

Religious Education

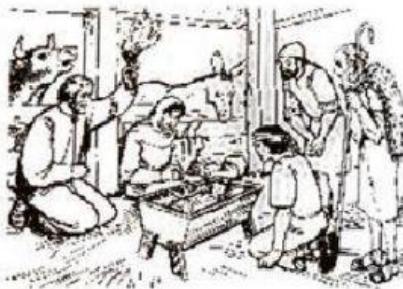
Celebrating Christmas

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The visitor to Mary and birth of baby Jesus

About two thousand years ago, in the town of **Nazareth**, there lived a young woman named **Mary**. She was **engaged** (betrothed) to be married to **Joseph**, a carpenter. One day an **angel** appeared before her and told her she had been chosen to have a special baby. The baby would be **God's son**, and she should call him **Jesus**.

Soon after the angel's visit, Mary and Joseph were married. Mary was due to have her baby when they were told that they had to go on a long journey to **Bethlehem**, which was where Joseph came from. This was because they had to pay a special **tax**. Mary had to ride on a donkey during the journey over the few days over the hills of Galilee.



At last Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem. It was crowded with many other people who also needed to pay their taxes. Mary was very tired and needed a place to stay. At each of the **inns** (small hotel), the story was the same. There was no room for them. Eventually, one kind innkeeper said he had a **stable** where he kept his animals. They were welcome to stay there.

A few hours after they were settled, Mary gave birth to her son. She named the baby **Jesus**, wrapped him in strips of cloth, and laid Him in a **manger** (a trough to keep animal straw) which was full of hay.

At the same time on a hillside overlooking Bethlehem, some **shepherds** were watching over their sheep. A bright light appeared in the sky. They were very afraid when they saw the bright light. They were angels sent by God. They sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will to all men." One of the angels told them not to be afraid because they had come to bring good news. He said that the Son of God had been born and they could find Him in Bethlehem.

The shepherds wanted to go and see the baby. When they arrived at the stable, they were filled with joy at seeing the baby Jesus lying in the manger. They knelt down and worshipped Him. They told Mary and Joseph how the angels had appeared in the sky and told them that Jesus was to be the Saviour of the world. When they left, they were filled with joy and told everyone they met about the good news of the new baby.

Read the passage carefully. Answer the following questions.

1. In which town did Mary live? _____
2. a. Who was she engaged to? _____
b. What was his occupation? _____
3. Mary was _____ to have a special baby.
4. Where did Mary and her fiancé go to be taxed?

5. For the long trip, what did Mary ride on?

6. The town was crowded and there were no rooms available.
 - a. Who gave Mary and her fiancé a place to stay?

 - b. They stayed in his _____.
7. After baby Jesus was born, Mary laid him in a _____.
8. Angels appeared to _____ and told them the good news then they spread the news of the _____ being born.