

<sup>21</sup> He arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. <sup>22</sup> But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in the place of his father, Herod, he was afraid to go there. Being warned in a dream, he withdrew into the region of Galilee, <sup>23</sup> and came and lived in a city called Nazareth; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

#### **Luke 2:40-52**

<sup>40</sup> The child was growing, and was becoming strong in spirit, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him. <sup>41</sup> His parents went every year to Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover.

<sup>42</sup> When he was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast, <sup>43</sup> and when they had fulfilled the days, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. Joseph and his mother didn't know it, <sup>44</sup> but supposing him to be in the company, they went a day's journey, and they looked for him among their relatives and acquaintances. <sup>45</sup> When they didn't find him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for him. <sup>46</sup> It happened after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking them questions. <sup>47</sup> All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. <sup>48</sup> When they saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us this way? Behold, your father and I were anxiously looking for you."

<sup>49</sup> He said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that I must be in my Father's house?" <sup>50</sup> They didn't understand the saying which he spoke to them. <sup>51</sup> And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth. He was subject to them, and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. <sup>52</sup> And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

#### **John 1:6-18**

<sup>6</sup> There came a man, sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> The same came as a witness, that he might testify about the light, that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup> He was not the light, but was sent that he might testify about the light. <sup>9</sup> The true light that enlightens everyone was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world didn't recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to his own, and those who were his own didn't receive him. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become God's children, to those who believe in his name: <sup>13</sup> who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup> The Word became flesh, and lived among us. We saw his glory, such glory as of the one and only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup> John testified about him. He cried out, saying, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me, for he was before me.'" <sup>16</sup> From his fullness we all received grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup> For the law was given through Moses. Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup> No one has seen God at any time. The one and only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has declared him.

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# The Christmas Story

*as recorded in the  
World English Bible*

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### John 1:1-5

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> The same was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through him. Without him was not anything made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and the life was the light of men. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness hasn't overcome it.

### Luke 1:5-38

<sup>5</sup> There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the priestly division of Abijah. He had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> They were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both were well advanced in years. <sup>8</sup> Now it happened, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to enter into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. <sup>10</sup> The whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense.

<sup>11</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zacharias, because your request has been heard, and your wife, Elizabeth, will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. <sup>14</sup> You will have joy and gladness; and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup> He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord, their God. <sup>17</sup> He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

<sup>18</sup> Zacharias said to the angel, "How can I be sure of this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

<sup>19</sup> The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God. I was sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. <sup>20</sup> Behold, you will be silent and not able to speak, until the day that these things will happen, because you didn't believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time."

<sup>21</sup> The people were waiting for Zacharias, and they marveled that he delayed in the temple. <sup>22</sup> When he came out, he could not speak to them, and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple. He continued making signs to them, and remained mute. <sup>23</sup> It happened, when the days of his service were fulfilled, he departed to his house. <sup>24</sup> After these days Elizabeth, his wife, conceived, and she hid herself five months, saying, <sup>25</sup> "Thus has the Lord done to me in the days in which he looked at me, to take away my reproach among men."

<sup>26</sup> Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man

and have come to worship him." <sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard it, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he asked them where the Christ would be born. <sup>5</sup> They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written through the prophet,

<sup>6</sup> 'You Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
are in no way least among the princes of Judah:  
for out of you shall come forth a governor,  
who shall shepherd my people, Israel.' "

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod secretly called the wise men, and learned from them exactly what time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child. When you have found him, bring me word, so that I also may come and worship him."

<sup>9</sup> They, having heard the king, went their way; and behold, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, until it came and stood over where the young child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. <sup>11</sup> They came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Opening their treasures, they offered to him gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> Being warned in a dream that they shouldn't return to Herod, they went back to their own country another way.

<sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and stay there until I tell you, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him."

<sup>14</sup> He arose and took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt, <sup>15</sup> and was there until the death of Herod; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked by the wise men, was exceedingly angry, and sent out, and killed all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all the surrounding countryside, from two years old and under, according to the exact time which he had learned from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled, saying,

<sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah,  
lamentation, weeping and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children;  
she wouldn't be comforted, because they are no more."

<sup>19</sup> But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, <sup>20</sup> "Arise and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel, for those who sought the young child's life are dead."

the things which were spoken to them by the shepherds. <sup>19</sup> But Mary kept all these sayings, pondering them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, just as it was told them.

<sup>21</sup> When eight days were fulfilled for the circumcision of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

<sup>22</sup> When the days of their purification according to the law of Moses were fulfilled, they brought him up to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord <sup>23</sup> (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), <sup>24</sup> and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons."

<sup>25</sup> Behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. This man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. <sup>26</sup> It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. <sup>27</sup> He came in the Spirit into the temple. When the parents brought in the child, Jesus, that they might do concerning him according to the custom of the law, <sup>28</sup> then he received him into his arms, and blessed God, and said,

<sup>29</sup> "Now you are releasing your servant, Master,  
according to your word, in peace;

<sup>30</sup> for my eyes have seen your salvation,

<sup>31</sup> which you have prepared before the face of all peoples;

<sup>32</sup> a light for revelation to the nations,  
and the glory of your people Israel."

<sup>33</sup> Joseph and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him, <sup>34</sup> and Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary, his mother, "Behold, this child is set for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which is spoken against. <sup>35</sup> Yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."

<sup>36</sup> There was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher (she was of a great age, having lived with a husband seven years from her virginity, <sup>37</sup> and she had been a widow for about eighty-four years), who didn't depart from the temple, worshipping with fastings and petitions night and day. <sup>38</sup> Coming up at that very hour, she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of him to all those who were looking for redemption in Jerusalem.

<sup>39</sup> When they had accomplished all things that were according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth.

### **Matthew 2:1-23**

<sup>1</sup> Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, <sup>2</sup> "Where is he who is born King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east,

whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> Having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, you highly favored one! The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women!"

<sup>29</sup> But when she saw him, she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered what kind of salutation this might be. <sup>30</sup> The angel said to her, "Don't be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> Behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and will call his name 'Jesus.' <sup>32</sup> He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father, David, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. There will be no end to his Kingdom."

<sup>34</sup> Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, seeing I am a virgin?"

<sup>35</sup> The angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore also the holy one who is born from you will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Behold, Elizabeth, your relative, also has conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup> For everything spoken by God is possible."

<sup>38</sup> Mary said, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; be it to me according to your word." The angel departed from her.

### **Matthew 1:18-25**

<sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was like this; for after his mother, Mary, was engaged to Joseph, before they came together, she was found pregnant by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Joseph, her husband, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, intended to put her away secretly. <sup>20</sup> But when he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take to yourself Mary, your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She shall bring forth a son. You shall call his name Jesus, for it is he who shall save his people from their sins."

<sup>22</sup> Now all this has happened, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying,

<sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child,  
and shall bring forth a son.

They shall call his name Immanuel;"  
which is, being interpreted, "God with us."

<sup>24</sup> Joseph arose from his sleep, and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took his wife to himself; <sup>25</sup> and didn't know her sexually until she had brought forth her firstborn son. He named him Jesus.

### **Luke 1:39-79**

<sup>39</sup> Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah, <sup>40</sup> and entered into the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> It happened, when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, that the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> She called out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed are you among women, and

blessed is the fruit of your womb! <sup>43</sup> Why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> For behold, when the voice of your greeting came into my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy! <sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of the things which have been spoken to her from the Lord!"

<sup>46</sup> Mary said,

"My soul magnifies the Lord.

<sup>47</sup> My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,

<sup>48</sup> for he has looked at the humble state of his handmaid.  
For behold, from now on, all generations will call me blessed.

<sup>49</sup> For he who is mighty has done great things for me.  
Holy is his name.

<sup>50</sup> His mercy is for generations of generations on those who fear him.

<sup>51</sup> He has shown strength with his arm.

He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

<sup>52</sup> He has put down princes from their thrones. And has exalted the lowly.

<sup>53</sup> He has filled the hungry with good things.

He has sent the rich away empty.

<sup>54</sup> He has given help to Israel, his servant,  
that he might remember mercy,

<sup>55</sup> As he spoke to our fathers,  
to Abraham and his seed forever."

<sup>56</sup> Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her house. <sup>57</sup> Now the time that Elizabeth should give birth was fulfilled, and she brought forth a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had magnified his mercy towards her, and they rejoiced with her. <sup>59</sup> It happened on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him Zacharias, after the name of the father. <sup>60</sup> His mother answered, "Not so; but he will be called John."

<sup>61</sup> They said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." <sup>62</sup> They made signs to his father, what he would have him called.

<sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, "His name is John."

They all marveled. <sup>64</sup> His mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue freed, and he spoke, blessing God. <sup>65</sup> Fear came on all who lived around them, and all these sayings were talked about throughout all the hill country of Judea. <sup>66</sup> All who heard them laid them up in their heart, saying, "What then will this child be?" The hand of the Lord was with him. <sup>67</sup> His father, Zacharias, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying,

<sup>68</sup> "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,  
for he has visited and worked redemption for his people;

<sup>69</sup> and has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David

<sup>70</sup> (as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets  
who have been from of old),

<sup>71</sup> salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us;

<sup>72</sup> to show mercy towards our fathers, to remember his holy covenant,

<sup>73</sup> the oath which he spoke to Abraham, our father,

<sup>74</sup> to grant to us that we, being delivered out of the hand of our enemies,  
should serve him without fear,

<sup>75</sup> In holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.

<sup>76</sup> And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High,

for you will go before the face of the Lord to make ready his ways,

<sup>77</sup> to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins,

<sup>78</sup> because of the tender mercy of our God,

whereby the dawn from on high will visit us,

<sup>79</sup> to shine on those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death;  
to guide our feet into the way of peace."

### Luke 2:1-39

<sup>1</sup> Now it happened in those days, that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled. <sup>2</sup> This was the first enrollment made when Quirinius was governor of Syria. <sup>3</sup> All went to enroll themselves, everyone to his own city. <sup>4</sup> Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David; <sup>5</sup> to enroll himself with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him as wife, being pregnant.

<sup>6</sup> It happened, while they were there, that the day had come that she should give birth. <sup>7</sup> She brought forth her firstborn son, and she wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a feeding trough, because there was no room for them in the inn. <sup>8</sup> There were shepherds in the same country staying in the field, and keeping watch by night over their flock. <sup>9</sup> Behold, an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be to all the people. <sup>11</sup> For there is born to you, this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This is the sign to you: you will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth, lying in a feeding trough." <sup>13</sup> Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army praising God, and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest,  
on earth peace, good will toward men."

<sup>15</sup> It happened, when the angels went away from them into the sky, that the shepherds said one to another, "Let's go to Bethlehem, now, and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." <sup>16</sup> They came with haste, and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby was lying in the feeding trough. <sup>17</sup> When they saw it, they publicized widely the saying which was spoken to them about this child. <sup>18</sup> All who heard it wondered at