

The Christmas Story

From Matthew 9:20–22, Mark 5:25–34, and Luke 8:43–48.

I want to tell you one of the best stories of Jesus today. It is one that you have heard a lot this Christmas. It is a story about how much Heavenly Father loves us. One time, when Nephi was trying to understand his father's dream about a tree, he prayed and was visited by an angel. And to explain to Nephi how much Heavenly Father loves us, the angel told Nephi this story:

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

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.

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.

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

I love this story. Every time I hear it, I feel like the whole world grows quiet and lit by candles and even the angels are listening intently. I feel how special it is. When this story was told to Nephi, he said that he knew it showed the “love of God,” and that this was “the most desirable above all things” and “the most joyous to the soul,” the happiest story of all!

That was the story the way Luke told it in the Bible. When John told the story, he told it differently. He said:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

He wanted to make sure that we knew about what Nephi's angel called “the condescension of God.” He wanted us to know that that little baby in the story was God. That he had been with God in the beginning. That he made this whole amazing world. All of it. And that he is the life and light of this world. He is everything, but he gave it all up to come as a little child, to live with us, to show us how to live and die so that we can all live with Him again in Heaven. That is the special feeling we get when we hear this story. We each feel the quiet hush of amazement that Jesus and our Heavenly Father love us so much!