

RE: Is the Christmas story true?

The first visitors: Luke's account

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The first visitors: Mark's account

And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.

What do Christians believe about Christmas?

Christians believe Jesus is the Incarnation of God on Earth. God gave Jesus to the Earth to show people how to lead good lives, forgive them for the things they do wrong and prove to them (through his resurrection) that there is life after death.

Luke the Evangelist

Luke's account shows his understanding of God's purpose.

Luke emphasises the way in which God gives new value to people who were generally devalued at that time.

Who is the key person in Luke's nativity story?

Who does the angel appear to, to explain Jesus' coming?

Who came first to visit Jesus in Luke's account of the nativity?



Shepherds were considered humble and ordinary, they were often regarded in polite Jewish society as a bit 'unclean' because their work with the animals inevitably got them dirty and smelly!

How does Luke's account differ to Matthew's with regard to the first visitors?

Were the first visitors in each account given the same value or regarded differently at the time?



