

Christmas



All the candles on our wreath are now lighting and we have put Jesus into our cribs. Christmas Day is here, hooray!

Here is the Christmas story:

Christmas night is a night like no other. It is a time to dream and sing our way to Bethlehem. The little town we seek sits in the hill country, about ten miles south of Jerusalem. For thousands of year, the houses have huddled there on the hilltop like a family breaking bread together. Bethlehem means 'House of Bread'. All is still and quiet in the little town.

As night begins to fall the last two travellers come slowly up the road with their donkey. Look, there is a young woman about to be a mother. She is walking with her husband. They are Joseph and Mary from Nazareth!

They have walked for six days to come to this place where David the King was born so long ago.

They have come, like so many others, because the Roman Emperor wants to count each one, so he can take their money as a tax.

But it is late, and Mary is weary? Where will they sleep? There is no room in the inn. They decide to sleep with the animals.

Stars brighten slowly in the sky. All creation holds its breath. Suddenly from the stable, comes the cry of a new born baby. Mary gently wraps him in a blanket and lays him in the feed box filled with straw.



In the hills outside Bethlehem, shepherds watch their sheep. All at once the dark is lost in light and in the midst of the light is something even brighter: the faces of angels.

The fearful shepherds then hear singing in the sky, and a voice says. ‘Do not be afraid. Listen I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared by all people. Today in the City of David, a Saviour is born! He is Christ, the Lord’.

Then more angels appear, a whole heavenly host of them praising God and singing: ‘Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace & good will to all people, everywhere.’

The shepherds run with joy across the fields to Bethlehem to the barn behind the inn. There they find the Holy Family and creep forward, over-whelmed with mystery, to find Nativity itself in the centre of all that love.

Three camels plod up the road to Bethlehem. They have come from the East, far beyond the Arabian Desert, perhaps as far as the Caspian Sea. The camels carry three kings, the wise ones, and the Magi. They are following the wild star, the one they had never seen before. They are following it, wherever it goes, to find the King. Its shining shows them.

The Magi’s journey ends in a new kind of king. Their restlessness rest at last. They fall to their knees and give him bright gold, sweet-smelling frankincense and bitter myrrh, brought so far with so much love.

So now we all come, following the star, to find Jesus. We come, as people have come through the ages to bring our own gifts to this Child who is God’s gift to us.

(from A Children’s Liturgy for Christmas Eve from ‘*The Complete Guide to Godly Play Volume III*’ by Jerome Berryman)

