

christmas story bible king james version

Discover the timeless Christmas story as told in the revered King James Version of the Bible. This comprehensive article delves deep into the biblical accounts of Jesus' birth, offering a rich exploration of the prophecies, events, and figures central to this miraculous narrative. We'll journey through Luke's detailed depiction of Mary's annunciation and Jesus' humble beginnings in Bethlehem, and Matthew's account of the Magi's arrival and Herod's fear. Understanding the Christmas story in the King James Version provides profound insight into the theological significance and historical context of this foundational event for Christians worldwide. Explore the scriptural roots of Christmas and deepen your appreciation for the King James Version's majestic prose.

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The Christmas Story: A King James Version Treasury

The Christmas story, a narrative that has echoed through centuries, finds its most profound and revered telling within the pages of the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. This beloved translation offers a majestic and deeply moving account of the birth of Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christianity. Exploring the Christmas story in the King James Version allows us to connect with the original biblical texts in a way that is both historically significant and spiritually enriching. The KJV's unique linguistic style imbues the Christmas narrative with a timeless power, drawing readers into the miraculous events surrounding the nativity. This article will meticulously examine the key biblical passages that constitute the Christmas story according to the King James Version, highlighting the prophecies, the divine intervention, and the humble circumstances of Christ's birth.

The Prophetic Foundations of the Christmas Story

The King James Version of the Bible lays a strong emphasis on the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in the birth of Jesus. These ancient foretellings provided a divine roadmap, indicating that the Messiah's arrival would be a significant event, marked by specific circumstances and signs. The prophets spoke of a virgin birth, a king born in Bethlehem, and a child who would bring salvation to the world. Understanding these prophecies enriches the Christmas story by demonstrating God's long-term plan for humanity and His faithfulness to His promises.

The Virgin Birth Prophecy

One of the most crucial prophecies directly linked to the Christmas story in the King James Version is the prediction of a virgin birth. The book of Isaiah, specifically chapter 7 and verse 14, is often cited as a foundational text. The King James Version states: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This verse, when understood in its prophetic context, points directly to the miraculous conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit, as described in the New Testament accounts.

The Birthplace Foretold

The prophecy concerning Jesus' birthplace is another cornerstone of the Christmas story as presented in the King James Version. The prophet Micah, in chapter 5 and verse 2, foretold the location of the Messiah's birth. The King James Version reads: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." This specific mention of Bethlehem, a seemingly insignificant town, highlights the divine selection of His birthplace and underscores the extraordinary nature of Jesus' arrival.

The Annunciation to Mary

The King James Version vividly portrays the divine intervention that initiated the Christmas story with the angel Gabriel's appearance to Mary. This event, known as the Annunciation, marks the beginning of Jesus' earthly journey and the unfolding of God's plan for salvation. The KJV's language captures the awe, wonder, and humble obedience of Mary in response to this divine message.

In Luke chapter 1, verses 26-38, the King James Version recounts the angel Gabriel's visit to Nazareth. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary." The angel's greeting and Mary's confusion are depicted with remarkable clarity, setting the stage for the miraculous announcement. "And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."

Mary's question, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" and Gabriel's reassuring explanation, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," are pivotal

moments. Mary's response, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word," showcases her profound faith and submission, an essential element of the Christmas story in the King James Version.

The Nativity in Bethlehem

The King James Version provides the most detailed and cherished account of the actual birth of Jesus, placing the event in the humble town of Bethlehem. The circumstances of His birth, as described in the KJV, emphasize God's humility and His desire to connect with humanity in the most relatable way possible. The manger scene, a central image of Christmas, is powerfully conveyed through this translation.

The Decree of Caesar Augustus

The King James Version connects the timing of Jesus' birth to a significant historical event: a census decreed by Emperor Augustus. Luke chapter 2, verses 1-5, explains the context: "And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And all went into their own town to be taxed. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, who was great with child." This decree necessitated Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem, fulfilling the prophecy of Micah.

The Birth in the Manger

The King James Version describes the arrival of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem and the subsequent birth of Jesus. The lack of lodging highlights the humble and perhaps even difficult circumstances surrounding the nativity. Luke 2:6-7 states: "And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." The image of the Son of God being laid in a manger, a feeding trough for animals, is a powerful symbol of His humility and the extraordinary nature of His birth.

The Visit of the Shepherds

The King James Version introduces a celestial announcement and a humble audience to the nativity: the shepherds. Their encounter with the angels and their subsequent visit to the manger are integral to the Christmas story, revealing God's desire to share the news of Christ's birth with ordinary people.

Luke chapter 2, verses 8-20, details this pivotal moment. "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." The angel's message, however, quickly turns fear into joy: "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

The appearance of a multitude of the heavenly host praising God adds to the grandeur of the announcement. The King James Version records: "And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The shepherds' immediate response, "Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us," demonstrates their eagerness to witness the fulfillment of the angelic message.

Upon finding Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus lying in the manger, the shepherds' reaction was to "make known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child." They returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, confirming the truth of the Christmas story in the King James Version. The shepherds, representing the common people, were the first to hear the good news of Christ's birth, signifying His inclusive mission.

The Visit of the Magi

The King James Version also includes the account of the wise men, or Magi, from the East. Their journey, guided by a star, and their presentation of gifts to the infant Jesus are significant elements of the Christmas narrative, highlighting the universal significance of Christ's birth.

Matthew chapter 2, verses 1-12, recounts this important event. "Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." The star served as a divine sign, leading these learned men from distant lands to the newborn King.

Their arrival in Jerusalem and their inquiry about the King of the Jews caused King Herod considerable distress. Herod's consultation with the chief priests and scribes, who confirmed Bethlehem as the birthplace based on prophecy, set in motion the tragic events that followed. The King James Version states that after hearing from Herod, "the wise men went their way; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was."

Upon entering the house, the Magi saw the young child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshipped him. They then presented their precious gifts: "And when they were opened, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." These gifts were not merely tokens but symbolic offerings: gold for His kingship, frankincense for His divinity and priestly role, and myrrh for His suffering and humanity. The King James Version emphasizes the fulfillment of prophecy and the recognition of Jesus as King by Gentiles, signifying His global impact.

Herod's Reaction and the Massacre of the Innocents

The King James Version portrays a stark contrast between the joy of the nativity and the fear and violence instigated by King Herod. Herod's reaction to the news of a newborn King highlights the conflict between earthly power and divine authority, a recurring theme in the Gospel accounts.

Matthew chapter 2, verses 13-18, details the aftermath of the Magi's visit. After the wise men

departed, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream: "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I again tell thee: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." This divine instruction for the Holy Family to flee into Egypt underscores the immediate danger posed by earthly rulers to the newborn King.

When Herod realized the Magi had tricked him, his rage led to a brutal act of infanticide. The King James Version vividly describes the Massacre of the Innocents: "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he diligently inquired of the wise men." This horrific event, prophesied in Jeremiah 31:15, demonstrates the lengths to which opposition to God's plan would go. The KJV's rendering of these events underscores the protective hand of God over Jesus, even amidst immense danger and the sorrowful fulfillment of prophecy.

The Presentation in the Temple

The King James Version also includes the event of Jesus' presentation in the Temple at Jerusalem, an observance of Jewish law that further solidifies the divine and human aspects of Jesus' birth. This event, occurring forty days after His birth, highlights the obedience of Mary and Joseph to the Law and introduces Simeon and Anna, who recognized the infant Jesus as the promised Messiah.

Luke chapter 2, verses 22-38, outlines this significant occasion. "And when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord." The King James Version emphasizes the fulfillment of religious customs by the Holy Family.

The encounter with Simeon is particularly poignant. "And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him." Simeon, guided by the Spirit, recognized the infant Jesus. "And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." Simeon's prophecy foretold both the glory and the suffering that Jesus would bring.

Anna, a prophetess, also testified about Jesus, confirming His identity as the Redeemer. The King James Version states that she "coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." This event, presented in the King James Version, reinforces the idea that the Christmas story is not just about a baby's birth, but the arrival of the long-awaited Savior, recognized by those who faithfully awaited His coming.

The Significance of the Christmas Story in the King

James Version

The King James Version's translation of the Christmas story carries profound significance for believers and scholars alike. Its enduring popularity stems from its linguistic beauty, its theological depth, and its faithful adherence to the original biblical texts. The KJV's rendering of the nativity narrative has shaped Christian understanding and devotion for centuries.

One key aspect of the King James Version's impact on the Christmas story is its authoritative and majestic tone. The language used creates a sense of awe and reverence, elevating the events of the nativity to their proper divine status. Phrases like "Glory to God in the highest" and the detailed descriptions of angelic visitations contribute to a powerful spiritual atmosphere.

Furthermore, the KJV's emphasis on the fulfillment of prophecy provides a strong theological framework for understanding Jesus' birth. By clearly linking the events of the nativity to Old Testament predictions, the translation underscores the divine orchestration of salvation history. This reinforces the belief that Jesus was not an unexpected arrival, but the promised Messiah.

The King James Version's detailed narratives also allow for a deeper appreciation of the humble circumstances of Jesus' birth. The manger scene, the visit of the shepherds, and the flight into Egypt are depicted with a clarity that emphasizes God's condescension and His identification with the poor and marginalized. This aspect of the Christmas story, as conveyed by the KJV, speaks powerfully to themes of humility, love, and God's presence with His people in their everyday lives.

The KJV's influence extends to cultural and artistic expressions of Christmas. The language and imagery found in this translation have inspired countless carols, paintings, and literary works, solidifying its place in the collective consciousness of Christmas traditions.

Conclusion: Embracing the King James Version Christmas Story

The Christmas story, as preserved in the King James Version of the Bible, remains a cornerstone of Christian faith and a beloved narrative for millions worldwide. Through its majestic prose and profound theological insights, the KJV offers a timeless and compelling account of the birth of Jesus Christ. This article has explored the key passages and events, from the prophetic foretellings to the angelic announcements, the humble nativity in Bethlehem, and the significant visits of shepherds and Magi. We have seen how the King James Version emphasizes the divine plan, the miraculous nature of Christ's conception, and the humble circumstances of His arrival, all while highlighting His role as Savior and King.

Understanding the Christmas story through the lens of the King James Version provides a deeper appreciation for the historical context, the scriptural accuracy, and the spiritual richness of this foundational event. The KJV's enduring legacy lies not only in its linguistic beauty but also in its ability to convey the transformative power of God's love manifested in the birth of His Son. By revisiting and reflecting on these biblical accounts, we can continue to find inspiration, hope, and a renewed sense of wonder in the Christmas story, embracing its message of salvation and peace as faithfully presented in the King James Version.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the primary biblical narrative that forms the basis of the Christmas story?

The primary biblical narrative forming the basis of the Christmas story, as found in the King James Version (KJV), is the birth of Jesus Christ, as recorded in the Gospels of Matthew chapters 1-2 and Luke chapters 1-2.

Which specific KJV verses describe the angel's announcement to Mary?

The angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary is described in the KJV at Luke 1:26-38, where it states, 'And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.'

According to the KJV, where was Jesus born?

According to the KJV, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, as stated in Matthew 2:1, 'Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.'

What does the KJV say about the shepherds and their role in the Christmas story?

The KJV recounts that in the same region there were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, proclaiming the good news of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:8-12).

Which KJV passage mentions the wise men (Magi) and their gifts?

The KJV passage that mentions the wise men, their journey, and their gifts is Matthew 2:11: '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 of gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.'

What is the KJV's account of the 'star' that guided the wise men?

The KJV describes the star in Matthew 2:2 and 2:9: 'Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.' and '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.'

How does the KJV describe the circumstances of Jesus' birth in terms of lodging?

The KJV states that Mary and Joseph found no place in the inn, so Jesus was born in a manger: 'And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn' (Luke 2:7).

What prophecy from the Old Testament, as cited in the KJV, foretold Jesus' birth in Bethlehem?

The prophecy cited in the KJV from the Old Testament is from Micah 5:2, quoted in Matthew 2:6: 'But thou, Bethlehem in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.'

What is the KJV's significance of the virgin birth of Jesus?

The KJV emphasizes the virgin birth of Jesus as a fulfillment of prophecy and a sign of His divine nature. Matthew 1:23 states, 'Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.'

Additional Resources

Here are 9 book titles related to a "Christmas Story Bible King James Version," focusing on various aspects of the Nativity narrative and its context, presented in a numbered list:

1. The Star of Bethlehem: A King James Bible Exploration

This book delves deeply into the biblical account of the star that guided the wise men, using the King James Version as its primary text. It explores astronomical phenomena, historical context, and theological interpretations of this pivotal celestial event. Readers will gain a richer understanding of the star's significance within the Christmas story.

2. Shepherds and Kings: Characters of the Nativity in KJV

Focusing on the human elements of the Christmas narrative, this title examines the roles and stories of the shepherds and the wise men as presented in the King James Version. It unpacks their individual experiences, their faith, and their encounters with the newborn King. The book provides detailed character studies from the sacred text.

3. The Incarnation: Truths from the King James Bible

This theological exploration centers on the profound doctrine of the Incarnation, the concept of God becoming flesh, as described in the King James Version. It meticulously analyzes the key scriptures that declare Jesus' divine nature and human birth. The book offers a spiritual and intellectual journey into the core mystery of Christmas.

4. Bethlehem's Promise: Peace on Earth in King James

This title examines the message of peace and goodwill toward men proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds, drawing directly from the King James Version. It contextualizes this message within the political and social landscape of ancient Judea. The book highlights the enduring relevance of the Christmas promise of peace.

5. Mary's Magnificat: A King James Commentary

Dedicated to the beautiful prayer of Mary, the mother of Jesus, this book offers a thorough commentary on her words as recorded in the King James Version. It explores the theological depth and personal significance of her "Magnificat." Readers will appreciate the lyrical beauty and spiritual power of this ancient song.

6. The Nativity Prophecies: Fulfilled in King James

This work traces the Old Testament prophecies that foretold the coming of the Messiah, connecting them to the events of Jesus' birth as described in the New Testament King James Version. It demonstrates the intricate fulfillment of God's promises throughout history. The book provides a compelling case for the divine orchestration of the Christmas narrative.

7. The Journey to Bethlehem: A King James Account

This title focuses on the physical and spiritual journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, as rendered in the King James Version. It explores the hardships and uncertainties they faced, and the divine guidance that led them to the humble birthplace. The book brings to life the often-overlooked details of their pilgrimage.

8. Herod's Fear: The Shadows of Christmas in KJV

Examining the darker side of the Christmas story, this book analyzes King Herod's reaction to the birth of Jesus, using the King James Version as its source. It discusses his fear, his cruelty, and the political machinations that followed. The book provides a contrast to the joy and hope of the Nativity.

9. The Gifts of the Magi: Symbolism in the King James Bible

This study explores the symbolic meaning of the gifts brought by the wise men – gold, frankincense, and myrrh – as presented in the King James Version. It interprets these ancient treasures in light of Jesus' identity as King, Priest, and sacrifice. The book offers a deeper understanding of the significance of these traditional Christmas offerings.

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