

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

God's Son Came To Earth



Simplified English Version for Indigenous Australians

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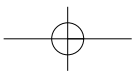
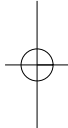
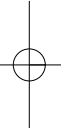
God's Son Came To Earth

The Reason Why God Sent His Son

John 3:16

God really loves everybody in the world.
He loves us so much that he sent his son to us.

This was the only son he had.
God sent him to die instead of us,
so that if anyone trusts him
they will not die but
will live for ever.



The Christmas Story

God Sent Gabriel to Mary

Luke 1:26b-35, 37-38

26-27 God sent Gabriel, one of his angel messengers, to Galilee country, to a town called Nazareth. He went there to a young lady called Mary. Before this time she never slept with a man. She was promised to a man called Joseph. He belonged to the family of King David.

28 Gabriel came to Mary and said, "Hello. You are a special person. God is with you."

29 She thought, "What is he talking about?"

30-33 So he said, "Don't be scared, Mary. God is really happy with you. You will become pregnant and you will have a son, and you will call him Jesus. God will make him the king, like he promised to David, his relation from long ago. He will be very important, and he will be the king of the Israel people forever. People will call him the Son of God."

34 But Mary said, "I've never slept with a man. How can I be pregnant?"

35, 37 Gabriel said, "The Spirit of God is very powerful. He can make a baby inside you. It is going to happen. Your baby will be really special and people will say he is God's Son. God can do

anything. Nothing is too hard for him to do.”

- 38 Mary said, “All right then, I want to do what God wants and I am happy to let him do what he says. I want everything to happen just like you have said.”
Then Gabriel left her.

Joseph Had a Dream

Matthew 1:18b-25a

- 18-19 Mary was promised to Joseph, who was from King David’s family. When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant he was not happy. He knew that the baby wasn’t his. He wanted to leave Mary, but he was a kind man and didn’t want to shame her, so he thought he would just leave her quietly—without any argument.
- 20-21 While Joseph thought about this, he went to sleep and had a dream. He saw an angel messenger from God who said, “Joseph, don’t be afraid. You go ahead and marry Mary, because it was not another man who made her pregnant, but the baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She will have a baby boy, and you will call him Jesus (the name Jesus means ‘God saves’). He will save his people from the punishment they will get from God because they don’t live God’s way.
- 22-23 A long time ago God told one of his men to write a story about this lady. He wrote, “There will be a young lady who has never slept with a man but she will have a baby boy. That boy will have a special

name, “Immanuel”. That name means “God is with us”.

24-25 When Joseph woke up he did what God’s angel messenger told him to do. He married Mary. But he did not sleep with her until after her son was born.

Mary Had a Baby Boy

Luke 2:1-7

1-3 At that time the boss of all the countries there was called Augustus. Well, Augustus sent a message to everyone in every country. He said the government bosses had to write down everyone’s name on a big list and make them pay tax money. He said that everyone had to go back to their home town and put their names on the list there. (A man called Quirinius was the government boss of Syria country at that time.)

4-5 Joseph belonged to King David’s family but he lived in a town called Nazareth in Galilee country. So he had to go south to a town called Bethlehem in Judea country to put his name on the list. Bethlehem was where King David grew up a long time ago. Joseph took his pregnant wife Mary with him.

6-7 At Bethlehem they couldn’t find any room to stay in, so they had to sleep out where the animals ate their food. Then it was time for Mary to have her baby, and she wrapped him up in some cloth and put him down to sleep in an animal’s feed box.

Men Who Looked After Sheep Saw Jesus

Luke 2:8-21

8-12 Not far away some men were out in the grass lands looking after their sheep. Suddenly, an angel messenger from heaven stood there with them, and bright light from God shone all around them, and they were very scared. But he said, “Don’t be frightened. I’ve got really good news for you, and for everyone in this world. Today a young lady had a baby boy over there in Bethlehem, where King David grew up. When you go there you will find him wrapped up in some cloth and lying in an animal’s feed box. When you see that baby in that animal’s feed box then you will know that what I tell you is true. He is the one who is going to save you people. He is the one God promised to send to be your good Boss.”

13-14 Then suddenly thousands of other angel messengers from heaven came and they all praised God and said, “God in heaven is really great. And here on earth, people who make God happy are calm and quiet, and they are good and kind to each other.”

15-16 When God’s messengers went back to heaven the men said to each other, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this baby that they told us about. God sent that messenger to tell us about him.” They went quickly and found the baby just like God’s messenger said it would be. They found Mary and Joseph with a baby boy in an animal’s feed box.

- 17-20 Then the men told everyone what they saw and what God's messenger told them. Everything happened just like God told them. Everyone was surprised when they heard these things, but Mary remembered them all her life and thought about them a lot.
- 21 The law of Moses said that they had to do a young man's operation on all baby boys when they were 8 days old. So they did that to him, and they called him Jesus. That's the name God's messenger said they had to call him, before Mary was even pregnant.

Simeon and Anna

Luke 2:22-38

- 22-24 Jewish law is like this: a woman's first baby boy belongs to God. So after 33 days people had to go to God's house in Jerusalem and kill two doves or two pigeons, and burn them there, and let the smoke go up to God.
- So Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the right time to follow that law. They took baby Jesus with them.
- 25-32 There was an old man in Jerusalem called Simeon. He was always very careful to live God's way. Before this time the Holy Spirit showed him that one day he would see the person God would send to help Israel. Then Simeon would die some time after that. Joseph and Mary took Jesus to

Jerusalem. On that day the Holy Spirit led Simeon to God's house. He was waiting there when Joseph and Mary brought Jesus in, and he took Jesus from them and held him in his arms, and said,

“Now, God, I can die happy, just like you promised me.

Because now I see the one you promised to send to save everybody.

He will be like a light for everybody in every tribe.

He will show them new things about you, God. And he will get everyone to respect your people, the Israel nation.”

33 Joseph and Mary were surprised when they heard the things he said about Jesus.

34-35 Simeon kept talking to Mary. He said, “This child is going to ruin many people in Israel, but he will help many others. He will point people to God but they won't understand, and they will speak against him. He will know what people are thinking and will tell these things to everybody. And Mary, later on, you will be really sad. It will hurt, like someone is stabbing you with a big knife.”

36a, 38 While Joseph and Mary were talking to Simeon there, a very old woman called Anna came along and saw Jesus, and she thanked God for what she saw. She called out to all the people close by and told them that Jesus was the one they were waiting for, because God sent him to help Jerusalem and its people.

36b-37 Anna was the daughter of Phanuel, from the tribe

called Asher. When she was a young woman she was married for 7 years, but then her husband died. For the next 84 years she stayed in God's house telling God's words to the people. She prayed all the time, in the day time and at night, and often she did not eat any food because she was praying.

The Wise Men Who Studied Stars Came to Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

1-2 At the time when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in Judea country, the king over that country was called King Herod.

One day some wise men who studied stars came from an eastern country and they stopped at Jerusalem, the big town in Judea country. They asked the people there, "Where was that baby born who is going to be the king of you Jewish people? We saw his star when it came up in the sky and we came here to show our respect for him."

3-6 When someone told King Herod about the wise men, that they were talking about another king, he was very worried. He thought that the other king might take over his job. Everybody in Jerusalem was worried about it too. He had a meeting with the leaders of the Jewish ceremonies and the law teachers, and asked them, "Where will that baby be born? You know, the one God promised to send?" They said, "He will be born in Bethlehem, in Judea country, because a long time ago God told one of his men to write this story in his book. He wrote:

Bethlehem is a small town,
but it is a very important town in Judea county,
because a good king will come from it.
He will really look after God's people, Israel."

7-8 So King Herod sent for those wise men to come to him, but he didn't tell anyone else about this meeting. He asked them about when they first saw that star. After they told him he said to them, "Go to Bethlehem and look carefully for that boy. When you find him, come and tell me where he's living so that I can go there too and show respect to him."

9-11 After King Herod said this, the wise men got up to go to Bethlehem. Then they saw that same star that they saw before. It made them very happy. And that star moved through the sky and stopped right above the house where Joseph and Mary were now living. When the wise men went into the house, they saw Jesus with Mary, and they got down and showed respect to him. Then they opened their saddle bags and gave him some presents. They gave him some gold, and some powder called frankincense, to burn to make a good smell, and they gave him some rubbing medicine called myrrh that smells like perfume.

12 Afterwards, when the wise men were sleeping, they had a dream. God told them not to go back to King Herod, so they went back to their own country along a different road.

King Herod Tried To Kill Jesus

Matthew 2:13-23

13 After the wise men went away, Joseph had a dream where he heard God’s messenger say, “King Herod will try to kill Jesus, so get up and take Mary and Jesus to Egypt, and stay there till I tell you to come back.”

14-15 Straightaway, Joseph got up in the middle of the night and got Mary and Jesus, and they left to go to Egypt. This is what God’s man was talking about when he wrote in God’s book, “God called his son out of Egypt.”

16-18 King Herod waited for those wise men to come back, but they didn’t. Then he got really angry. He remembered the wise men’s story about when they first saw the star, so he sent his soldiers to Bethlehem to kill all the baby boys up to 2 years old. They killed all the baby boys around Bethlehem. Herod did this to try to make sure that Jesus was dead. This is what God’s man Jeremiah wrote about in God’s book where he wrote:

In the place called Ramah,
 many people are crying.
 The mothers in Rachel’s family
 (that were born afterwards)
 are crying for their babies.
 Nobody can cheer them up
 because all their babies are dead.

15, 19-20 Later on King Herod died.

Then Joseph had another dream where he heard God's angel messenger say, "Get up and take Mary and Jesus back to Israel country. The people who wanted to kill him are now dead."

21-23 So Joseph did what God's messenger told him. But when he heard that Herod's son Archelaus was the new king, he was too frightened to go back to his family's country in Judea. Then he had another dream where God warned him not to go to Judea, so he took the family up north to Galilee country. He came to Nazareth and stayed there. One of God's men wrote about this in God's book, a long time before it happened. He wrote, "People will say that God's special one comes from Nazareth." Those words came true when Joseph took his family to live at Nazareth.

Jesus At Nazareth

Luke 2:52

52 Then Jesus grew up there at Nazareth and became strong. As he got bigger and stronger he became very wise. God was happy with him and so was everyone who knew him.

Translation Background

The aim of this **Simplified English Version** of Scripture is to make it easily understood by Indigenous Australians whose mother tongue is an indigenous Australian language. In this translation we modified the English in the direction of the features that are common to almost all Australian languages. This has affected the vocabulary, grammar and rhetorical devices that we have used. We have also followed the principles of meaning based translation wherein we have sought to convey to the readers of this version the same meaning as the original authors conveyed to the original readers, not just in terms of the words used but also of the message contained in those words.

The following are some of the more common modifications we have made:

- Where the grammar of the original has used the passive voice we have used the active voice, since the grammars of most indigenous Australian languages do not have passive voice.
- Where the original text has used an abstract noun to express a concept that is fundamentally an action or a quality we have used a verb or adjective to translate that concept, since abstract nouns are comparatively rare in Australian languages.
- Where the grammar of the original has used long and complicated sentences we have conformed to the grammars of Australian languages by using shorter sentences, making other adjustments as necessary to retain the meaning carried by the grammar of the original.
- Where the original text has implicit information that would not be obvious to our target audience we have made that information explicit.
- Where the original text has used a word or phrase, the literal translation of which would not be understood by our target audience, we have used an explanatory rendering to convey the same meaning, whether or not it involved more words.
- Where the original text has used figurative language that would be taken as literal by our target audience we have stated the meaning of the figure rather than its literal form.

At any one place in our translation we may have used any combination of the above. We have tried to keep the wording and style of this version as close as possible to that used by Indigenous Australians who know English only as a learned language.

Dave Glasgow

Translation Team Coordinator

