

JOY — JESUS IS BORN





JESUS' BIRTH

Luke 2: 1-7

Several months after the angel had visited Mary, a decree went out from the Roman Caesar Augustus. To facilitate a census throughout the Roman empire, all subjects had to go to their home town to be enumerated and assessed for tax levying purposes. Joseph and Mary therefore set out on their way to Bethlehem, Joseph's home town. The journey was very strenuous for Mary because she was expecting her child to be born soon. When they were in Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to a son. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no more room in the inn.



THE SHEPHERDS

Luke 2: 8-20

During the night, shepherds were tending their flocks in the area around Bethlehem. Suddenly an angel appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them. The shepherds were very frightened. The angel of the Lord said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." The angel explained to them where they would find the Child. Suddenly a multitude of the heavenly host gathered around the angel. They praised and extolled God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on the earth peace, good will toward men."

When the angels had left them, the shepherds set out on their way to Bethlehem. There they found the Child wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. Mary and Joseph were with Him. The shepherds found everything as the angel had told them. They talked about the appearance of the angels. All who heard about it, were amazed. Mary took the words of the shepherds to heart.

The shepherds returned to their flocks. They praised and extolled God.

SIMEON AND ANNA

Luke 2: 21–38



Mary and Joseph adhered to the instructions of the Mosaic Law. Eight days after His birth, the Child was circumcised and given the name Jesus. After Jesus' birth, Mary remained at home for forty days. Then Mary and Joseph brought the child into the temple to dedicate Him to God and to bring a thank-offering. There they met Simeon, a devout and God-fearing man. Simeon was waiting for the promised Redeemer. He had been prompted by the Spirit to go into the temple. The Holy Spirit had previously proclaimed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Saviour. Simeon took the Child into his arms and said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation." He then blessed Mary and Joseph.

The prophetess Anna was also present. She was a widow, advanced in years, who never left the temple, but served God day and night by fasting and praying. She came at that moment, thanked God, and talked about the child to everyone in Jerusalem waiting for salvation.

THE WISE MEN

Matthew 2: 1–12



The wise men from the East went to King Herod the Great to ask where the newly born King of the Jews was to be found. They said that they had seen his star and had now come to worship the new king. Herod the Great was very frightened and feared that the newly born King was a rival. He gathered all the high priests and scribes around him and ordered them to find out where the new King was to be born. They told him that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem, as the prophet Micah had already foretold. The king told the wise men, asking them to find the Child and then tell him where he could find the Child so that he himself could worship it.

The wise men now set out on their way to Bethlehem and found the Child there with Mary and Joseph. They worshipped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. In a dream, God told them not to return to Herod, but to return home a different way.

Shortly thereafter, Herod had all children two years of age and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding area killed.

EXERCISE



Jesus' birth created joy.

From the text beside the pictures, you will be able to ascertain the effects of this joy.

Complete the sentences!



The shepherds returned. They praised and extolled God for everything they had heard and seen themselves according to the message of the angel.

The shepherds *praised and extolled God*.



Simeon took the baby Jesus into his arms, praised God, and said, "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen Your salvation."

Simeon *praised God*.



The prophetess Anna also joined them. She thanked God and talked about the Child to all who were waiting for salvation.

Anna *thanked God and talked about the Child*.



The wise men from the East came and saw the Child with Mary and Joseph. They fell down before Him and paid homage to Him. Then they opened their treasure bags and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The wise men from the East *gave Jesus gifts*.