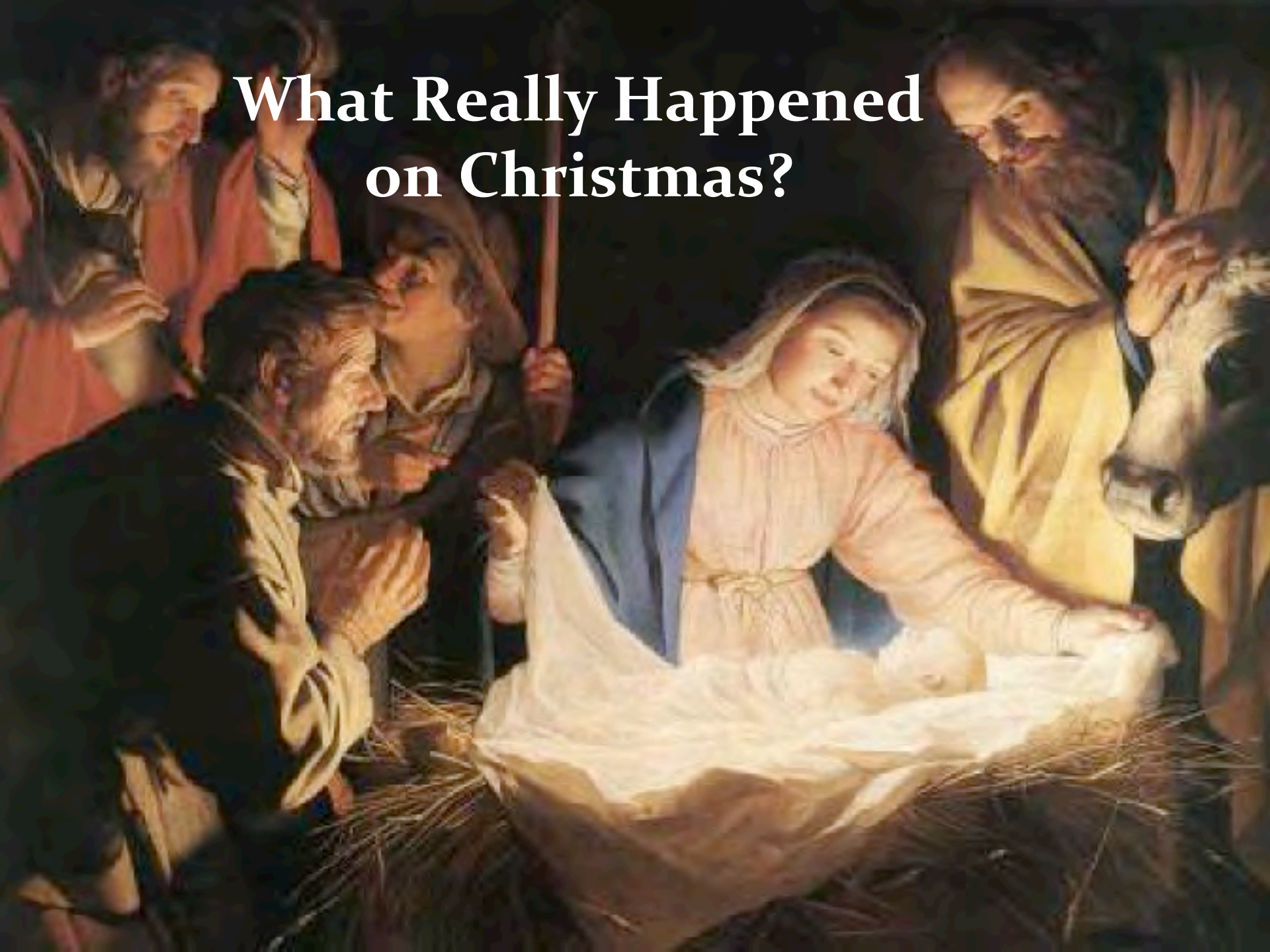


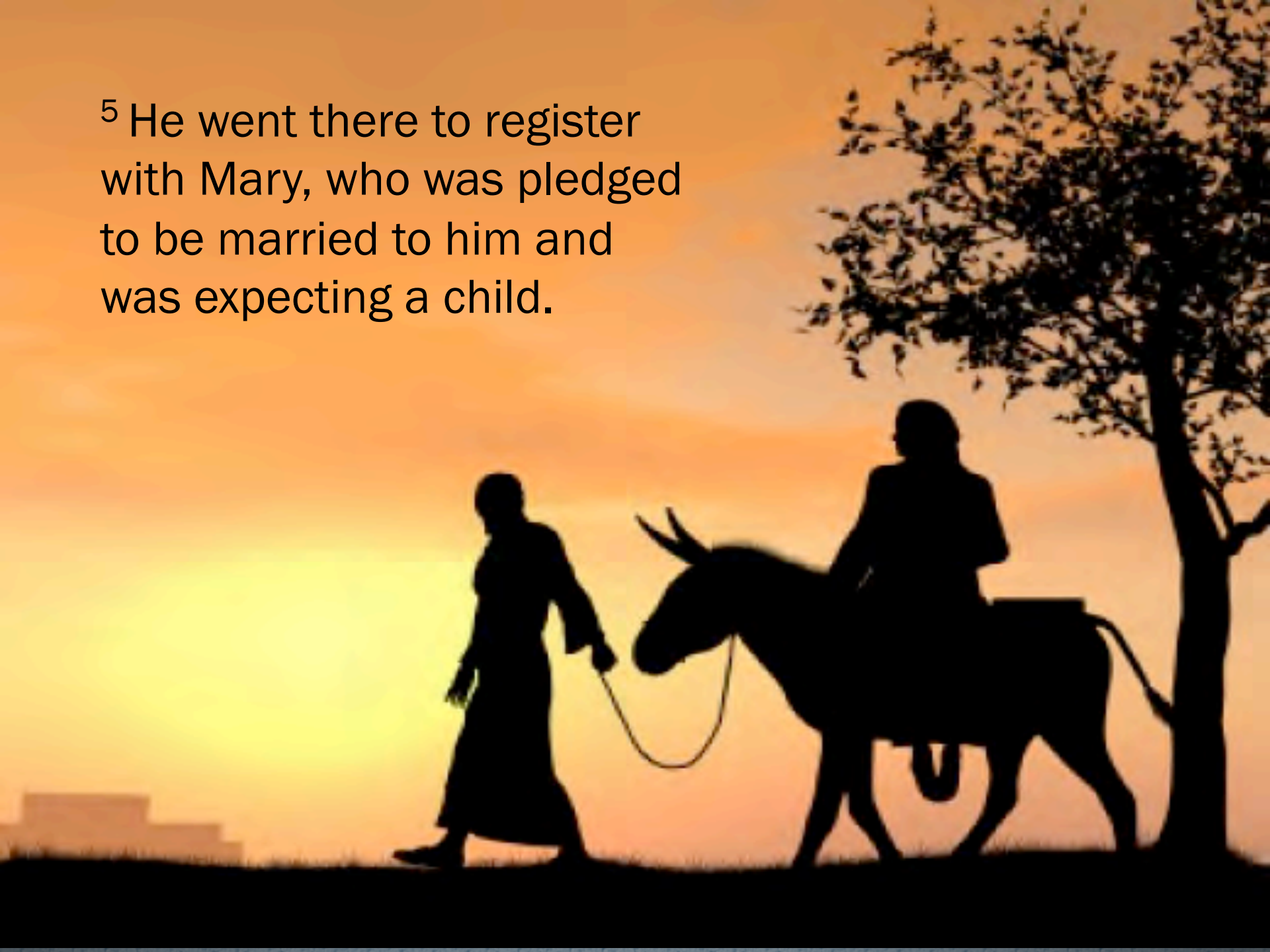
What Really Happened on Christmas?



In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.





⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.



⁸ And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

⁹ An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.



¹⁰ But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

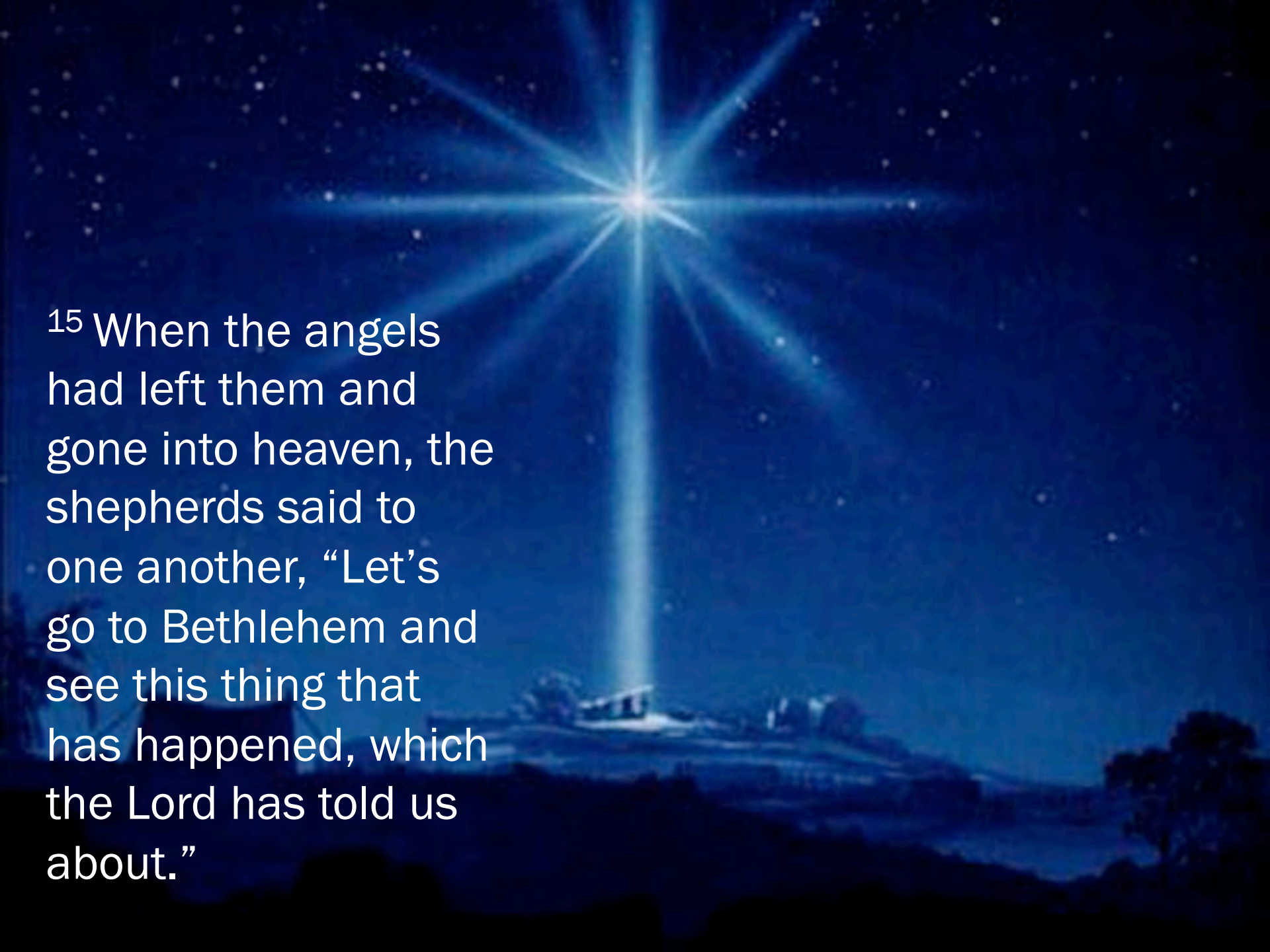
¹¹ Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.



12 “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

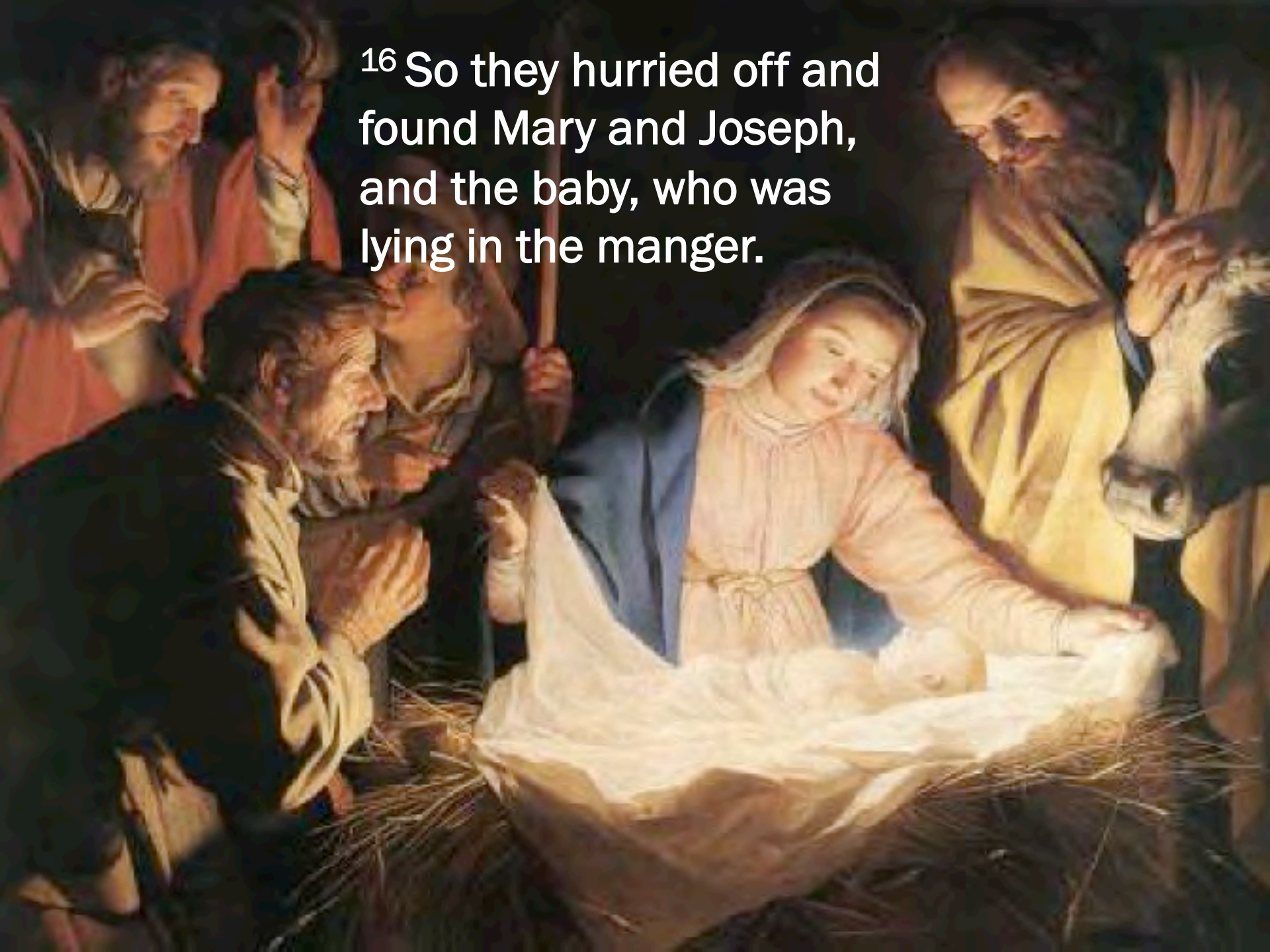


¹³ Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,
¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

A night sky with a bright starburst in the center, emitting a beam of light that shines down on a landscape. The landscape is dark with some buildings and trees visible. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

¹⁵ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.



¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

What really happened on Christmas?

- Was Jesus born in a house or a stable?
- Did Mary suddenly go into labor shortly after arriving in Bethlehem?
- Did the local inn refuse to make room for a woman in labor?
- Did every home ignore an emergency?
- Did the city of David receive or reject the Son of David?

What really happened on Christmas

- Jesus was born in a house.
- Joseph and Mary probably had been in town a few days before labor began.
- They never sought an inn.
- They were welcomed into family quarters because the guest room was full.
- The city of David received the Son of David with humble, hearty hospitality.

Manger in the house

- Only the rich had a stable separate from the house. Common people had a house in which animals were kept on one end of the family's room, a few steps lower.
- Animals in the house were kept safe from theft and provided body heat.
- Mangers could be dug in the family room floor or could be built of wood and moved.
- Going into **the house** they saw the child with Mary his mother. (Matthew 2:11)

No space in the guest room

- There was no place for them in the *kataluma* [καταλύμα] (Luke 2:7)
- The Samaritan brought him to an inn [*pandocheion* πανδοχεῖον] (Luke 10:34)
- “Tell the master of the house, ‘The Teacher says to you, Where is the guest room [*kataluma* καταλύμα], where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ And he will show you a large upper room furnished.” (Luke 22:11-12)



What really happened?

The holy family came to Bethlehem, where they were received into a private home. The child was born, wrapped and (literally) “put to bed” (*anaklino*) in the living room in the manger that was either built into the floor or made of wood and moved into the family living space. The guest room was already occupied by other guests. The host family graciously accepted Mary and Joseph into the family room of their house. (Dr. Kenneth Bailey)

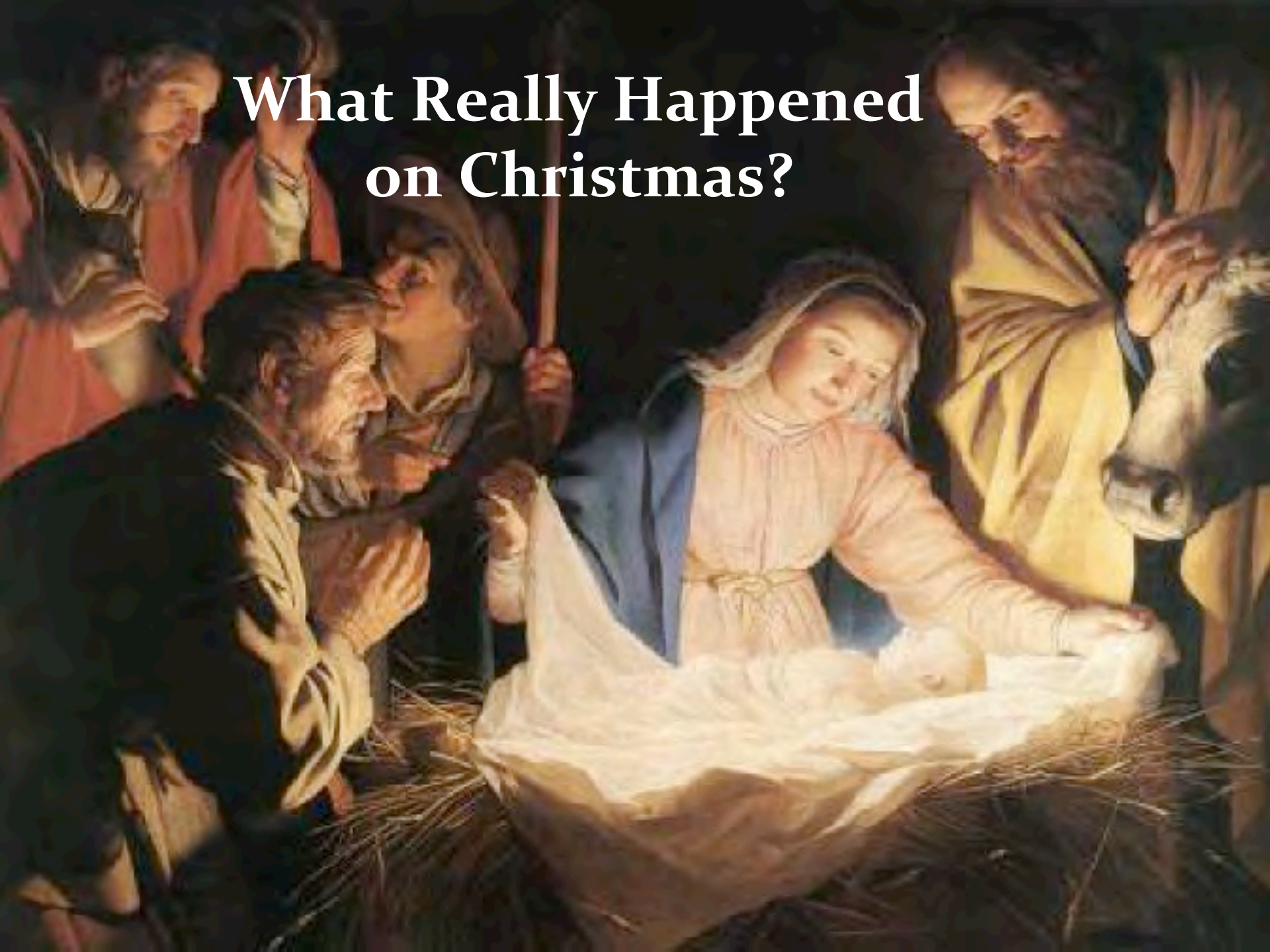
Good news for shepherds

- Even if the Savior-Messiah-Lord was really born, would lowly shepherds be welcome to visit his family and see him?
- A sign: The baby will be wrapped in cloths just like any other baby of peasants. He will be lying a manger, which means the shepherds will find him in an ordinary peasant home much like theirs.

What really happened on Christmas?

- Jesus was born in a house-stable.
- Joseph and Mary probably had been in town a few days before labor began.
- They never sought an inn.
- They were welcomed into family quarters because the guest room was full.
- The city of David received the Son of David with humble, hearty hospitality.

What Really Happened on Christmas?



What really happened on Christmas?

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11)

God with us to save from sin

“What is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”—which means, “God with us.”

(Matthew 1:21-23)

The Word became flesh

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth... No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. (John 1:1-18)

God became human

Christ Jesus, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:5-8)

Manifested in the flesh

Great indeed, we confess, is the
mystery of godliness:

He was manifested in the flesh,
vindicated by the Spirit,
seen by angels,
proclaimed among the nations,
believed on in the world,
taken up in glory.

(1 Timothy 3:16)

Image and fullness of God makes peace by his blood

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created... For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

(Colossians 1:15-20)

Christ Came Into the World

God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

(John 3:16)

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. (1 Timothy 1:15)

Why he came

The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mark 10:45)

The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. (Luke 19:10)

He appeared so that he might take away our sins. And in him is no sin... The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. (1 John 3:5, 8)

God sent his Son to make us his sons

When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. (Galatians 4:4-5)

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God. (John 1:12)

God's radiance, our purification

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. (Hebrews 1:3)

What really happened on Christmas?

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:10-11)

Incarnate Deity

Christ by highest heav'n adored
Christ the everlasting Lord!
Late in time behold Him come
Offspring of a Virgin's womb
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see
Hail the incarnate Deity
Pleased as man with man to dwell
Jesus, our Emmanuel.

Born to give second birth

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!

Hail the Son of Righteousness!

Light and life to all He brings

Ris'n with healing in His wings

Mild He lays His glory by

Born that man no more may die

Born to raise the sons of earth

Born to give them second birth.