



Discovery

DECEMBER 2010

Christmas

Stories, Puzzles, Jokes, Readers' Response and more...

It's hard to believe that another Christmas has come. Sometimes it's easy to focus on all the things that need to be done, the presents, food, holidays. Let's all get wrapped up in something more important this year – Jesus. He is the reason for the season and what we should focus on each Christmas. Let's focus on being more like Him – patient, kind, loving, giving.

Merry Christmas everyone.

Wendy 



**BIBLE
DISCOVERY**

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Shine like Stars

Samantha lay on her stomach and watched the reflection of the lights against the lounge walls. They flashed red, blue, red, blue, red blue.....

But, unlike in the movies, when flashing red and blue lights always meant police cars and chaos, here, in the lounge on Christmas Eve, it was completely quiet.

Sam flipped onto her stomach, but tilted her head back so she could still see the Christmas tree. Her gaze was fixed on the star at the top of the tree. It wasn't quite as bright as the flashing lights, but it was a steady brightness, never fading.

Had there really been a special star shining over the place where Jesus had been born? The only things she knew about Jesus' birth were from the Christmas songs and plays they had at school. Sam rolled over again to her back and tried to think of some of the words in the songs. How was it possible that she could remember hundreds of songs off the radio, but she couldn't really remember the words of the Christmas songs? Tonight she wished she knew them all. She stared hard at the star; thinking.

Suddenly, she jumped up and flicked off one of the power switches, turning off the flashing lights. The red, blue, red,

blue confusion instantly stopped. But the star continued to shine. And, without the competing flashes of the other lights, it looked even brighter. She thought about the difference between the star and the flashing lights. At the moment her life felt a little bit like the flashing ones, busy, bright and noticeable. But what she really wanted was to be like the star. Soft, steady and comforting. Immediately, she knew some of the things that she could "turn off" in her life to make it better. But then she realised that by just doing that, it wouldn't make her into a star. It would help, like turning off the lights had helped stop the confusions of colours. But she knew she needed to change completely. There was a part of her heart, her soul, that knew she wasn't living the right way. And she knew that only God could change her.

Just then, her watch beeped, giving her a fright. It was 12.00am, Christmas morning. Normally people waited till the New Year to make New Year's resolutions and changes. But today, this morning, was the perfect time. She closed her eyes and made a promise to God. She would find a Church and learn how to let God change her life. She wanted to be a star. A star for Jesus.

That First Christmas!

Hi, my name is Melzar and I come from the Middle East. I simply must tell you what happened to us in the last few months. My friends and I were studying the stars this last year. We have always known that you can read special things in the sky.

One day we saw a brand new star. It was HUGE! We just KNEW that Someone special had been born somewhere. we were sure that it was a new king. We decided to find Him, and loaded our camels up with three sorts of presents gold, frankincense and myrrh.

We headed west, and the star moved with us. Night after night, it was still there in front of us. Even during the daytime, we could see it shining brightly above us.

We kept travelling until we reached Jerusalem in Israel. We went to the king's palace and asked, "Where is the new king? We've come from the East to find Him and to worship Him." The king seemed surprised, and said, "Bring in the wise men! Look in the ancient books and see if you can find out anything about a special king!"

They soon found the writings about a special baby who would be the Governor of the people. The king beckoned to us. "Look," he said, "It seems that a special baby will be born in Bethlehem not far from here. You go and see if you can find him, and then come back and tell me so I can worship Him too!" But while he was talking, he had a wicked look about him that sent a shiver up my spine.

As we got back onto our camels, there was the star again, winking and beckoning us on. We soon

arrived at Bethlehem, and the star seemed to get lower and brighter. It was shining right on one of the little houses up the street. We knocked on the door, and the man who opened it didn't seem to be surprised to see us. It was almost as though he was expecting us. "Come on in", he said, "You've come to see our Baby I guess".

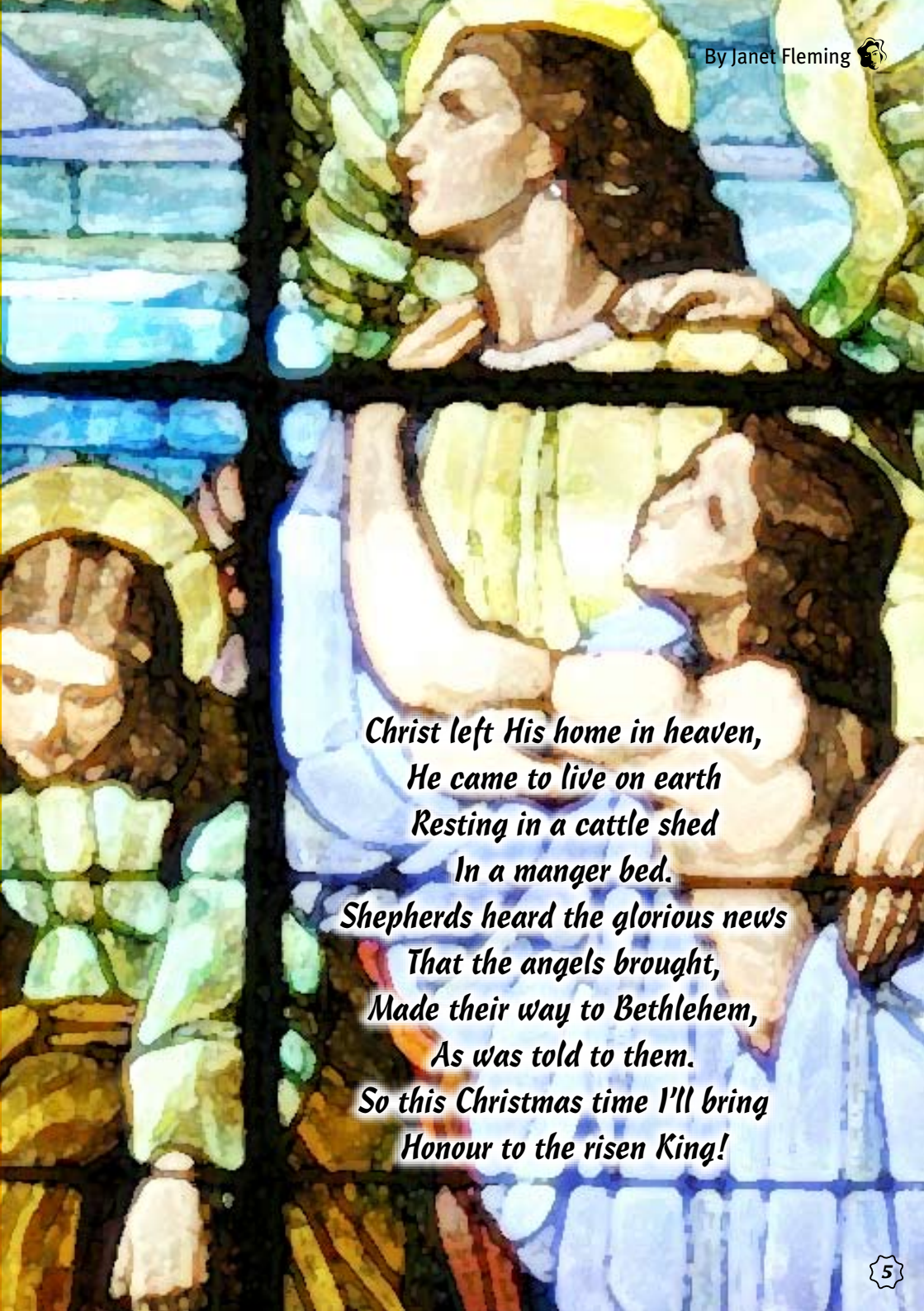
We took the presents inside. It was quite dim there after the bright sunlight, or was it the starlight? We could see the young mother, sitting with the Baby on her lap. Oh, He was SUCH a beautiful Baby! He looked right at us, and gave a smile, just as though He knew who we were.

We fell on our knees, it seemed the right thing to do. This was the Baby that the Star had led us to! We were filled with a great joy, as we laid our gifts on the ground in front of Him. We hardly knew what to say. Words didn't seem to be necessary, everyone seemed to know what it was all about.

We left the house, still hardly able to talk, and found a place for the night. That wasn't the end of the story though. That night, we each had a strange dream. We heard God saying, "Don't go back to the king. Go home another way". The dream was very vivid and we remembered how the king had looked when he told us to find the Baby. It still made us shiver! So we headed off home another way.

What a difference it has made to us all, to see the Baby, the King of the Jews. We will never forget Him, and in fact we know that He is our King too. It just seems that He is still with us, smiling His special smile to us!





*Christ left His home in heaven,
He came to live on earth
Resting in a cattle shed
In a manger bed.*

*Shepherds heard the glorious news
That the angels brought,
Made their way to Bethlehem,
As was told to them.*

*So this Christmas time I'll bring
Honour to the risen King!*

Prophecies Concerning the Birth, Life and Death of Jesus

(A prophecy is something that a prophet said would happen hundreds of years before it happened)

1a Micah 5:2

What town was this person to come from?

_____ .

1b Who was born in Bethlehem? Matthew 2:1

2a Isaiah 7:14 says the mother of this

baby would be a _____

2b Did this happen? Luke 1:34 & 35 Yes/No

3a Isaiah 9:6 talks about a child being

born who is '...Mighty God,

Father...'

3b John 1:1-3 talks about the Word who was Jesus.

Who does it say the Word was? _____

4a In Hosea 11:1, who was called out of

Egypt? His _____

4b In Matthew 2:13 - 15 who did this

happen to? _____

5a Isaiah 9:1 & 2 tells us this Child would live in

5b Matthew 4:12 - 15 says that

_____ returned to Galilee.

6a Isaiah 35:4 - 6a says that God would come

and perform _____ .

6b Who was the miracle worker in Matthew

11:2 - 5? _____

7a The king would ride on a

_____ . Zechariah 9:9

7b John 12:12 - 15 tells us that

_____ came riding on a colt.

8a He would be despised and

_____ . (Isaiah 53:3a)

8b John 1:11 tells us Jesus came to His own

people and they did not

_____ Him.

9a Psalm 22:16 says they

my hands and my feet.

9b John 20:24 -27 tells us that the hands of

_____ were pierced.

10a Isaiah 53:12b says He bore the sin of many
and prayed for those bad

people who _____ Him.

10b In Luke 23:34 Jesus prayed 'Father

_____ them...'

11a Isaiah 53:9 says that He would have a grave with
the wicked and with the _____ in His death.

11b This happened to _____ in Matthew
27:57 - 60

Now take the coloured letter from each
question and see if you can fill the
spaces below to find out who all these
prophecies were about.

The story of Christmas

Fill each gap with the correct word from the list below.

At Christmas we celebrate the birth of _____ Christ in human form. From eternity past he had always existed with his _____ in heaven.

Old Testament writers, such as Isaiah, had predicted his coming as the promised _____.

At the appointed time, God sent his angel _____ to a young virgin named _____. The angel told her that she would have a special _____ and he would be the Son of God.

Mary was engaged to _____ and the couple had to travel to _____ for a _____ ordered by the Roman emperor.

When they arrived, there was nowhere to stay, so they took shelter in a _____. While they were there, Jesus was born.

Out in the fields that night _____ were guarding their sheep.

An angel appeared and announced the good _____. Suddenly the sky was lit up with hosts of _____ singing and praising God.

The shepherds hurried away to see the new baby lying in a _____.

Meanwhile, away in the _____, some wise men had discovered a new _____ in the sky. They followed it in search of the new born _____.

When they found him they were overjoyed and fell down and _____ him.

They presented him with _____ of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The _____ of the world had come. God's greatest gift of all.

Joseph

stable

shepherds

Mary

king

Father

star

east

Saviour

gifts

census

news

Gabriel

Messiah

baby

Bethlehem

angels

Jesus

worshipped

manger

AWARDS

CONGRATULATIONS

For years completed!



1 Kate Barwick
Keren Baxendine
Nathanael Baxendine
Merelesita Debaleacagi
Merewalesi Diveisaunibuli
Sven Engelbrecht
Chantelle Galvin
James Garta
Shantallia Gerrard-Smith
Joshua Kautai
Stephanie McDermott
Irene McIntyre
Emily Munro
Christine Shue
Peter Stokes
Shing Yan

2 Vicky Chiu
Jeremy D'souza
Ryan Finlayson
Levi Horton
Savy Naidoo
Alisi Naufahu
Stephen Turner
Tony Yan

3 Michael Stokes

4 Josline Kumar
Jonathan Spurgeon
Luke Spurgeon
Joel Spurgeon

5 Sung Cheong
Sarah Duncan
Ashnita Gounder
Zara Lane

6 Shiu Narain
Nika Yew

7 Sheila Parsons

8 Cinci Ayam
Isaac Martin

9 Rohit Emmanuel
Mavis Harris
Wilfred Naicker

14 Helen Dunn

21 Gavin Brookshaw

22 Rosaline McKinnon

25 Ravai Mosese

DECEMBER BIBLE READINGS

DATE	Book	VERSE
1	Wed	1 Cor. 9:24-27
2	Thur	1 Cor. 10:12-13
3	Fri	1 Cor. 12:1-11
4	Sat	1 Cor. 12:12-20
5	Sun	1 Cor. 12:21-31
6	Mon	1 Cor. 13:1-3
7	Tue	1 Cor. 13:4-7
8	Wed	1 Cor. 13:8-13
9	Thur	1 Cor. 15:1-11
10	Fri	1 Cor. 15:12-19
11	Sat	1 Cor. 15:51-58
12	Sun	1 Cor. 16:1-9
13	Mon	Micah 1:1-7, 2:3-4
14	Tue	Micah 4:6-13
15	Wed	Micah 5:2-5
16	Thur	Luke 1:1-4
17	Fri	Luke 1:5-17
18	Sat	Luke 1:18-25
19	Sun	Luke 1:26-33
20	Mon	Luke 1:34-38
21	Tue	Luke 1:39-45
22	Wed	Luke 1:46-56
23	Thur	Luke 1:57-66
24	Fri	Luke 1:67-80
25	Sat	Luke 2:1-7
26	Sun	Luke 2:8-20
27	Mon	Luke 2:21-31
28	Tue	Luke 2:41-52
29	Wed	Luke 3:1-6
30	Thur	Luke 3:7-14
31	Fri	Luke 3:15-18

JANUARY BIBLE READINGS

DATE	Book	VERSE
1	Sat	Luke 3:21-22
2	Sun	Luke 4:1-13
3	Mon	John 1:19-28
4	Tue	John 1:29-34
5	Wed	John 1:35-42
6	Thur	John 1:43-51
7	Fri	John 2:1-12
8	Sat	John 2:13-25
9	Sun	John 3:1-8
10	Mon	John 3:9-15
11	Tue	John 3:16-21
12	Wed	John 3:22-30
13	Thur	John 3:31-36
14	Fri	Joel 1:1-12
15	Sat	Joel 2:12-17
16	Sun	Joel 2:18-20, 28-32
17	Mon	Joel 3:16-21
18	Tue	Song of Songs 1:15-2:2
19	Wed	Song of Songs 2:14-3:4
20	Thur	Song of Songs 4:1-7
21	Fri	Song of Songs 4:8-11
22	Sat	Song of Songs 4:12-16
23	Sun	Song of Songs 8:5-7
24	Mon	Song of Songs 8:8-14
25	Tue	Luke 4:16-22
26	Wed	Luke 4:23-30
27	Thur	Luke 4:31-37
28	Fri	Luke 4:38-44
29	Sat	Luke 5:1-11
30	Sun	Luke 5:12-16
31	Mon	Luke 5:17-26

Merry Christmas



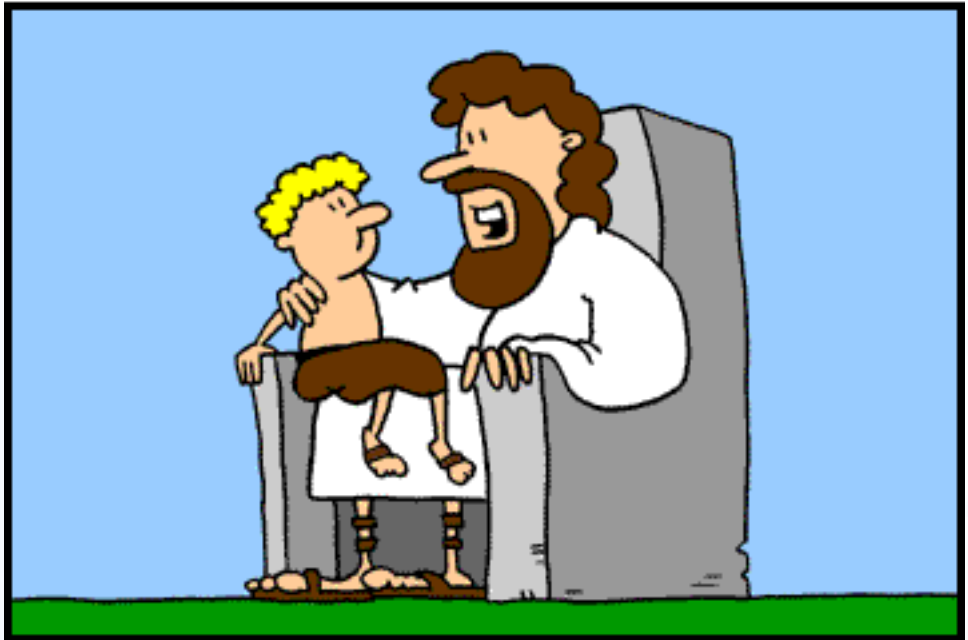
Readers' Response

Email: info@biblediscovery.org.nz
or write to us: 888 New North Road, Mt Albert, Auckland 1025



"Hey kids - this is YOUR page - so send in (original materials) your favourite joke, one of your own poems or prayers, a letter or a question about being a Christian and it might end up here!!"

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Thanks to Christopher Huffman

12-24-1998

HOW ABOUT IF INSTEAD OF GIVING YOU
EVERYTHING THAT YOU THINK YOU WANT FOR
CHRISTMAS I GIVE YOU WHAT YOU NEED?

A Terrible Inconvenience!

By Julia Martin 

Cast:

Narrator/s	Non-Speaking parts could add:
Innkeeper	Townpeople at inn; shepherds in manger;
Innkeeper's wife	sheep/animals
Neighbour	
Shepherd	
Joseph	
Mary	

Narrator 1: Many, many years ago, in a small city far away, a whole lot of grumbling was going on.

(Extra townspeople could be used here to grumble)

You see, the ruler of the land had ordered a census, which meant that entire families had to pack up their gear and go back to the city of their birth, no matter how far away that was. It was a terrible inconvenience!

Mary and Joseph enter one side, Innkeeper from the other side.

Innkeeper: Look, I've already told you! We don't have any rooms left! You should have booked ahead. There are so many people in the city and they all want accommodation. It's a nightmare! I don't think I have enough linen for everyone as it is. The only thing I can offer you is our stable, but I'm not cleaning it out. I just don't have the time. It's a terrible inconvenience!

All exit. Innkeeper's wife enters, basin and towels in hand.

Wife: It's all very well my husband offering them the stable, but couldn't he see she's having a baby! Men! They just don't realize what's involved. I can't just leave them to themselves, I mean, it's her first baby, in a strange city, and without her Mum to help. I really need to be getting back to all my other guests. I'm far too busy for a baby to arrive just now. I hope it doesn't come tonight. It would be a terrible inconvenience!

(Narrator 2)—Optional lines: Next door to the inn, a weary traveler was sound asleep.)

Exits. Neighbour enters and lies down under a blanket. Snores. Then tosses and turns as the sound of a baby crying starts. Then a light shines making neighbour sit up and shield eyes.

Neighbour: What on earth...?! What is that noise?! And where is that light coming from?! Who can possibly sleep with that crying and that light shining through the curtains. I've been travelling for two days and I'm dead tired and I need my sleep! I'm going to complain. This is a terrible inconvenience!

Props:

Apron for innkeeper and for wife.
Blanket for neighbour.
Baby doll in blanket for baby.
Could have basin/towels for Wife;
nightcap/ dressing gown for neighbour.
Scenes could be set by using pictures on an AV screen behind.

(Narrator 3. Optional lines. High on a hill some sheep were resting.)

Exits. Shepherd enters looking around.

Shepherd: Fred? Jim? Harry? Where are you? Where could they have gone? Their sheep are here but... Hello?! George said they passed him running down the hill in a real hurry muttering something about angels and stars and babies. I hope they haven't been drinking!

This makes no sense. We agreed to meet tonight to talk about our plans for tomorrow. But how can I if they're not here!

It's a terrible inconvenience!

Exits. Mary and Joseph with baby enter and sit. Shepherd/ sheep/ animals can be included if wanted.

(Narrator 4. Optional lines. Back in Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph had their baby in the stable.)

Joseph: It's hard to believe he is finally here. It's lucky he didn't appear a couple of days ago when we were on the way here. Now that would have been a terrible inconvenience!

Mary: I get the feeling he was meant to be born here, in this stable, in this town, surrounded by these people. God planned it all along. It may seem like a terrible inconvenience, but really, it's a wonderful significant event.

END

Sometimes following God and obeying Him can be inconvenient. We might have to go somewhere we don't want to go or do something for someone that puts us out. But God always has our best interests at heart, and we can do what He asks with joy because we know He will reward our obedience and make us better people because of it.

What's so great about Christmas?

What's so great about **Christmas?**
Is a question it's time we all asked,
As we think about presents and parties
Has its meaning perhaps become masked?

It's holiday time for the children,
We play in the surf and the sun,
With lots of time for 'Dear Santa',
For food, for family, for fun.

We hurry to find the right pine tree
Then deck it with glitter and gold,
While the wonderful meaning of Christmas
Is discarded as worthless and old.

God gave His Son as my Saviour
A gift I can never out give,
Christ Jesus left heaven for a stable
He showed us the way we should live.

This year as you think about Christmas
Will Jesus be sharing a part?
You will learn the real meaning of Christmas
When you give Him first place in your heart.




Bethlehem's Child

*He came as a baby to Bethlehem,
Leaving heaven's glory behind,
He came and was given a stable,
The One who created mankind.
No palace to welcome the Saviour,
His bed just a bundle of hay,
Though angels announced His arrival
Few welcomed His coming that day.*

*This year as you celebrate Christmas
I wonder what treasures you'll bring,
Or will it be only the 'stable'
You spare for the Saviour and King?
I'll give Him the best I can offer,
The One who left heaven above,
I'll kneel like the wise men before Him,
And bring Him my thanks and my love.*

CHRISTMAS

Read Matthew 1:18-23 and 2:1-6

By Gwenyth Frear 

"What is prophecy, Mum?" Jack asked his mother one day near Christmas.

"Whatever makes you ask that, Jack?" said Mum as she peeled another potato and put it in the pot.

"Well, our KidZone teacher told us last Sunday that when Jesus was born he made the prophecies all come true, and I was wondering what that meant!"

"Well", said Mum, putting the pot on the stove, "It's like this. Long before Jesus was born, long before even his mother was born, one of the ancient prophets who was giving God's messages to the people of Israel, announced that one day a young lady would give birth to God's special servant and that this would happen in Bethlehem. This was written down in the Old Testament part of the Bible, and we can still read it today".

"Our teacher said that Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth, so how come Jesus was born in Bethlehem?" Jack asked next. "Wasn't it a long way away?"

"Yes, it sure was", Mum agreed, "I've often thought what a long tiring trip it must have been for Mary! It's strange how God works things to come together. The Roman governor told the people to go back to the places where they were born to sign census papers there. He didn't have a clue that he was being nudged by God, so His Son could be born in Bethlehem!"

"Wow!" said Jack as he thought this over, "I wonder if God nudges us sometimes too?"

"I'm sure He does", said Mum, "Anyway, that is what a prophecy is Jack. Something that God says will happen

in a future time at a certain place in a special way. It always happens exactly as God says it will. Now do you think you can set the table for me?"

"Sure Mum", Jack said as he got the knives and forks out. "Why did God want Jesus to be born in Bethlehem?"

"Well, we don't always know why God does things," Mum said, "But I think in this case it was because King David came from Bethlehem, and God made some special promises to David. He told him that one of his descendants would reign as King forever and ever. David didn't know how this would happen, but WE know it was because the Lord Jesus was his descendant and He is God's king forever."

"Oh!" said Jack as he took all this in, "Well thanks Mum! That makes it easier to understand. That's how the wise men found out where to go too I guess!"

"That's right", Mum agreed, "Well tea will soon be ready so go and tell the others to finish off what they are doing and come along in".

"OK Mum", said Jack as he ran off.



Only a Stable

Scene 1 - Esther - (Standing polishing inn sign)

Father – “Esther, Esther, where are you? What are you doing, you lazy girl? Why, there you are. Have you made all the beds with fresh linen?”

Esther – “Yes Father. The beds are all changed, the windows are polished and now I thought I’d clean the sign so travellers can read it.”

(reading from the sign)

“Bethlehem Travel Lodge, the best in comfort and cleanliness. Guarantee to find you a bed at a moment’s notice.”

“Father, do you want me to clean the last part. It would not do for your image to suffer and you know the inn is already full.”

Father - “Now, don’t you be cheeky lass. Just get on with your work. It’s not long to nightfall so I guess that most folks are settled now. Besides, I don’t doubt that if someone as important as our last week’s visitors came we’d somehow provide them with first class accommodation.”

Esther – “Yes Father, I’m sure we would. Wasn’t that exciting. (Dreamily) “A real prince, and I served his breakfast. I guess it’s unlikely to happen again.” (Putting her hand to her eyes) “Whoever is this coming?” (Enter Mary on donkey with Joseph leading donkey)

Father – “Obviously no one we’re interested in. (Turning away) “Our inn is of a better standard than caters for such as ride on a donkey.”

Joseph – “Wait a moment, sir. Is there no chance that you might help us? Is there nobody who will spare a room for us?”

Mary – “Anything will do.” (bending forward) “I must find a place where my baby can be born.”

Esther – (Pleading) “Father, can’t we find somewhere for them to rest? Perhaps...”

Father – (Interrupting abruptly) “The only room that’s spare is the stable. If they want to they can share with the animals. Our beds are all full and (walking inside muttering to himself), besides I’m not one for handing out charity to a couple of paupers.”

Joseph – “We will be quite happy to sleep in the stable.”

Esther – “I’m sorry my father was rude to you, but last week we had royal visitors and I guess it has gone to his head. Come with me.” (Joseph, Mary and Donkey follow Esther to stable. Mary climbs from the donkey and lies on the hay.)

Esther – “I know it’s not very clean but I’ll go and see if I can find some spare linen to make you more comfortable.” (Exit Esther)



Scene 1 - Esther - (Standing polishing inn sign) (leading donkey)

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*Know the Spirit of God:
Every spirit that confesses
that Jesus Christ
is come in the flesh
is of God*

1 John 4:2