

by Bill Crews

7. **The birth of Jesus.** Read Luke 2:1-7. Joseph and Mary journey from Nazareth of Galilee to Bethlehem of Judaea to be enrolled in the census ordered by the emperor Augustus. There Mary gives birth to her baby (apparently in a stable because there was no room in the inn), wraps him in swaddling cloths and lays him in a manger (a feeding trough). Matthew 1:25 goes with this passage.
8. **The visit of the shepherds.** Read Luke 2:8-20, which tells of the visit of the shepherds that very night to see the babe in a manger.
9. **Jesus is circumcised and named.** Read Luke 2:21. Joseph and Mary apparently stay at Nazareth, finding a house for that purpose. When Jesus is eight days old He is circumcised and given his name "Jesus."
10. **Joseph, Mary and Jesus go to Jerusalem.** Read Luke 2:22-24. When Jesus is forty days old, they take Him to the temple at Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord as their firstborn son and to offer the required sacrifices for Mary's cleansing.
11. **Simeon and Anna see Jesus.** Read Luke 2:25-39a. While Joseph, Mary and Jesus are there in the temple, they encounter the righteous and devout Simeon (who holds the infant in his arms) and the aged prophetess Anna.
12. **The visit of the wise men.** Read Matthew 2:1-21. Joseph, Mary and Jesus apparently returned to Bethlehem and the house where they were residing. A few or more months pass. Then we are told of the visit of the wise men from the east (they are not identified as kings, nor is their number given). Following a star, they go first to Jerusalem and then to Bethlehem where they find "the young child" (**not** "babe"; eight times in this section Jesus is called "the young child") in a "house" (not a stable or a manger). There follows their flight into Egypt, Herod's order to slay all male children (in and around Bethlehem) two years old and under (according to the time the wise men first saw that guiding star in the east), the death of Herod, and the return of Joseph, Mary and Jesus to Judaea.
13. **Joseph and Mary return to Nazareth.** Read Matthew 2:22-23 and Luke 2:39b. It is then that Joseph and Mary go back to Nazareth with their son Jesus.

Friend, the traditional "Christmas story" is a garbled version of the Biblical account which most people will never read or hear in their entire lives. Please read these passages for yourself and get others to read this article and those passages.

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