

Political Climate Noted At Dawn of Christian Era

By CHARLES E. CHAPEL, Assemblyman, 46th District
 The Gospel according to St. Luke, Chapter 2, begins: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)"
 "And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city."
 "And Joseph also went up from Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of

the house and lineage of David.)
 "To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child."
 "And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered."
 "And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."
 THE ABOVE is only the beginning of the Second Chapter of the Gospel according to St.

Luke, followed by the adoration of the shepherds and many other events in the life of Jesus Christ. It may be of interest to know that the phrase in English which reads, "that all the world should be taxed" in the original Greek reads "that all the inhabited earth should be taxed" and actually refers to the part of the world under Roman rule at that time.
 Aside from our interest in the above quotation from the Bible during the Christmas season, it clearly shows that at the dawn of the Christian era, the Roman Empire went to extreme efforts to collect taxes

from every human being within its power in order to support the dictatorship of a strong central government. Anyone who advocated home rule or otherwise criticized the government of Rome did so at the risk of his life.
 In this year of our Lord, 1963, in the United States of America, we are oppressed by heavy taxes levied by the federal government, and these taxes are increasing along with the national debt. We could bear the heavy burden of taxation easier if we believed that it helped the United States, but when we know that billions of

dollars are being given to ungrateful, unfriendly nations, we have a right to ask how long this can continue.
 RETURNING TO the Holy Bible, we find the New Testament begins with the Gospel according to St. Matthew, also known as Levi, a Jew of Galilee who had taken a job as tax collector under the Roman government. Therefore, he was one of the hated and despised men known as publicans, but Matthew became a disciple of Jesus and wrote his Gospel about the year A. D. 37, after the crucifixion, Matthew wrote

for Israel primarily, but, in a larger sense, he wrote for the whole world.
 Saints Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the authors of the four Gospels, told the record of the human ancestry, birth, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ, but each wrote in his own manner because each had a strong personality.
 St. Matthew describes the visit of the Magi, the flight into Egypt by the Holy Family, Herod's slaughter of the innocents in his effort to kill the infant Jesus, and the return of the Holy Family from Egypt

to Nazareth. Herod was the son of Antipater, who was made procurator of Judea by Julius Caesar in the year B. C. 47. Antipater appointed Herod governor of Galilee.
 AFTER THE assassination of Julius Caesar, disorders ensued in Judea. Herod fled to Rome and there he was appointed King of the Jews in B.C. 40. He returned to the Holy Land and tried to conciliate the Jews by marrying Mariamne, the beautiful Jewish granddaughter of Hyrcanus, in B.C. 38. Herod also appointed his wife's brother, the Macbean Aristobulus III, High Priest of the Jews.

Herod was still King of the Jews when Jesus was born, hence when the Magi, the scribes, and the chief priests all told him that the new-born Jesus was King of the Jews in accordance with the prophecies of the Old Testament, Herod ordered that "all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under" must be killed. According to the Scriptures this was done, but the life of Jesus was saved when Mary and Joseph took him with them to Egypt.
 Those who stretch the truth often find that it snaps back and hits them.

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