

The Nativity

Luke 2:1–16

And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. Luke 2:7

Caesar Augustus, the Roman emperor, sent out a decree (law) that everyone in his empire had to be taxed. Each man was to pay taxes in the city of his ancestors, so Joseph and Mary had to travel from their home in Nazareth to Bethlehem. It was a difficult trip for Mary because her baby was about to be born. (See Luke 2:1–5.)

When Mary and Joseph reached Bethlehem, the city was crowded with people who had come to pay taxes. There was no room for Joseph and Mary in the inns, but they were finally allowed to stay where Mary “brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger” (Luke 2:7).

That night there were also shepherds in the field watching over their flocks. An angel of the Lord appeared and the shepherds were frightened, but the angel said:

“Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

“And . . . ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:10–12).

Suddenly there appeared a multitude of angels praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men” (Luke 2:14; see also Luke 2:13).

When the angels had gone, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us now go . . . unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us” (Luke 2:15). Hurrying to Bethlehem, the shepherds found Mary and Joseph, and the baby Jesus lying in a manger (see Luke 2:16).

Summary

When it was nearly time for Jesus to be born, Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem to pay taxes. Bethlehem was crowded with people, and the inns were full. Joseph and Mary found a place to stay in a stable. There the baby Jesus

was born. Mary wrapped the babe in swaddling clothes and laid Him in a manger. Angels told shepherds the joyful news of Christ’s birth, and the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see the newborn Savior.

THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS