

# The First Christmas

## Luke 2:1-7

Mary stared at Joseph in surprise. Bethlehem! They couldn't go to Bethlehem now. Why, it was time for the baby to be born! They would just have to stay home and wait until. . .

But the king had said that ALL grown-ups had to go to their hometown and be registered, NOW! Joseph and Mary knew they had to obey.

So Joseph got the patient little donkey ready. Carefully he fixed a seat for Mary on the little animal's back. Then very carefully, they started off down the road. First came Joseph, holding the rope to guide the donkey, then Mary, riding on the donkey's back. It was a L-O-N-G way to Bethlehem.

Finally, Mary and Joseph came to Bethlehem. Their L-O-N-G trip was almost over. Soon they would be at the inn where they could rest in a cool room away from the dusty road and the hot sun. Oh, they could hardly wait!

But what was this? What was the inn-keeper saying? NO ROOM? Oh, it couldn't be! Mary and Joseph were so hot and tired, and besides, it was almost time for the baby to be born. They just HAD to have a place to stay!

But there was no room in the inn. Joseph and Mary could NOT stay there. What could they do? Where could they go?

"There is a small barn behind the inn where the animals are kept," said the inn-keeper kindly.  
"Perhaps you could rest there."

Joseph led the patient little donkey around the big inn to the small building.

Quickly Joseph fixed a resting place in the straw for tired Mary; then he got some food and water for the donkey.

Late in the night while it was very still and quiet, God's own Son, Jesus, was born out there in the little barn! Mary wrapped the baby in a special cloth, then gently laid Him on the hay in one of the animal's feeding boxes.

Baby Jesus slept in His little manger-bed in the barn in Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph knew this special baby was the Gift God promised to send to save His people from their sins. Everything worked out just the way God planned!

### Bible Verse to Learn

"And she brought forth her firstborn son. . .and laid him in a manger" (Luke 2:7).