

Innkeeper Discussion

Remember that these monologues are essentially historical fiction, based on the Scripture but filling in plausible subjective details, both emotional responses and motivations. Your first task is to decide if they are reasonable

Rome at this time had required people to register in their family's hometown, causing great hardship. On the flip side, Rome had allowed Jews to practice their religion.

What do we know about the reasons for this "census"? The regular census was held every 20 years and was not due. The year 2 B.C. marked the 25th anniversary of Caesar Augustus's rule and the 750th anniversary of the founding of Rome and Augustus was to be declared "Father of his country." This census was an expression of loyalty and tribute to Caesar and would especially need to include descendants of King David. (See Craig Chester, https://www.tccsa.tc/articles/star_of_bethlehem.html)

Where did Jewish families travel on a fairly regular basis?

Is it likely that Jerusalem would have accommodation for the many people who came on feast days?

What reasons might there be for people travelling to places like Bethlehem?

Is it reasonable that an Innkeeper would be a "tour guide" and "Chamber of Commerce" promoter of his town?

What historical events were central to the Jewish identity?

What was Bethlehem's claim to fame?

Were Jews looking for their Messiah at this time?

What were the expectations of the Messiah?

Might an innkeeper have heard stories about amazing events like the birth of a son to the priest Zechariah and his barren wife, Elisabeth, announced when he was presiding over the incense in the Temple?

How would the oriental tradition of hospitality to strangers put an additional strain on the innkeeper?

Is it reasonable that children would do some of the work of their parents?

What does this whole event tell us about the way God goes about accomplishing His will in the world?

Can you imagine the talk that went around the town after the shepherds spread the story of their angelic visitation?

What would the children of the town be talking about?

Compare the way the events might have been analyzed and scrutinized if the people to find out about them were Pharisees, Scribes or Sadducees.