

# THE EASTER STORY

SCENE 1	SCENE 2	SCENE 3
SCENE 4	SCENE 5	SCENE 6
SCENE 7	SCENE 8	SCENE 9

## SCENE ONE (Luke, Ch.22, vv.14-23.)

(Jesus is wearing a blue robe in the picture and holding up a piece of bread.)

Then at the proper time Jesus and the twelve apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, "I have looked forward to this hour with deep longing, anxious to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won't eat it again until it comes to fulfilment in the Kingdom of God." Then he took a cup of wine, and when he had given thanks for it, he said, "Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come." Then he took a loaf of bread; and when he had thanked God for it, he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, "This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." After supper he took another cup of wine and said, "This wine is the token of God's new covenant to save you – an agreement sealed with the blood I will pour out for you. But here at this table, sitting among us as a friend, is the man who will betray me. For I, the Son of Man, must die since it is part of God's plan. But how terrible it will be for my betrayer!" Then the disciples began to ask each other which of them would ever do such a thing.

## SCENE TWO (Matthew, Ch.26, vv.36-46.)

Then Jesus brought them to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and he said, "Sit here while I go on ahead to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and he began to be filled with anguish and deep distress. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with me." He went on a little farther and fell face down on the ground, praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from me. Yet I want your will, not mine." Then he returned to the disciples and found them asleep. He said to Peter, "Couldn't you stay awake and watch with me even one hour? Keep alert and pray. Otherwise temptation will overpower you. For though the spirit is

willing enough, the body is weak!" Again he left them and prayed, "My Father! If this cup cannot be taken away until I drink it, your will be done." He returned to them again and found them sleeping, for they just couldn't keep their eyes open. So he went back to pray a third time, saying the same things again. Then he came to the disciples and said, "Still sleeping? Still resting? Look, the time has come. I, the Son of Man, am betrayed into the hands of sinners. Up, let's be going. See, my betrayer is here!"

## BACKGROUND READING

### JESUS IS BETRAYED AND ARRESTED

And immediately, as he said this, Judas, one of the twelve disciples, arrived with a mob that was armed with swords and clubs. They had been sent out by the leading priests, the teachers of religious law, and the other leaders. Judas had given them a prearranged signal: "You will know which one to arrest when I go over and give him the kiss of greeting. Then you can take him away under guard."

( Mark, Ch.14, vv.43-44.)

Then the people who had arrested Jesus led him to the home of Caiaphas, the high priest, where the teachers of religious law and other leaders had gathered. Meanwhile, Peter was following far behind and eventually came to the courtyard of the high priest's house. He went in, sat with the guards, and waited to see what was going to happen to Jesus. Inside, the leading priests and the entire high council were trying to find witnesses who would lie about Jesus, so they could put him to death. But even though they found many who agreed to give false witness, there was no testimony they could use. Finally, two men were found who declared, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the Temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'" Then the high priest stood up and said to Jesus, "Well, aren't you going to answer these charges? What do you have to say for yourself?" But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest said to him, "I demand in the name of the living God that you tell us whether you are the Messiah, the Son of God." Jesus replied, "Yes, it is as you say. And in the future you will see me, the Son of Man, sitting at God's right hand in the place of power and coming back on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his clothing to show his horror, shouting, "Blasphemy! Why do we need other witnesses? You have all heard his blasphemy. What is your verdict?" "Guilty!" they shouted. "He must die!"

( Matthew Ch.26, vv.57-66.)

## SCENE THREE

JESUS' TRIAL BEFORE PILATE (John, Ch.18, vv.28-40 and Ch.19, v.16.)

Jesus' trial before Caiaphas ended in the early hours of the morning. Then he was taken to the headquarters of the Roman governor. His accusers didn't go in themselves because it would defile them, and they wouldn't be allowed to celebrate the Passover feast. So Pilate, the governor, went out to them and asked, "What is your charge against this man?" "We wouldn't have handed him over to you if he weren't a criminal!" they retorted. "Then take him away and judge him by your own laws," Pilate told them. "Only the Romans are permitted to execute someone," the Jewish leaders replied. This fulfilled Jesus' prediction about the way he would die. Then Pilate went back inside and called for Jesus to be brought to him. "Are you the King of the Jews?" he asked him. Jesus replied, "Is this your own question, or did others tell you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate asked. "Your own people and their leading priests brought you here. Why? What have you done?" Then Jesus answered, "I am not an earthly king. If I were, my followers would have fought when I was arrested by the Jewish leaders. But my Kingdom is not of this world." Pilate replied, "You are a king then?" "You say that I am a king, and you are right," Jesus said. "I was born for that purpose. And I came to bring truth to the world. All who love the truth recognise that what I say is true." "What is truth?" Pilate asked. Then he went out again to the people and told them, "He is not guilty of any crime. But you have a custom of asking me to release someone from prison each year at Passover. So if you want me to, I'll release the King of the Jews." But they shouted back, "No! Not this man, but Barabbas!" (Barabbas was a criminal.) Then Pilate gave Jesus to them to be crucified.

## SCENE FOUR

THE SOLDIERS MOCK JESUS (Mark, Ch.15, vv.16-20.)

The soldiers took him into their headquarters and called out the entire battalion. They dressed him in a purple robe and made a crown of long, sharp thorns and put it on his head. Then they saluted, yelling, "Hail! King of the Jews!" And they beat him on the head with a stick, spat on him, and dropped to their knees in mock worship. When they were finally tired of mocking him, they took off the purple robe and put his own clothes on him again. Then they led him away to be crucified.

## THE CRUCIFIXION

So they took Jesus and led him away. Carrying the cross by himself, Jesus went to the place called Skull Hill (in Hebrew, Golgotha). There they crucified him. There were two others crucified with him, one on either side, with Jesus between them. And Pilate posted a sign over him that read, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." The place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; and the sign was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, so that many people could read it. Then the leading priests said to Pilate, "Change it from 'The King of the Jews' to 'He said, I am King of the Jews.'" Pilate replied, "What I have written, I have written. It stays exactly as it is." When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they divided his clothes among the four of them. They also took his robe, but it was seamless, woven in one piece from the top. So they said, "Let's not tear it but throw dice to see who gets it." This fulfilled the Scripture that says, "They divided my clothes among themselves and threw dice for my robe." So that is what they did. Standing near the cross were Jesus' mother, and his mother's sister, Mary (the wife of Clopas), and Mary Magdalene.

(John, Ch.19, vv.17-25.)

Two criminals were crucified with him, their crosses on either side of his. And the people passing by shouted abuse, shaking their heads in mockery. "Ha! Look at you now!" they yelled at him. "You can destroy the Temple and rebuild it in three days, can you? Well then, save yourself and come down from the cross!" The leading priests and teachers of religious law also mocked Jesus.

(Mark, Ch.15, vv.27-31.)

At noon, darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. Then, at that time Jesus called out with a loud voice, "Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Some of the bystanders misunderstood and thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah. One of them ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, holding it up to him on a stick so he could drink. "Leave him alone. Let's see whether Elijah will come and take him down!" he said. Then Jesus uttered another loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain in the Temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "Truly, this was the Son of God!"

(Mark, Ch.15, vv.33-39.)

## SCENE FIVE

( Luke, Ch.23, vv.44-49.)

By this time it was noon, and darkness fell across the whole land until three o'clock. The light from the sun was gone. And suddenly, the thick veil hanging in the Temple was torn apart. Then Jesus shouted, "Father, I entrust my spirit into your hands!" And with those words he breathed his last. When the captain of the Roman soldiers handling the executions saw what had happened, he praised God and said, "Surely this man was innocent." And when the crowd that came to see the crucifixion saw all that had happened, they went home in deep sorrow. But Jesus' friends, including the women who had followed him from Galilee, stood at a distance watching.

### THE BURIAL OF JESUS

When the Roman officer who stood facing him saw how he had died, he exclaimed, "Truly, this was the Son of God!"

(Mark, Ch.15 v.39.)

As evening approached, Joseph, a rich man from Arimathea who was one of Jesus' followers, went to Pilate and asked for Jesus' body. And Pilate issued an order to release it to him. Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a long linen cloth. He placed it in his own new tomb, which had been carved out of the rock. Then he rolled a great stone across the entrance as he left. Both Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting nearby watching.

(Matthew, Ch.27, vv.57-61.)

## SCENE SIX

(Mark, Ch.16, vv.1-8 and Matthew, Ch.28. vv.8-10.)

The next evening, when the Sabbath ended, Mary Magdalene and Salome and Mary the mother of James went out and purchased burial spices to put on Jesus' body. Very early on Sunday morning, just at sunrise, they came to the tomb. On the way they were discussing who would roll the stone away from the entrance to the tomb. But when they arrived, they looked up and saw that the stone – a very large one – had already been rolled aside. So they entered the tomb, and there on the right sat a young man clothed in a white robe. The women were startled, but the angel said, "Do not be so surprised. You are looking for Jesus, the Nazarene, who was crucified. He isn't here! He has been raised from the dead! Look, this is where they laid his body. Now go and give this message to his disciples, including Peter: Jesus is going ahead of you to Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you before he died!" The women fled from the tomb, trembling and bewildered, saying nothing to anyone because they were

too frightened to talk. They were very frightened but also filled with great joy, and they rushed to find the disciples to give them the angel's message. And as they went, Jesus met them. "Greetings!" he said. And they ran to him, held his feet, and worshipped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Don't be afraid! Go tell my brothers to leave for Galilee, and they will see me there."

## SCENE SEVEN

JESUS APPEARS TO HIS DISCIPLES (John, Ch.20, vv.19-23.)

That evening, on the first day of the week, the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you", he said. As he spoke, he held out his hands for them to see, and he showed them his side. They were filled with joy when they saw their Lord! He spoke to them again and said, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven."

## SCENE EIGHT

(John, Ch.21, vv.1-8 & 14.)

Later Jesus appeared again to the disciples beside the Sea of Galilee. This is how it happened. Several of the disciples were there – Simon Peter, Thomas (nicknamed the Twin), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples. Simon Peter said, "I'm going fishing." "We'll come, too," they all said. So they went out in the boat, but they caught nothing all night. At dawn the disciples saw Jesus standing on the beach, but they couldn't see who he was. He called out, "Friends, have you caught any fish?" "No," they replied. Then he said, "Throw out your net on the right-hand side of the boat, and you'll get plenty of fish!" So they did, and they couldn't draw in the net because there was so many fish in it. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" When Simon Peter heard that it was the Lord, he put on his tunic (for he had stripped for work), jumped into the water, and swam ashore. The others stayed with the boat and pulled the loaded net to the shore, for they were only out about three hundred feet. This was the third time Jesus had appeared to his disciples since he had been raised from the dead.

( Acts Ch.1, vv.1-5.)

Dear Theophilus: In my first book I told you about everything Jesus began to do and teach until the day he ascended to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions from the Holy Spirit. During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time and proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. On these occasions he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. In one of these meetings as he was eating a meal with them, he told them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you what he promised. Remember, I have told you about this before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

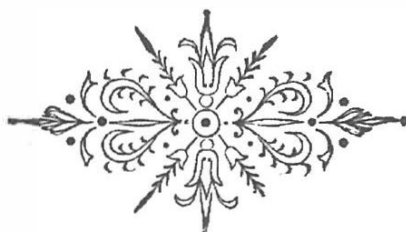
## SCENE NINE

(Acts, Ch.1, vv.6-11.)

When the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, are you going to free Israel now and restore our kingdom?" "The Father sets those dates," he replied, "and they are not for you to know. But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere – in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. It was not long after he said this that he was taken up into the sky while they were watching, and he disappeared into a cloud. As they were straining their eyes to see him, two white-robed men suddenly stood there among them. They said, "Men of Galilee, why are you standing here staring at the sky? Jesus has been taken away from you into heaven. And someday, just as you saw him go, he will return!"

Jesus' disciples saw him do many other miraculous signs besides the ones recorded in this book. But these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing in him you will have life.

(John, Ch.20, vv.30-31.)



# THE CHRISTMAS STORY

## BACKGROUND READING

### THE BIRTH OF JESUS FORETOLD

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favoured woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be frightened, Mary," the angel told her, "for God has decided to bless you! You will become pregnant and have a son, and you are to name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!" Mary asked the angel, "But how can I have a baby? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will over-shadow you. So the baby born to you will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she's already in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant, and I am willing to accept whatever he wants. May everything you have said come true." And then the angel left.

(Luke, Ch.1, vv.26-38.)

### MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

A few days later Mary hurried to the hill country of Judea, to the town where Zechariah lived. She entered the house and greeted Elizabeth. At the sound of Mary's greeting, Elizabeth's child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, "You are blessed by God above all other women, and your child is blessed. What an honour this is, that the mother of my Lord should visit me! When you came in and greeted me, my baby jumped for joy the instant I heard your voice! You are blessed, because you believed that the Lord would do what he said."

(Luke, Ch.1, vv.39-45.)



## THE BIRTH OF JESUS THE MESSIAH

Now this is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. Joseph, her fiancé, being a just man, decided to break the engagement quietly, so as not to disgrace her publicly. As he considered this, he fell asleep, and an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to go ahead with your marriage to Mary. For the child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All of this happened to fulfil the Lord's message through his prophet: "Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel (meaning, 'God is with us')." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord commanded. He brought Mary home to be his wife, but she remained a virgin until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

(Matthew, Ch.1, vv.18-25.)

SCENE 1	SCENE 2	SCENE 3
SCENE 4	SCENE 5	SCENE 6
SCENE 7	SCENE 8	SCENE 9

### SCENE ONE (Luke, Ch.2, vv.1-5.)

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) All returned to their own towns to register for this census. And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He travelled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, his fiancée, who was obviously pregnant by this time.

## SCENE TWO

(Luke, Ch.2, vv.6-7.)

And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. She gave birth to her first child, a son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the village inn.

## SCENE THREE

(Luke, Ch.2, vv.8-15.)

That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terribly frightened, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Saviour – yes, the Messiah, the Lord – has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David! And this is how you will recognize him: You will find a baby lying in a manger, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth!" Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others – the armies of heaven – praising God: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favours." When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Come on, let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

## SCENE FOUR

( Luke, Ch.2, vv.16-20.)

They ran to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. Then the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, but Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their fields and flocks, glorifying and praising God for what the angels had told them, and because they had seen the child, just as the angel had said.

## SCENE FIVE

(Matthew, Ch.2, vv.1-8.)

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We have seen his star as it arose, and we have come to worship him." Herod was deeply disturbed by their question, as was all of Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law. "Where did the prophet say the Messiah would be born?" he asked them. "In Bethlehem," they said, "for this is what the

prophet wrote: 'O Bethlehem of Judah, you are not just a lowly village in Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'" Then Herod sent a private message to the wise men, asking them to come to see him. At this meeting he learned the exact time when they first saw the star. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

## SCENE SIX

(Matthew, Ch.2, vv.9-11.)

After this interview the wise men went their way. Once again the star appeared to them, guiding them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house where the child and his mother, Mary, were, and they fell down before him and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

## SCENE SEVEN

(Matthew, Ch.2, v.12.)

But when it was time to leave, they went home another way, because God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

## SCENE EIGHT

(Matthew, Ch.2, v.13.)

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up and flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to try to kill the child."

## SCENE NINE

(Matthew, Ch.2, vv.14-15.)

That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod's death. This fulfilled what the Lord has spoken through the prophet: "I called my Son out of Egypt."

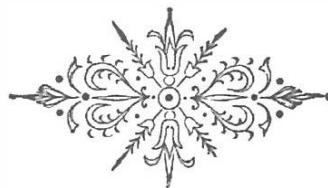
Herod was furious when he learned that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, because the wise men had told him the star first appeared to them about two years earlier. Herod's brutal action fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah: "A cry of anguish is heard in Ramah – weeping and mourning unrestrained. Rachel weeps for her children, refusing to be comforted – for they are dead."

(Matthew, Ch.2, vv.16-18.)

## THE RETURN TO NAZARETH

When Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and told him, "Get up and take the child and his mother back to the land of Israel, because those who were trying to kill the child are dead." So Joseph returned immediately to Israel with Jesus and his mother. But when he learned that the new ruler was Herod's son Archelaus, he was afraid. Then, in another dream, he was warned to go to Galilee. So they went and lived in a town called Nazareth. This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophets concerning the Messiah: "He will be called a Nazarene."

(Matthew, Ch.2, vv.19-23.)



(NTL) All the Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible,  
New Living Translation.  
copyright © 1996

Proceeds from the distribution of the Tibetan art prints are designated for charitable purposes - including the support of non-political educational projects.

# WHY NOT CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS AND EASTER WITH A DIFFERENCE THIS YEAR?

## WHAT ARE THESE PICTURES ABOUT?

Historical events of 2000 years ago are brought vividly to life through the talented brush strokes and ingenuity of a well-known Sherpa master artist – Gurmi Lama.

Combining traditional Tibetan art forms with modern techniques he has produced a kaleidoscope of wonderful scenes depicting the Christmas and Easter stories.

Each individual contextualized picture is based on passages taken from the Bible.

You will be able to relate to each individual scene more deeply if you read the passages while looking at the picture.

The Christmas story inevitably leads on to the Easter story. And the Easter account takes us back to the purpose of Christ's coming into the world.

## HOW CAN THEY BE USED?

Being laminated they will be durable and can be used during successive Christmas and Easter seasons.

A new family tradition of focusing upon a single scene, a day at a time, prior to Christmas or Easter is proving popular.

If the scripture passage relating to the scene is read out loud these amazing events take on a fresh significance for both adults and children.

