

The Christmas Story: The Birth of Jesus

On a quiet night, when the stars shone brightly in the sky and the world lay under a soft veil of peace, Mary and Joseph traveled along the dusty roads of Judea, searching for a place to stay, for the time had come for Mary to give birth to her first child.

They arrived in Bethlehem, a small village that seemed busy and lively with travelers coming for the census, but the inns were full, and the innkeeper could offer them no room.

Finally, a kind innkeeper offered them a simple stable, a place where animals rested, but whose walls provided warmth and shelter against the cold night.

Mary felt the first pangs of labor and knew that the moment was near, while Joseph gently held her hand and tried to calm her with soft words and a praying gaze.

The stable smelled of straw and fresh hay, and the gentle sounds of cows and sheep gave a sense of home, simple as it was.

Under the bright moonlight and the soft glow of the stars, Mary carefully wrapped her newborn son in cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no cradle available.

Outside the town, on the wide fields, shepherds were watching their flocks, when suddenly an angel appeared to them, surrounded by dazzling light that filled them with fear and wonder.

The angel said, "Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news that will bring joy to all people: today, in Bethlehem, the Messiah is born, the Savior of the world. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger."

Suddenly, a heavenly host of angels surrounded the shepherds, praising God's glory and singing: "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to people of good will."

The shepherds hurried, filled with joy and awe, and found Mary and Joseph in the stable, exactly as the angel had said, and they saw the child who would change the world.

They knelt by the manger, admired the little Jesus, and told Mary and Joseph about the heavenly message they had received, and Mary treasured all these words in her heart, pondering their meaning.

In the East, three wise men saw a bright star that shone higher than all the others, and they understood that this sign announced the birth of a king in Judea.

They followed the star day and night, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, knowing that these gifts symbolized kingship, divine honor, and the suffering the child would later endure.

When they arrived in Bethlehem, they bowed before the child, gave their gifts, and honored him with humility, great despite their royal status.

Mary and Joseph were deeply moved by the arrival of the wise men, and they felt how God's promise manifested in their simple, holy surroundings.

The flocks of shepherds, the angels, and the wise men spread the news of Jesus' birth, and all who heard it felt joy and hope in their hearts, knowing that something extraordinary and holy had begun.

The child lay peacefully in the manger, surrounded by the warmth of his parents, the soft breaths of the animals, and the quiet admiration of the visitors, while the night continued in a moment of sacred beauty.

Mary realized that this child, though small and vulnerable, would make a great difference in the world, and she felt deep gratitude and joy filling her heart with love.

Joseph looked at Mary and the child and felt a responsibility greater than he had ever known, yet also a comfort and peace that gave him strength.

The story of Jesus' birth slowly spread through Bethlehem, and those who heard it were reminded of hope, love, and the miracle of a new beginning.

In the years that followed, the shepherds and wise men continued to tell stories about that holy night, about the angels and the star, and about the child who would change the world.

Thus, the birth of Jesus became a Christmas story that inspired generation after generation, a story of faith, humility, love, and joy that would never be forgotten.

20 Multiple-Choice Questions (English)

1. Where did Mary and Joseph travel to?
 - a) Nazareth
 - b) Bethlehem
 - c) Jerusalem
 - d) Jericho
2. Why could they not stay in an inn?
 - a) It was too cold
 - b) All inns were full
 - c) They did not want to
 - d) They were too late
3. Where did the innkeeper provide shelter?
 - a) A large room
 - b) A stable
 - c) A tent
 - d) A cave
4. What lay in the manger?
 - a) A sheep
 - b) The newborn child Jesus
 - c) Gifts
 - d) Straw
5. Who appeared to the shepherds outside the town?
 - a) Joseph
 - b) An angel
 - c) The wise men
 - d) A priest
6. What did the angel tell the shepherds?
 - a) That a storm would come
 - b) That the Messiah was born in Bethlehem
 - c) That they must pray
 - d) That they must bring gold
7. What did the shepherds do after finding the child?
 - a) They gave the child a gift
 - b) They knelt and shared the heavenly message
 - c) They left the stable
 - d) They slept

8. What did the three wise men see in the East?
 - a) A shooting star
 - b) A bright star announcing a king
 - c) A rainbow
 - d) The moon
9. Which gifts did the wise men bring?
 - a) Gold, frankincense, and myrrh
 - b) Clothes and food
 - c) Toys
 - d) Books
10. Why were the wise men's gifts special?
 - a) They were expensive
 - b) They symbolized kingship, honor, and suffering
 - c) They came from faraway lands
 - d) They were beautifully wrapped
11. How did Mary react to the shepherds and wise men?
 - a) She was angry
 - b) She was moved and joyful
 - c) She slept
 - d) She cried
12. What did the shepherds and wise men spread?
 - a) Gold and frankincense
 - b) The news of Jesus' birth
 - c) The angels
 - d) Clothes
13. How did Jesus lie in the stable?
 - a) In a bed
 - b) In a manger, surrounded by warmth
 - c) In Mary's arms
 - d) On the ground
14. What does the story of Jesus' birth emphasize?
 - a) Luxury and wealth
 - b) Faith, humility, love, and joy
 - c) Power and rule
 - d) Conflict and war

15. Who witnessed Jesus' birth?
- a) Only Mary and Joseph
 - b) Shepherds and wise men
 - c) Roman soldiers
 - d) No one
16. Why did the wise men follow the star?
- a) For an adventure
 - b) Because it announced the birth of a king
 - c) To find gold
 - d) To celebrate
17. How did the people feel who heard the news?
- a) Afraid
 - b) Hopeful and joyful
 - c) Angry
 - d) Sad
18. What did Joseph do during the birth?
- a) He was scared
 - b) He helped Mary and felt responsibility and peace
 - c) He slept
 - d) He ran away
19. What do the wise men's gifts symbolize?
- a) Only wealth
 - b) Kingship, divine honor, and suffering
 - c) Gifts for children
 - d) Decoration
20. How does the story end?
- a) With conflict
 - b) With an inspiring Christmas story told for generations
 - c) With war
 - d) With sadness
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Answers and Explanations

1. **b) Bethlehem** – Mary and Joseph traveled there for the census and Jesus' birth.
 2. **b) All inns were full** – They could find no room in any inn.
 3. **b) A stable** – A simple stable was offered as shelter.
 4. **b) The newborn child Jesus** – The child lay in the manger.
 5. **b) An angel** – The angel appeared to the shepherds.
 6. **b) That the Messiah was born in Bethlehem** – This was the heavenly message.
 7. **b) They knelt and shared the heavenly message** – They honored the child and told the news.
 8. **b) A bright star announcing a king** – The star led the wise men to Jesus.
 9. **a) Gold, frankincense, and myrrh** – Symbolic gifts for the child.
 10. **b) They symbolized kingship, honor, and suffering** – Each gift had deep meaning.
 11. **b) She was moved and joyful** – Mary felt gratitude and love.
 12. **b) The news of Jesus' birth** – They spread the good news.
 13. **b) In a manger, surrounded by warmth** – The manger served as a cradle.
 14. **b) Faith, humility, love, and joy** – The central theme of the Christmas story.
 15. **b) Shepherds and wise men** – They witnessed the birth.
 16. **b) Because it announced the birth of a king** – The star led the wise men to the child.
 17. **b) Hopeful and joyful** – People felt joy upon hearing the news.
 18. **b) He helped Mary and felt responsibility and peace** – Joseph supported Mary.
 19. **b) Kingship, divine honor, and suffering** – The gifts symbolized these qualities.
 20. **b) With an inspiring Christmas story told for generations** – The story remains a source of inspiration.
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Het Verhaal / The Story

Nederlands

(Ongeveer 100 lange zinnen, samengevoegd in vloeiende alinea's voor leesbaarheid)

In een stille nacht, toen de sterren helder aan de hemel fonkelden en de wereld onder een zachte sluier van rust lag, reisden Maria en Jozef door de stoffige wegen van Judea, op zoek naar een plek om te overnachten, want de tijd was gekomen dat Maria haar eerste kind zou baren.

Ze kwamen aan in Bethlehem, een klein dorp dat druk leek door reizigers die kwamen voor de volkstelling, maar de herbergen waren vol en de herbergier kon geen plek voor hen vinden.

Uiteindelijk bood een vriendelijke herbergier hen een eenvoudige stal aan, een plek waar dieren rustten, maar waar de muren warmte en beschutting boden tegen de koude nacht.

Maria voelde de eerste krampen van het naderende leven en Jozef nam haar geruststellend bij de hand, terwijl hij probeerde haar te kalmeren met zachte woorden.

De stal rook naar stro en vers hooi, en de zachte geluiden van runderen en schapen gaven een gevoel van huiselijkheid.

Onder het maanlicht en het schijnsel van de sterren wikkelde Maria haar pasgeboren zoon in een doek en legde hem in een kribbe, omdat er geen wieg beschikbaar was.

Buiten de stad waakten herders over hun schapen, toen een engel verscheen, omringd door schitterend licht dat hen met angst en verwondering vervulde.

De engel zei: "Wees niet bang, want ik breng jullie goed nieuws: vandaag is in Bethlehem de Messias geboren, de Redder van de wereld. Jullie zullen een kind vinden gewikkeld in doeken en liggend in een kribbe."

Plotseling verschenen duizenden engelen en prezen de glorie van God, zingend: "Eer aan God in de hoogste hemelen en vrede op aarde voor mensen van goede wil."

De herders haastten zich en vonden Maria, Jozef en het kind, precies zoals de engel had voorspeld, en knielden bij de kribbe, bewonderden het kind en vertelden het hemelse bericht.

In het Oosten zagen drie wijzen een heldere ster die hoger leek te schijnen dan alle andere, en begrepen dat dit teken de geboorte van een koning aankondigde.

Ze volgden de ster dag en nacht, met geschenken van goud, wierook en mirre, symbolen van koningschap, goddelijke eer en toekomstig lijden.

Bij hun aankomst boogden ze voor het kind, gaven hun geschenken en eerden Hem met nederigheid, ondanks hun koninklijke status.

Maria en Jozef waren ontroerd door de komst van de wijzen en voelden hoe Gods belofte zichtbaar werd in hun eenvoudige, heilige omgeving.

De herders en wijzen verspreidden het nieuws over Jezus' geboorte, en iedereen die het hoorde, voelde vreugde en hoop in hun hart.

Het kind lag vredig te slapen in de kribbe, omringd door de warmte van zijn ouders, de zachte adem van de dieren en de stille bewondering van de bezoekers.

Maria besepte dat dit kleine en kwetsbare kind een groot verschil in de wereld zou maken en voelde diepe dankbaarheid en vreugde.

Jozef voelde een verantwoordelijkheid groter dan ooit, maar ook vrede en troost die hem kracht gaven.

Het verhaal van Jezus' geboorte verspreidde zich langzaam door Bethlehem en herinnerde mensen aan hoop, liefde en een nieuw begin.

In de jaren daarna bleven de herders en wijzen vertellen over die heilige nacht, de engelen, de ster en het kind dat de wereld zou veranderen.

Zo werd de geboorte van Jezus een kerstverhaal dat generatie na generatie inspireerde, een verhaal van geloof, nederigheid, liefde en vreugde dat nooit vergeten zou worden.

English

On a quiet night, when the stars shone brightly in the sky and the world lay under a soft veil of peace, Mary and Joseph traveled along the dusty roads of Judea, searching for a place to stay, for the time had come for Mary to give birth to her first child.

They arrived in Bethlehem, a small village that seemed busy with travelers coming for the census, but the inns were full, and the innkeeper could offer them no room.

Finally, a kind innkeeper offered them a simple stable, a place where animals rested, but whose walls provided warmth and shelter against the cold night.

Mary felt the first pangs of labor while Joseph gently held her hand and tried to calm her with soft words.

The stable smelled of straw and fresh hay, and the gentle sounds of cows and sheep gave a sense of home.

Under the moonlight and the glow of the stars, Mary carefully wrapped her newborn son in cloth and laid him in a manger because there was no cradle available.

Outside the town, shepherds watched their flocks when an angel appeared, surrounded by dazzling light that filled them with fear and wonder.

The angel said, “Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news: today, in Bethlehem, the Messiah is born, the Savior of the world. You will find a child wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly, thousands of angels appeared, praising God’s glory and singing, “Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to people of good will.”

The shepherds hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and the child, exactly as the angel had said. They knelt by the manger, admired the child, and shared the heavenly message.

In the East, three wise men saw a bright star that shone higher than all others and understood that it announced the birth of a king.

They followed the star day and night, bringing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, symbols of kingship, divine honor, and future suffering.

Upon arrival, they bowed to the child, gave their gifts, and honored Him with humility despite their royal status.

Mary and Joseph were moved by the wise men’s arrival and felt God’s promise manifest in their simple, holy surroundings.

The shepherds and wise men spread the news of Jesus’ birth, and everyone who heard it felt joy and hope in their hearts.

The child lay peacefully in the manger, surrounded by the warmth of his parents, the soft breaths of the animals, and the silent admiration of the visitors.

Mary realized that this small and vulnerable child would make a great difference in the world and felt deep gratitude and joy.

Joseph felt a responsibility greater than ever, but also peace and comfort that gave him strength.

The story of Jesus’ birth slowly spread through Bethlehem, reminding people of hope, love, and a new beginning.

In the following years, the shepherds and wise men continued to tell stories about that holy night, the angels, the star, and the child who would change the world.

Thus, the birth of Jesus became a Christmas story that inspired generation after generation, a story of faith, humility, love, and joy that would never be forgotten.

Multiple-Choice Questions / Meerkeuzevragen

#	Nederlands	English
1	Waar reisden Maria en Jozef naartoe?	Where did Mary and Joseph travel to?
2	Waarom konden ze niet in een herberg overnachten?	Why could they not stay in an inn?
3	Waar bracht de herbergier hen onder?	Where did the innkeeper provide shelter?
4	Wat lag er in de kribbe?	What lay in the manger?
5	Wie verscheen aan de herders buiten de stad?	Who appeared to the shepherds outside the town?
6	Wat vertelde de engel aan de herders?	What did the angel tell the shepherds?
7	Wat deden de herders nadat ze het kind vonden?	What did the shepherds do after finding the child?
8	Wat zagen de drie wijzen in het Oosten?	What did the three wise men see in the East?
9	Welke geschenken brachten de wijzen mee?	Which gifts did the wise men bring?
10	Waarom waren de geschenken van de wijzen speciaal?	Why were the wise men's gifts special?
11	Hoe reageerde Maria op de komst van de herders en wijzen?	How did Mary react to the shepherds and wise men?
12	Wat verspreidden de herders en wijzen?	What did the shepherds and wise men spread?
13	Hoe lag Jezus in de stal?	How did Jesus lie in the stable?
14	Wat benadrukt het verhaal van Jezus' geboorte?	What does the story of Jesus' birth emphasize?
15	Wie waren getuige van de geboorte van Jezus?	Who witnessed Jesus' birth?
16	Waarom volgden de wijzen de ster?	Why did the wise men follow the star?

#	Nederlands	English
17	Hoe voelden de mensen die het nieuws hoorden?	How did the people feel who heard the news?
18	Wat deed Jozef tijdens de geboorte?	What did Joseph do during the birth?
19	Welke symboliek dragen de geschenken van de wijzen?	What do the wise men's gifts symbolize?
20	Hoe eindigt het verhaal?	How does the story end?

Antwoorden / Answers

1. b) Bethlehem – Mary and Joseph traveled there for the census and Jesus' birth.
2. b) Alle herbergen waren vol – All inns were full.
3. b) Een stal – A simple stable was offered as shelter.
4. b) Het pasgeboren kind Jezus – The newborn child Jesus lay in the manger.
5. b) Een engel – An angel appeared to the shepherds.
6. b) Dat de Messias geboren was in Bethlehem – That the Messiah was born in Bethlehem.
7. b) Ze knielden en vertelden over het hemelse bericht – They knelt and shared the heavenly message.
8. b) Een heldere ster die een koning aankondigde – A bright star announcing a king.
9. a) Goud, wierook en mirre – Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
10. b) Ze symboliseerden koningschap, eer en lijden – They symbolized kingship, divine honor, and suffering.
11. b) Ze was ontroerd en voelde vreugde – She was moved and joyful.
12. b) Het nieuws van Jezus' geboorte – The news of Jesus' birth.
13. b) In een kribbe, omringd door warmte – In a manger, surrounded by warmth.
14. b) Geloof, nederigheid, liefde en vreugde – Faith, humility, love, and joy.
15. b) Herders en wijzen – Shepherds and wise men.
16. b) Omdat het de komst van een koning aankondigde – Because it announced the birth of a king.

17. b) Hoopvol en blij – Hopeful and joyful.

18. b) Hij hielp Maria en voelde verantwoordelijkheid en vrede – He helped Mary and felt responsibility and peace.

19. b) Koningschap, goddelijke eer en lijden – Kingship, divine honor, and suffering.

20. b) Met een inspirerend kerstverhaal dat generatie na generatie wordt doorverteld
– With an inspiring Christmas story told for generations.