

She Wrapped Him in Swaddling Clothes

Christmas is an exciting time! At home you help your mom and dad clean, bake, and decorate for Christmas. Perhaps you write a letter to Santa or write a list of presents you hope to receive. At services you hear the ministers talk about Advent, the time of waiting before Christmas. You practice your part for the Sunday school program. You hear the story of Jesus' birth.

When Jesus was almost ready to be born, Mary and Joseph had to go on a long trip. They needed to go to Bethlehem so they could be counted or registered with the government. There were many people in Bethlehem, and Mary knew that Jesus would be born. The only place that they could find to stay was a stable. Here Jesus was born. Even though this was the animals' shelter, the birth of Jesus brought much joy to Mary and Joseph. Angels shared the good news with the shepherds and they came to visit Baby Jesus.

The stable where Jesus was born is a picture of God's kingdom. When you hear the Christmas Gospel, do you notice what Mary did for her baby, Jesus? The Bible tells us that she "wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger." The swaddling clothes that wrapped Baby Jesus are a picture of God's Word. Mary wrapped Baby Jesus just like mothers today might wrap their baby in a blanket. Babies feel secure when they are wrapped in this way. The manger filled with warm clean hay was a safe place for Mary to place her baby. Baby Jesus was happy, safe, and warm in the manger.

Jesus was born of Mary and was also the Son of God, but He was raised in the home of earthly parents Mary and Joseph. They loved Him, cared for Him, and wanted Him to be safe. You are also a gift from the Heavenly Father to your mom and dad. They give you food to eat, clothes to wear, and a home to live in. They love you and want you to be safe. They take you to services and Sunday school so you can learn about God and Jesus. They pray for you and hope that you will always be a believer.

As believing children you have received a double blessing! Not only do your parents care for you, but you have another mother also. This is God's kingdom. Here we are safe and protected because we believe our sins forgiven according to God's Word.

As Christmas comes again, remember to thank God. He has given you a mother and father. You can be a child in His kingdom. He has also given you the best Christmas gift—Jesus the Savior!

Adrian Pirness

Visit about These:

- Read the Christmas Gospel (Luke 2:1–20) as a family. (See also *The Savior Is Born! The Christmas Gospel for Children*, CHZ 2009). If you can read, read it to your younger brothers and sisters. Why is Jesus the best Christmas gift?
- You could also read and listen to *Aviva and the First Christmas* (LLC book and audio set, 1999).
- How does your favorite Christmas song relate to the Christmas Gospel?
- What is your favorite part of Christmas? Why is it your favorite?

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