

The Nativity Story

(taken from the New Living Translation of the Bible)

Luke 1v26-38 - Mary and the Angel Gabriel

26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, **27** to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. **28** Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favoured woman! The Lord is with you!" **29** Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. **30** "Don't be frightened, Mary," the angel told her, "for God has decided to bless you! **31** You will become pregnant and have a son, and you are to name him Jesus. **32** He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. **33** And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" **34** Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin." **35** The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby born to you will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. **36** What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she's already in her sixth month. **37** For nothing is impossible with God." **38** Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to accept whatever he wants. May everything you have said come true." And then the angel left.

Matthew 1v19-25 - Joseph's Dream

19 Joseph, her fiancé, being a just man, decided to break the engagement quietly, so as not to disgrace her publicly. **20** As he considered this, he fell asleep, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to go ahead with your marriage to Mary. For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. **21** And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." **22** All of this happened to fulfil the Lord's message through his prophet: **23** "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel (meaning, God is with us)." **24** When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord commanded. He brought Mary home to be his wife, **25** but she remained a virgin until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

Luke 2v1-7 - The Birth of Christ

1 At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. **2** (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) **3** All returned to their own towns to register for this census. **4** And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He travelled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. **5** He took with him Mary, his fiancé, who was obviously pregnant by this time. **6** And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. **7** She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn.

Luke 2v8-20 - The Angels visit the Shepherds

8 That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village, guarding their flocks of sheep. **9** Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terribly frightened, **10** but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! **11** The Saviour yes, the Messiah, the Lord has been born tonight in

Bethlehem, the city of David! **12** And this is how you will recognise him: You will find a baby lying in a manger, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth!" **13** Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others the armies of heaven praising God: **14** "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favours. " **15** When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Come on, let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about." **16** They ran to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. **17** Then the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. **18** All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, **19** but Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often. **20** The shepherds went back to their fields and flocks, glorifying and praising God for what the angels had told them, and because they had seen the child, just as the angel had said.

Matthew 2v1-23 - The Wise men and King Herod

1 Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, **2** "Where is the new-born king of the Jews? We have seen his star as it arose, and we have come to worship him." **3** Herod was deeply disturbed by their question, as was all of Jerusalem. **4** He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law. "Where did the prophets say the Messiah would be born?" he asked them. **5** "In Bethlehem," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: **6** 'O Bethlehem of Judah, you are not just a lowly village in Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.' " **7** Then Herod sent a private message to the wise men, asking them to come see him. At this meeting he learned the exact time when they first saw the star. **8** Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

9 After this interview the wise men went their way. Once again the star appeared to them, guiding them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! **11** They entered the house where the child and his mother, Mary, were, and they fell down before him and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12** But when it was time to leave, they went home another way, because God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

13 After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up and flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to try to kill the child." **14** That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, **15** and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt."

16 Herod was furious when he learned that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, because the wise men had told him the star first appeared to them about two years earlier. **17** Herod's brutal action fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah: **18** "A cry of anguish is heard in Ramah weeping and mourning unrestrained. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted for they are dead."

19 When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and told him, **20** "Get up and take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel,

because those who were trying to kill the child are dead." **21** So Joseph returned immediately to Israel with Jesus and his mother. **22** But when he learned that the new ruler was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid. Then, in another dream, he was warned to go to Galilee. **23** So they went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophets concerning the Messiah: "He will be called a Nazarene."

Luke 2v25-40 - Simeon and Anna the Prophetess

25 Now there was a man named Simeon who lived in Jerusalem. He was a righteous man and very devout. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he eagerly expected the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. **26** The Holy Spirit had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, **28** Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, **29** "Lord, now I can die in peace! As you promised me, **30** I have seen the Saviour **31** you have given to all people. **32** He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!" **33** Joseph and Mary were amazed at what was being said about Jesus. **34** Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, "This child will be rejected by many in Israel, and it will be their undoing. But he will be the greatest joy to many others. **35** Thus, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."

36 Anna, a prophet, was also there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher, and was very old. She was a widow, for her husband had died when they had been married only seven years. **37** She was now eighty-four years old. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshipping God with fasting and prayer. **38** She came along just as Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She talked about Jesus to everyone who had been waiting for the promised King to come and deliver Jerusalem. **39** When Jesus' parents had fulfilled all the requirements of the law of the Lord, they returned home to Nazareth in Galilee. **40** There the child grew up healthy and strong. He was filled with wisdom beyond his years, and God placed his special favour upon him.

Nativity Bullet Points

- The Angel Gabriel visits Mary and tells her that she is going to become pregnant with God's Son. Mary agrees.
- Joseph is told in a dream about the pregnancy and told not to divorce Mary.
- The Emperor holds a census of the Roman Empire; Mary and Joseph have to travel to Joseph's home of Bethlehem.
- While in Bethlehem, Mary gives birth. They name the child 'Jesus', which means 'God is salvation'. Since there is no accommodation available, the couple and babe stay in a stable.
- Shepherds tending to flocks near Bethlehem are visited by Angels, who tell them of Christ's arrival.
- The Shepherds go and see the new-born child and worship Him.
- Wise men following a star arrive in Jerusalem and ask King Herod about the new King. Herod feels threatened by the thought of there being a new king who might overthrow him and tries to find out where the child is.
- The wise men continue their journey and find the child and worship Him with gifts. Being warned about Herod's plans to kill the child, they go back avoiding Herod.
- Joseph is warned in a dream about Herod wanting to kill the child. Mary, Joseph and Jesus flee to Egypt.
- Herod kills all of the infants in Bethlehem.
- When Herod dies, Mary and Joseph bring Jesus back to Nazareth.
- Mary and Joseph present the child at the temple, where Simeon and Anna prophecy over Jesus.