



## Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

# Short Study 076: Christmas Passages

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**Introduction:** Every Christmas of our lives we have heard some or all of the *Nine Lessons and Carols*. It is all too easy to become so familiar with the passages that we give them little thought. This Study is not a list of test questions. Rather the questions are prompts to get you thinking and, where necessary, finding out more to distinguish the facts from the traditions (and Christmas card pictures) that have become attached to the Biblical accounts over the years. Use Bible commentaries to find out meanings, history and contemporary cultures lying behind the Christmas narratives.

### 1. Gabriel's announcement to Mary (Luke 1:26-39).

Who is Gabriel and what is special about him (v26)?

What was betrothal as distinct from engagement and what did it involve (v27)?

Why do you think Mary found favour with God (v30)?

What do you reckon Mary's submission involved (v38)?

### 2. The angel's announcement to Joseph (Matt 1:18-25).

Why was the child to be called 'Jesus' (v21)?

What does 'Immanuel' mean (v23)?

What was the initial meaning of Isaiah's prophecy from Isaiah 7:14 (v23)?

### 3. Jesus' birth in Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7). See also Mic 5:2

What was the significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem?

Why did the emperor insist Joseph went to Bethlehem to be counted (v1)?

Who was Quirinius (v2)?

Why do you think the inns were full (v7)?

What was the manger (v7)?

### 4. Angelic announcement to the Shepherds (Luke 2:8-20).

Why announce to shepherds?

Who were the heavenly hosts (v13)?

What can we learn from the shepherds' actions (vs 16 & 17)?

### 5. Visit of the wise men (Matt 2:1-18)

Who or what were they?

When did they arrive in Bethlehem (note carefully the words used in v11)?

How do you think a star led them to the place where Jesus was born (v9)?

What was the significance of gold, frankincense and myrrh?

**To think about:** What does Christmas mean to me?

**To dig deeper:** Find out about the 1<sup>st</sup> Century cultures that helped shape the events of Christmas.