turned to stone. Simeon is chosen to be his successor – the same Simeon who was told that he would not see death before the Messiah would appear Luke 2: Thus ends the Infancy Gospel of James.

Chapter 6 : List of Gospels - Wikipedia

Near the end of I began reading Jonathan Pennington's excellent book entitled Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction (Baker Academic,). Pennington is a professor of New Testament at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

The Birth of Jesus in the New Testament: It might come as a big surprise to learn that many of the elements people often treasure as part of the nativity story come from Christmas carols and that the true source for this event, the Gospels in the New Testament, deal with the story of the birth of Jesus in four very different, but yet not contradictory, ways. Each of the Gospels approaches this story with great care to communicate their respective images of Jesus and in doing so powerfully communicate their unique message to their own particular audience. The Gospel of Mark is possibly the first of the Gospels to be written and although done so by Mark, according to early Church tradition, probably represents the preaching and message of the Apostle Peter. Mark starts his story of Jesus with the calling of John the Baptist in the wilderness. The first time we see Jesus in this Gospel is when Jesus comes to be baptized by John. Mark wrote his gospel to the Romans of his day and emphasizes the paradoxical message of the hidden service of Jesus as Lord. Together with the secrecy motives in this Gospel, the omission of any details of the birth of Jesus helps the reader to understand that it is not important where a servant is born or from which family he comes – it is his service that defines him. For the Roman society in the First Century, deeply divided into social classes of honor and status, this exquisite picture of hidden and radical service by one with all authority Lord calls the audience of this Gospel to emulate the example of Jesus that as Lord defined his mission and ministry by His service to others. Here already Matthew shows his special interest and the intended audience for his Gospel. He is writing to the Jews and presents Jesus as a King, better than David and a teacher greater than Moses. Joseph is contrasted with Herod, an unjust and wicked ruler. Matthew, in his powerful birth account, presents Jesus, in fulfillment of the prophecies and hopes of the Hebrew Scriptures, as the King of the Jews who has been given all authority in Heaven and Earth. He is Emmanuel, God with us. Luke wrote his Gospel primarily for a Gentile audience and focuses on the traditionally marginalized and neglected groups in First Century Mediterranean societies. Here the angel appears to Mary not to Joseph and it is Elizabeth and then later again Mary that each has words of praise and blessings recorded. The Gospel of John, possible the last of the Gospel to be produced, records the birth of Jesus in heavenly, if not spiritual terms and language. For John, this birth started in Heaven: Jesus, the Word was in the beginning and was God. All that is created was created through Him. John then describes the birth of Jesus with powerful language: John writing to Greek-speaking Gentiles across the Roman Empire explains that in Jesus, the Word becomes flesh and chooses to dwell with us and thus we all have been witnesses of His glory which is full of grace and truth. John purposefully leaves out any mention of Mary, Joseph and all the other characters that Matthew and Luke mentions in their birth narratives. John clearly communicates that this birth is the most significant event in the history of the world. God became flesh and so is shining His light in darkness, an event that mirrors the creation of the heavens and earth. The four Gospels in the New Testament present four unique and yet complimentary pictures of Jesus -- and this is evident in the way they record the birth of Jesus: Matthew presents Jesus as the King of the Jews worthy of obedience and worship; Luke shows a humane Savior that brings good tidings and liberation to the poor, neglected and marginalized; Mark present Jesus as Lord that serves in secret and thus shows a new way, free from the fight for supremacy and status; and finally, John presents Jesus as God, who comes as the Word become flesh and this shines in the darkness to bring a new beginning in this world. May we use this advent season and time of celebration to rediscover the powerful birth narratives in the Gospels of the New Testament. Read the birth narratives of Jesus from the New Testament:

Chapter 7 : The Infancy Gospel of James - Bible Study - BibleWise

Reading the Gospels well requires skill and thankfully Dr. Pennington is a skilled teacher who will help you to understand the issues and then equip you to help others read the Gospels wisely. Reading the Gospels Wisely is a challenging but welcome introduction that I heartily commend to Pastors and seminarians.

Retrieved February 8, Andrew in the leading role. What they were is uncertain. Fabricius supposes that Merinthus and Cerinthus are the same person and that Cerinthus was changed into Merinthus by the way of banter or reproach. Although Epiphanius makes them into two different persons, yet in the heresy of the Cerinthians, he professes himself uncertain. Retrieved June 18, Archived from the original PDF on March 5, Retrieved June 11, The gospel purports to be an old manuscript found in an old Alexandria Library giving a graphic and detailed account of Jesus as a friend of Jesus. The gospel states that Jesus did not die on the cross but died six months later. The gospel references the Essenes a lot and is allegedly written by an elder of the Essene order who was a close friend of Jesus. The document was discovered in a building in Alexandria but since then the document has disappeared. This information was retrieved from 4Enoch. The gospel is in the form of thirteen lectures. The book contains Zoroastrian themes along with Christian themes. Steiner states that the Gospel can be read at Akashic Record. From the Akashic Record. The Gospel of Jesus. He said he found the manuscript at the St. Unlike other biblical hoaxes Mendes presented the manuscript. The manuscript was written in Old Latin that the Romans had used. However the manuscript was quickly proved to be a hoax as it was written by Mendes. The gospel is an infancy Gospel attributed to the Apostle Peter. It was originally written in Latin by Mendes but was eventually translated into French by Mendes. He claimed to get it from various eastern mysterious sources. The book was first published in with the title Yehoshua Nazir; Jesus the Nazarite; life of Christ. The book is accepted as scripture by the Mazdaznan followers. The text is available on the Internet Text Archive. The gospel was allegedly inspired by the Aquarian Gospel. The book is a collection of records about Jesus retrieved from the ancient monasteries of the Essenes and the Rosicrucian Order. Lewis allegedly went with a staff of researchers through Palestine and Egypt visiting holy sites and obtaining information. The book states that Jesus entered priesthood and secret priesthood and talks about the doctrines and secret facts about the resurrection. A preview of the book can be read on Amazon. The book has not been translated into English and the full text in German is available at the internet text archive under the title:

Chapter 8 : The Gospels - Questions & Answers - Bible Characters - Bible Study - BibleWise

For those interested in studying the Gospels, Jonathan Pennington's book "Reading the Gospels Wisely" can be added to a number of helpful works published in recent years by the likes of George Eldon Ladd, D.A. Carson, Klyne Snodgrass, Richard Bauckman and Thomas Schreiner.

Every time I read the Gospels, I gain a fresh and deeper understanding of all Jesus has done for me which leads me to worship Him all the more for all He has done on my behalf. In his new book *Reading the Gospels Wisely: A Narrative and Theological Introduction* Dr. Reading the Gospels Wisely has three parts. In part one the author seeks to define what the Gospels are, why we need the Gospels, gives the testimony to the Four Gospels, and then moves to explain how to read Scripture and the Gospels well. In part two, the author seeks to explain his hermeneutical method and in the final part applies his teaching. Many today question and doubt the credibility of the Gospels but the judicious interpreter will evaluate these documents with an understanding of their conventions of their day. Students of the Gospels ought not to force modern conventions onto the Gospels but must understand that the use of paraphrase and the telescoping of events were legitimate devices. In addition, given that there were four different writers involved one should not expect them to recount every detail in an identical fashion. Consequent, any approach to the interpretation of the Gospels must begin with the presumption that the Gospels are historically accurate and reliable. And most of all my desire is that readers will not be merely hearers but responders by faith to the clarion call of the love of God in Jesus Christ as presented in the Gospels. The author accomplishes his goal of helping the reader understand more of the Gospels intent and purpose by walking readers through not only issues that affect how people understand the Gospels but proposing how the reader of the Gospels can read the Gospels wisely through taking their meaning and thus their interpretation seriously. *Reading the Gospels* is a book that will help Bible college and seminary students, and those engaged in the teaching ministry of the Church to understand not only the issues surrounding the Gospels in the past, but also in the present. *Reading the Gospels well* requires skill and thankfully Dr. Pennington is a skilled teacher who will help you to understand the issues and then equip you to help others read the Gospels wisely. *Reading the Gospels Wisely* is a challenging but welcome introduction that I heartily commend to Pastors and seminarians. Baker Academic Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from the publisher through the Baker Academic book review bloggers program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own.

Chapter 9 : Why the Gospels are the center of the Bible (and your life) – Southern Equip

The first four books of the New Testament, the Gospels, show us the life and teachings of Jesus Christ while providing evidence that He is the Son of God and the Messiah.