

Key Vocabulary

Gospels of Matthew and Luke	The first four books of the New Testament which tell the life story of Jesus
Emmanuel	God with us
Vulnerability	The state of needing additional support, care or protection because of age or a disability, or due to a risk of harm.
Messiah	Someone who will come and save the Jewish people (from the Romans)
Incarnation	God coming to earth as a human
Gold, frankincense Myrrh	The gifts of the wise men. Frankincense was used as a perfume Myrrh was used to anoint dead bodies.
Bethlehem	Where Jesus was born, where Joseph's family came from
Shepherds	First people to learn of Jesus' birth – very lowly in society
Herod	The king of the Jews at the time of the birth of Jesus. He lived in Jerusalem.

What I already know:

• Christians believe that Jesus is God and that he was born as a baby in Bethlehem. • The Bible points out that his birth showed that he was extraordinary (for example, he is worshipped as a king, in Matthew) and that he came to bring good news (for example, to the poor, in Luke). • Christians celebrate Jesus' birth; Advent for Christians is a time of getting ready for Jesus' coming.

Our big question:
What are the
significance of the
characters for Christians
in the Christmas story?

Why is the birth of Jesus so
important to Christians?

What is the
significance that
Jesus was born in a
stable? Does it
matter?

Powerful knowledge

God chose a Jewish young woman called Mary, who was engaged to Joseph the carpenter, to be the mother of his earthly son. He sent his angel, Gabriel, to ask this of her. Mary agreed to allow this to happen and Jesus was born in Bethlehem. This is the Christian concept of "incarnation": God becoming man or literally being "made flesh". In Christianity, God is all-powerful but when he came to earth, he expressed vulnerability. Jesus was born in a stable and was visited by a variety of people from very different social classes such as the shepherds and the wise men. There is a significance to the people and places which appear in the Christmas story. Each of the characters have a different viewpoint which help Christians understand the meaning of the birth of Jesus. Slightly different accounts of the story are found in the gospels of Luke and Matthew.



