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### **The Christmas Story**

Mary and Joseph were pledged to be married. Mary was approached by the angel of the Lord, Gabriel. The angel told her that she was going to bear the son of God. They had to travel to Bethlehem, Joseph's home town, because there was an official census being conducted by the emperor of Rome. When they finally got there, it was late and they needed a place to stay. Everywhere they went they were rejected because the inns were all full with people arriving for the census. One innkeeper showed some sympathy for them and told them that they could stay in the stable.

Along the countryside, shepherds were watching their flocks. A glorious appearing occurred and the same angel Gabriel told them that he had come to bear good news and then he told them about the baby being born in Bethlehem, the son of God. Suddenly the night sky was filled with lights and an entire multitude of angels surrounded them and sang an anthem giving glory to God. The shepherds were terrified but they decided to go and worship this baby from heaven.

Elsewhere, wise men saw the star from the east and desired to follow it. King Herod, the ruler of that region in Bethlehem, stopped them. Herod was an evil king and when he found out that there was a king in Bethlehem he wanted to destroy him. He told the wise men to find the baby and when they did, report back to him so he could worship him. By the time they got to the baby he was about two years old. They brought gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh. The wise men were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod so they returned home through another route.