

# The Christmas Story

**TEXT:** Luke 2:1-20

**KEY VERSE:** But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. — Micah 5:2

For centuries the coming of the promised Messiah had been the cherished hope of God's people. Now on this first Christmas night, the promise became reality. Jesus came to earth in the likeness of man to dwell among men. He was God's Gift to the world, but came willingly to pay the price of man's redemption. Jesus knew that the Cross lay at the end of His earthly pilgrimage, but His only desire was to do the will of His Father. God desires only one thing of us in return for the love He has manifested—that we do His will.

1. Joseph was directed by the angel of the Lord to name Mary's Son "Jesus." This name means "Savior," "for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). What significance does this truth have in our time?

2. In what city was the Christ Child born? Why is this birthplace more than just a coincidence? See Micah 5:2.

3. From what royal lineage did Jesus come? How can this be proved (Matthew 1:1-16; 22:42)? Does this mean, then, that the Gentiles are excluded from God's plan of salvation? See Ephesians 2:12-18.

4. Why was Christ laid in a manger? What does this seem to indicate? See 2 Corinthians 8:9.

5. Who heard the announcement of Christ's birth ? Why was the proclamation made to this sort of people, rather than to the scribes and priests? See Luke 2:15-20.

6. The angel proclaimed to the shepherds, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:10,11). Compare the angel's announcement with Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Which is the greater, and why?

7. The shepherds believed the message of the angels, and left their sheep and went quickly to see the Savior. How should men respond to the story of Christ today?

8. How did Mary react to the news concerning the angel's proclamation? What advantage can be gained by meditating on God's Word? See Joshua 1:8.

9. "God so loved . . . he gave" (John 3:16). Who does God love and what did He give on that first Christmas night?