

Jesus, Our Savior Is Born

Joseph and Mary lived in a little town called Nazareth, but their families came from another town called Bethlehem. Now it happened that King Herod, who ruled over the country, wanted to know how many people lived there. He ordered that everyone should go to his or her hometown and have their names listed. This meant that Joseph and Mary had to go to the little town of Bethlehem to have their names listed there.

They set off early in the morning. Mary rode on a little donkey and Joseph walked beside her. They had to go slowly, and the journey was a long one. Night had come when they reached Bethlehem. All the stars were out.

Joseph took Mary to the village inn. There he asked for a room in which to spend the night. But the innkeeper said: "I am sorry, sir, many people have come here before you. There is not one room left at the inn." Mary and Joseph tried other inns, but all of them were full because many people had come to Bethlehem to have their names listed.

Mary was very tired. At last someone told Joseph that they could find a place to stay in a stable where cows and sheep were cared for at night. They went there and found the stable in a kind of cave empty, for the night was not cold and all the animals stayed out in the fields. Mary and Joseph could rest comfortably on the clean hay which was on the floor. The night was clear and quiet. All the stars shone brightly in the sky.

That very night a wonderful thing happened. God's promised Savior to the world, our Lord Jesus Christ, was born to Mary. She took her precious baby Son and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and laid Him on some fresh hay in the manger.

King Herod did not know that this had happened. None of the important and rich people in the great cities knew about this great event. The men who commanded the great armies did

not know that this night was different from any other night. But out in the fields a few poor shepherds were watching their flocks. All was quiet. The sheep and lambs were sleeping. The shepherds kept awake to watch over them. Suddenly a bright light shone in the sky and an angel stood before them. The shepherds were frightened, but the angel said: "Do not be afraid. I am bringing you good news of great joy that will bring happiness to all the people in the world. Today is born a Savior, Christ the Lord. You may go and see Him. He is lying in the manger in the stable, a small Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes."

Suddenly there came many angels and they all began to sing a beautiful song:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

When the song ended, the light faded and all was again dark and quiet. The shepherds said to each other: "Let us go quickly to Bethlehem and see what happened. What is this message from God that the angels brought us?"

They hurried on, and as they came to the stable they found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in the manger.

The shepherds looked and looked at the beautiful Babe, and they told Joseph and Mary what had happened out in the fields. Everyone who heard them wondered at what they said. Mary kept all these things in her heart, and she always remembered them.

Every year we have a special day when we remember the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ. This day is Christmas. On this day we hear many beautiful hymns in which this story is told again and again. Christ came to us to teach us to love one another, and because of this we try to make all those we love very happy on His birthday.