

## MEMO FROM THE MAYOR

### SUBJECT: Chip the Wonder Dog Attends the First Christmas, Part II (final)

*Note: This completes a fantasy version of what Christ's birth might have looked like to a prototype Dachshund had he been one of the animals that witnessed the Savior's Nativity.*

In the small workshop located in the back of Yosef ben Yaakov's house in Nazareth, where Yahshua lived, Chip the Wonder Dog's extended family gathered around their patriarch. There, the old dog began his tale. He recited what he understood his three recurring dreams relating to their young Master's birth meant.

Chip recounted how at the time of Yahshua's birth in Bethlehem, strangely dressed people appeared one night during the time of counting Yosef's clan. It was a large group, explained Chip, but only three or four entered to view the child they had traveled to see.

Chip continued, "They didn't stay long, but they had created quite a stir in Jerusalem. They were dressed in fine linens and silks, much like royalty, which I suspect accounts for the ruckus they created in Jerusalem. Apparently, the Jerusalemites thought there might be another war with Parthia, like the one forty years before."

"What are you talking about Papa?" asked Hannah, Chip's daughter.

"Yahshua explained the matter to me later, my child. Much turmoil existed in Rome, especially in its Senate due to civil wars. This happened way before any of us lived. During its troubles, Rome forgot about Judea for a little while. So, about fifty years ago, the Parthians in the east and an anti-Rome Hasmonean named Antigonus defeated a pro-Roman Jewish militia led by high priest Hyrcanus II and the one they now call Herod the Great, the first Herod, when Yahshua was born. The Parthians and Antigonus conquered Syria, Judea and the Galilee. Herod fled to Rome, where the Roman Senate made him "King of the Jews" and sent him back to Jerusalem with a commission to retake Judea. So, he did. With Roman support, Herod retook Judea, causing Antigonus' reign to quickly end."

"Were these strangely dressed people Parthians?" Chip's grandson Ezekiel asked.

"Perhaps, but I can't say for certain. I'd never seen any before, as far as I know," Chip explained. "But I remember they spoke similarly to Yahshua's tongue, though I had never heard their dialect before. One day I overheard Myriam explain to Yahshua when he was old enough that the visitors were descendants of a group of people who were taken captive out of the north

and moved east. They lived there with a prophet named Daniel in a region near Persia. This Daniel taught their ancestors that when they saw certain stars and constellations in the sky that a baby would be born in Judea who would be the King of the Jews and the child's Kingdom would never end."

"Why would that be important to Persians or Parthians or whoever lives where they came from?" asked a granddaughter.

"Because, princess, they worship the same God as Yahshua. So, when they saw the signs in the heavens, they knew the time was near. A contingent traveled to Jerusalem and they asked the first Herod where they might find the King of the Jews who had just been born. You can imagine how upset Herod was to hear people from the East asking where they might find the King of the Jews. Herod had to be livid! He claimed that title. The Roman Senate gave it to him."

Chip continued, "But that, dear ones, is just the beginning. I need to tell you how the story might end based upon my dreams."

Chip related how in one of the dreams, Yahshua is in Jerusalem for one of the Jewish feasts accompanied by His extended family, Yosef, Myriam, His brothers and sisters, along with aunts, uncles, and cousins. There, Yahshua goes to the Temple with His family, but when they leave at the end of the feast to return to Nazareth, Yahshua is nowhere to be found in the family's caravan.

In Chip's retelling, Yosef and Myriam are devastated to have their firstborn missing. They hurry back to Jerusalem and the Temple grounds where Yahshua was last seen. When they enter one of the rooms in the court area, an astonishing sight confronts them. They see their son being questioned by teachers of the law, but their son seems to be teaching the teachers the true meaning. Yet, Yahshua was months away from His bar mitzvah!

When Myriam confronts Yahshua about what appears to be a clear violation of the law—not honoring his father and mother—Yahshua seemingly teaches His mother. "Why were you worried? Jesus asks. "Don't you understand? I must be about my Father's business."

"How can that be, Papa?" asked Aaron, Chip's oldest son. "Yosef has nothing whatsoever to do with remodeling the Temple."

"I'm not exactly sure, Aaron," Chip replied. "In the dream, Myriam is most perplexed by the answer. But the second and third dreams might hold the key."

Chip then recounts the second dream. He tells of Yahshua being about thirty years old and living with his mother, Myriam, and His siblings further north in the Galilee region at Kfar Nahum.

As Chip explained, “It did not help the attitude of Yahshua’s brothers and sisters, now grown, that Yahshua spent so much time traveling around the area teaching Torah instead of helping of what was left of the family’s carpentry business. Yet, Yashua’s Torah seemed so much more alive than that taught in the regional synagogues.

As the old dog recounts the second dream, he tells of Yeshua walking by the Jordan River meeting up with a kinsman, Yohanan, the son of Zachariah, who served as a priest in the Temple and the husband of Elizabeth, Myriam’s cousin.

Chip continues, “In this dream, Yahshua is baptized by Yohanan, and although a priest’s son, Yohanan rails against the Temple Scribes and Pharisees who come to the Jordan to see what he is doing. He calls them vipers. But when Yohanan sees Yahshua, he calls Him the Lamb of God.”

“Why is that so strange, Papa?” asked Esther, another granddaughter.

“Well, my little sabra,” Chip explained, “I don’t want to scare you, but the only Lamb of God I know of is the one sacrificed by the Temple priests on Pesach. They kill the innocent little thing, sprinkle its blood, then eat it.”

“No! No!” the great grand puppies cried in unison.

“Oh, wait for the third dream. It’s the most disturbing of all,” declared Chip.

“What is it?” asked Aaron. “Please explain.”

Chip coughed, took a deep, labored breath, then began the explanation. He tells of their beloved Master being beaten and spat upon, then hung on a cross, bleeding profusely, surrounded by Roman soldiers, and crying out to God in heaven, calling Him, Father. Then, peacefully looking up, Yahshua declares, “It is finished!”

“What was finished, Papa”? Hannah asks.

“I am not certain, my child,” answered Chip. “But I know this. My time with all of you has come to an end. I must say good-bye. But I know that if you follow our young Master, all of you will be taken care of just fine.”

With that, Chip breathed his last. His family cried softly, pondered his words.  
Have a Blessed New Year!