

# CREATION FOR KIDS

By Russell Grigg



**C**hristmas Day, December 25th, is celebrated as the traditional birthday of Jesus, although no one knows for certain the exact day or year when He was born, even though we know reasonably well when Jesus was here on Earth. The Bible says: “when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son”. God sent an angel to a young lady named Mary, who lived in

Nazareth, to tell her that she would have a son and that she should call His name Jesus. Mary was greatly surprised at this because she was not married and was a virgin.

The angel told her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). The reason for this is that when

Jesus lived on Earth, not only was He fully human, He was also fully God.

An angel from God also appeared in a dream to Joseph, who was engaged to be married to Mary. The angel said, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from

their sins” Matthew (1:18–25).

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. This came about because the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, decided that everyone in the Roman world had to be registered in their families’ home town, for a census. This was also so that an Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled. Joseph had to take Mary from Nazareth to his home town of Bethlehem. While there, Mary gave birth to Jesus, and laid him in a manger.

The very first people whom God announced this to were some nearby shepherds. An angel told them that Christ the Lord had just been born. When this happened, the glory of the Lord shone around them and a great company of angels appeared, praising God (Luke 2:8–20).

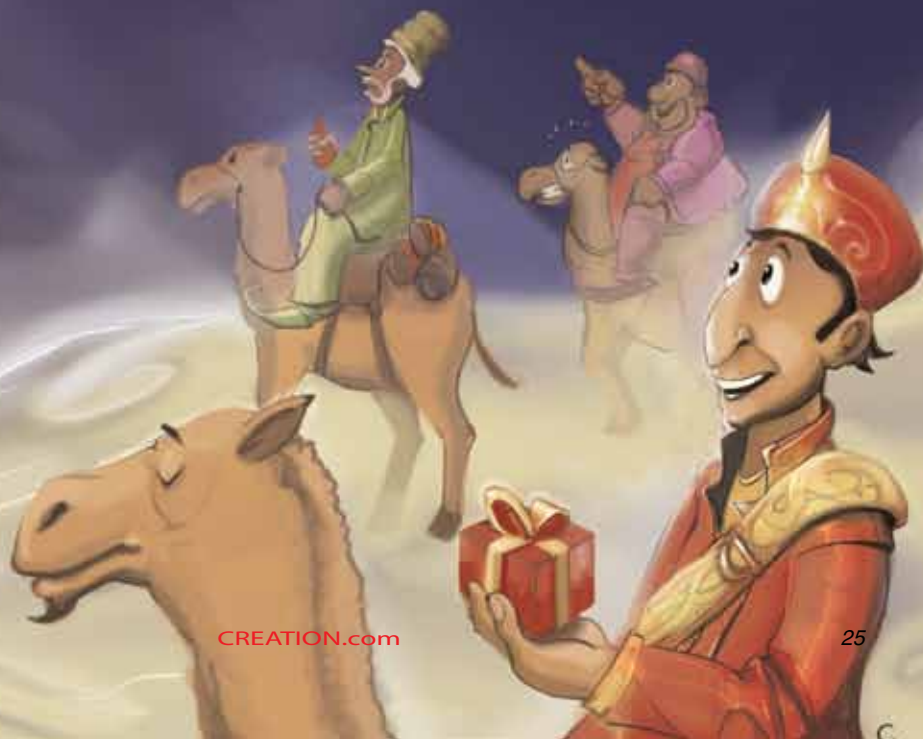
About that time some wise men living in another country

to the east saw a strange new light in the sky. They thought it was a special star that announced the birth of a new king, whom they were meant to go and worship. Later, when they got to Jerusalem they went to the palace of King Herod, expecting that the new king would be there. Not so! Herod was dumfounded. The Jewish leaders told him that the prophet Micah had foretold that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). So off the wise men went. The light led them to a house where the little child Jesus now was. Stars don’t normally move like that or illuminate just one particular house, so it may have been that the light that the wise men saw and followed was the glory of God called the Shekinah that had also appeared to the shepherds.

When the wise men saw the child Jesus, they worshipped Him and gave Him expensive

gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold was a symbol of Jesus’ kingship. Frankincense was incense used by the priests in the worship of God and so represented homage to God as well as being a symbol of Jesus’ priesthood. Myrrh was an oil used to embalm bodies for burial and so was a symbol of Jesus’ future suffering and death. The Bible doesn’t say how many wise men there were; just that there were three gifts.

God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. This was because Herod was planning to kill the new king whom he now saw as a rival, by murdering all Bethlehem babies under 2 years old to make sure. God also warned Joseph in a dream to take Mary and the child Jesus and escape to Egypt. The gold was probably God’s provision to pay for their needs there before they could return to Nazareth after Herod died.



### **Does Christmas have anything to do with Genesis?**

Yes, very much so. The Lord Jesus, whose birth we celebrate at Christmas, is none other than the Creator God who brought the whole universe into existence. In the Gospel of John, Jesus is called “the Word” of God (or in Greek the *logos*). John tells us that, “All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1–3). And the Apostle Paul, speaking of Jesus, tells us that all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible “were created by Him and for Him” (Colossians 1:16).

The first mention of Jesus in the Bible is in the promise given to Adam and Eve immediately after they had sinned against God. In Genesis 3:15, God says to Satan, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” Eve’s descendant would be the Lord Jesus Christ. Through the miraculous power of God, Jesus would be born of a virgin. He is called the “seed” of the woman because He had no human father (Isaiah 7:14, Matthew 1:23). He would then live a sinless life, and die for the sins of the whole world on the cross, thereby defeating the power of the devil (Hebrews 2:14–18).

### **Why was it necessary for Jesus to be a descendant of Adam?**

In the Old Testament, the prophet Isaiah calls the coming Messiah a “Kinsman-Redeemer” (Isaiah 59:20). This meant that the Messiah must be a blood-relative of those He redeems. So it was necessary for Jesus to be born into the human race, via Mary, a descendant of Adam, not just for Him to suddenly appear, as angels did from time to time in the Old Testament. This means that only Adam’s descendants can be saved. Angels could not save us; indeed angels themselves that sinned cannot be saved through the death of Christ (Hebrews 2:16), because they are not Adam’s descendants.

### **Was Jesus born on Christmas Day?**

Nobody knows exactly which day Jesus was born. But an argument against 25 December that some people have made is that shepherds would not have been watching their flocks by night in December because it would have been too cold.

Those who make this claim, however, have clearly never been to Bethlehem.

Just because shepherds in Europe and North America are indoors in December, it doesn’t follow that shepherds in Bethlehem are also indoors. They are indeed to be found watching their flocks by night, just like they did on that first Christmas night.





### **What does Santa have to do with Christmas?**

In most countries today only Christians worship Jesus and praise God at Christmas time. Everybody else just has a holiday and a party. Christmas trees, lights, decorations, exchanging cards and presents, family reunions, and enjoying a delicious Christmas dinner are all fun things to have or to do.

But Christmas for most people is a giant shopping spree, with people giving gifts to each other, not to Jesus like the Wise Men did.

Nowadays, most people's celebration of Christmas involves a jolly fat man in a red suit, who lives at the North Pole and who travels all over the world by snow sledge

on Christmas Eve carrying children's presents that have been made by elves. This is a fairy story, and idolatry when used as a substitute for worshipping Jesus. God, not Santa, is the One who knows all that we say and do.

So enjoy all the good things about Christmas, but remember that the 'reason for the season' is that Jesus came to Earth to be born, to live, and then to die for the sins of the world and to rise again to give new life to all who put their faith and trust in Him. ■

