

The Birth of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ reveals thru Jakob Lorber

The „Christmas Story“

Out from the
Gospel of James¹⁾
about the Childhood of Jesus Christ

¹⁾ More information about the Gospel of James are written at the Begin of the complete Work „The Childhood of Jesus“ by the Lord Himself.

The casting of lots for Mary in the temple

1,3. Mary, who had been brought up in the temple, had come into womanhood, and according to Mosaic Law, she had to be given from the temple.

1,4. Messengers were sent out throughout Judea so that fathers could come forward and one among them could be found worthy to take the young maid into his house.

1,6. After three days, the candidates met in the same place again, and after each candidate for Mary offered the priest a fresh lily stalk, the priest went into the interior of the temple with the stalks and prayed.

1,7. After his prayer, he came out with the stalks and returned them to each man.

1,8. All the stalks immediately became blemished, only the one last handed to Joseph remained fresh and spotless.

1,9. Some of the candidates objected to this test, declaring it biased and thus invalid, and demanded another test which would allow no room for any mischief.

1,10. The priest, annoyed at this, commanded that Mary be fetched, gave her a dove and asked her to step in among the candidates, while at the same time letting go of the dove,

1,11. but just before the release of the dove said to the candidates: "Behold, you who misinterpret the sign of Jehovah! – This dove is a pure and innocent animal and unable to hear our discussion,

1,12. but lives only in the Lord's will and understands only the almighty language of God!

1,13. Hold high your stalks! – The stalk of the candidate, on which the dove released by the young maid perches, and the head of the person on which it sits, will be the one who shall take Mary!"

1,14. The candidates were satisfied with this and said: "Yes, this will be an unmistakable sign!"

1,15. As Mary released the dove at the behest of the priest, it immediately flew towards Joseph, perched on top of his stalk and then flew from there to sit on Joseph's head.

1,16. And the priest spoke: "This is the will of God! Upon you, worthy craftsman, the lot for the virgin of the Lord has unmistakably fallen! So take her in the name of the Lord in your pure house for further care, Amen."

1,17. But when Joseph heard this, he answered the priest and spoke: "See, anointed servant of the Lord according to the Law of Moses, the trustworthy subject of the Lord God Sabaoth, I am already an old man with grown-up sons at home and have been a widower since a long time; I will become an object of ridicule and scorn to the sons of Israel, by taking this young maid into my house!

1,18. So let the process be changed once again and let me stay outside so that I am not counted among the candidates!"

1,19. The priest however held up his hand and spoke to Joseph: "Joseph! Fear the Lord! Do you not know what He did to Dathan, Korah and Abiram?"

The Birth of Jesus Christ

God's testimonial of Joseph

1,24. The priest now went inside and prayed for Joseph in front of the inner sanctum, - and the Lord spoke to the priest:

1,25. "Do not cause the man, whom I have selected, to be sad; then there is no other more righteous man in Israel, and no man in the whole world, and no one in front of my eternal throne in all the heavens!

1,26. Go outside and give the virgin that I have brought up Myself to the most righteous man on earth!"

1,27. Here the priest beat his breast and spoke: "O Lord, almighty one and only God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, be merciful to me, a sinner, for now I realize that You will judge Your people!"

1,28. Thereupon the priest arose, went out with a blessing in the name of the Lord, gave the maid to the fearful Joseph

1,29. and spoke to him: "Joseph, you are righteous before the Lord, that is why He has chosen you from among many thousands of men! And so you may go in peace, Amen."

1,32. However, work awaited Joseph, so he did not tarry in his house this time and spoke to Mary accordingly:

1,33. "Mary, behold, I have taken you from the temple of the Lord, my God, according to his will; however I cannot stay with you now and protect you but must leave you behind, for I must go to take care of the construction of the house that I showed you on the way here.

1,34. But this does not mean that you will be at home alone and uncared for. I have a closely related resident who is a devout and righteous woman; she will be with you and my youngest son; and the grace of God and His blessing will not leave you.

1,35. I will soon return home to you, together with my four sons, and I will be a guide to you in the Lord's ways. The Lord God will now watch over you and my house, Amen."

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The new curtain in the temple. Mary's work on the curtain.

2,1. At the time, a new temple curtain was deemed necessary to cover the old curtain, which was worn and torn.

2,5. Then call for me seven immaculate virgins from the tribe of David, and we will come to a solution for dividing the work!"

2,9. As soon as the virgins were assembled in the temple's atrium, the high priest came and led them into the temple of the Lord.

2,10. And when they were assembled in the temple of the Lord, the high priest spoke:

2,11. "Hear, o virgins from the tribe of David, who has decreed by the Lord's will that the fine work on the curtain that separates the temple's Holy of Holies must always be done by the virgins from his tribe;

2,12. and according to his testament, the various tasks must be distributed through the drawing of lots, and may every virgin do the work allotted to her according to her skill!

2,13. Look, there in front of you is the damaged curtain, and here on the golden table are the various raw materials already prepared for the work!

2,14. You can see that this work is necessary, therefore let us immediately draw lots, so that we can know who among you will spin the threads of gold, asbestos, cotton,

2,15. silk, as well as the hyacinth-coloured, the scarlet, and the genuine purple!"

2,16. And the virgins meekly drew lots according to the prescribed order as the High Priest prayed over them; and it was established how the work would be distributed.

2,17. And the scarlet and the genuine purple fell to the lot of the virgin Mary, the daughter of Anna and Joachim.

2,18. The virgin gave thanks to God for such a gracious award and the allotment of such honourable work for His glory, took the work and returned with it to her house, with Joseph leading the way.

2,19. Upon arrival at home, Mary immediately started the work in joyful spirits; Joseph advised her to work with all possible diligence, blessed her and immediately returned to his construction work.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

2,20. It was at the same time this took place that Zachariah, while taking care of the smoke offering in the temple, lost his power of speech because of a lack of faith. Therefore a replacement was chosen for him, under whom the drawing of lots for this work had taken place.

2,21. Mary was related to both Zachariah as well as his replacement, so that she increased her diligence twofold in order to complete the work in a short time, and if possible, be the first one to do so.

2,22. However she increased her diligence twofold not out of a desire for fame, but in her determination to give great joy to the Lord God by completing her work as soon and as best as she could.

2,25. In a span of just three days, Mary had completed the scarlet and immediately began with the purple. As she had to constantly moisten it, she often needed to take the jug and go out with it to fetch water during the work.

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The announcement of the Lord's birth by an angel. Mary's humble devotion.

3,1. One Friday morning, Mary took the water jug once again and went outside to fill it with water, and oh! – a voice spoke to her:

3,2. "Greetings to you Mary, full of the Lords' grace! The Lord is with you, oh blessed among women!"

3,3. She trembled when she heard these words and was quite afraid, as she could not see from where the voice came, and keenly looked to the right and to the left; but she could not discern anyone who could have spoken.

3,4. Hence she was full of great fear, and hastily took the filled water jug and hurried home.

3,5. As she arrived trembling, she put aside the water jug, took up the purple, sat down in her chair and diligently continued to spin the purple.

3,6. But she had hardly regained her composure at work when the angel of the Lord stood before the diligent virgin and spoke to her:

3,7. "Do not be afraid, Mary, God is greatly pleased with you; and you will conceive by the word of God!"

3,8. As Mary heard this, she began to ponder on these words, and could not comprehend their meaning; so she spoke to the angel:

3,9. "How can this happen, I am not married and I have never been with a man, who might then take me as his wife, so that I might become pregnant and bear a child, just as other women do?"

3,10. The angel however spoke to Mary: "Chosen virgin of the Lord! It will not happen as you think, but God's power will come over you.

3,11. Therefore the Holy One who will be born of you will be called the Son of the Almighty!

3,12. When He is born, you shall name Him Jesus; for He will redeem His people from all sins, judgments and eternal death."

3,13. Mary kneeled before the angel and spoke: "I am only the Lord's maidservant! Let it happen as you have said." And the angel left her, and Mary continued her work.

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Mary's childlike-innocent conversation with God and the response from above.

4,1. Soon after the angel disappeared, Mary praised and glorified the Lord God in her heart:

4,2. "O who am I, o Lord, that You grant me such grace? –

4,3. I am to become pregnant without ever having known a man; because I do not even know what differentiates a man from me.

4,4. Would I then really know what it is: to be pregnant? O Lord! I know nothing of this!

4,11. But when, when will this happen, and how? – Or has it already happened? Am I already pregnant, or will it happen later?

4,12. O Lord! O eternal Saint of Israel, give me, your poor maidservant, a sign, as to when this will happen so that I may exalt and glorify You for it!"

4,13. At these words, a luminous whiff of air wafted towards Mary and a soft voice spoke to her:

The Birth of Jesus Christ

4,14. "Mary! Do not trouble yourself in vain; you have conceived, and the Lord is with you! – Do your work, and complete it, for no more work of such quality will be done for the temple!"

4,15. Here Mary kneeled, prayed to God and praised Him for such grace. – After she had praised the Lord, she arose and took up her work.

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The handing over of Mary's completed temple work.

5,1. In a few days, Mary had also completed the purple, arranged it, then took the scarlet and laid it to the purple.

5,2. Then she thanked God for the grace that enabled her to complete the work so well, bound the spun yarn in pure linen and set out with it to Jerusalem.

5,3. She went alone to the building site at which Joseph was working; however, from there onwards, Joseph again accompanied her to Jerusalem and thereat to the temple.

5,4. Upon arrival, she immediately handed over the work to the High Priest.

5,5. He visually examined the scarlet and purple, found the work exceptionally good and praised and greeted Mary with the following words:

5,6. "Mary, such proficiency does not lie naturally within you; however the Lord has worked through your hand!

5,7. Therefore God has made you great; you will be blessed by the Lord God from among all women on

earth, for you are the first to deliver her work to the temple."

5,8. Mary however spoke to the High Priest in great humility and gladness of heart:

5,9. "Honourable servant of the Lord in His holy shrine! O do not praise me too highly, and do not elevate me above the others; for the credit of this work cannot be given to me, but to the Lord alone, who guided my hand!

5,10. Therefore let all praise, all honour, all glory and all my love and worship be to Him alone!"

5,11. And the High Priest spoke: "Amen, Mary! Immaculate virgin of the Lord, you have spoken well before the Lord! – So leave again in peace; the Lord be with you!"

5,12. Thereupon Mary arose and went with Joseph to the building site, where she partook of some refreshment consisting of bread, milk and water.

5,13. A half day's journey away from the building site, across a small mountain range, lived an aunt of Mary, named Elizabeth. Mary wanted to visit her and requested Joseph for permission.

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The wonderful reception of Mary by Elizabeth. Humility and wisdom of Mary. Mary returning home to Joseph.

6,1. On arrival at Elizabeth's house, being in a rather timid frame of mind, she knocked on the door, in accordance with Jewish custom.

6,2. As Elizabeth heard the timid knocking, she wondered: "Who knocks so very softly?"

6,3. It must be a neighbour's child; for it cannot be my husband, who is still mute in the temple and awaiting his redemption!

6,4. My work however is important; shall I put it aside on account of a mischievous child of neighbour?

6,5. No, I will not do so, for I have work to do for the temple, which is of greater importance than a child's naughtiness, who probably just wants to tease and make fun of me again.

6,6. Therefore I will continue to work and let the child knock for a good bit of time."

6,7. Mary knocked once more, and the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaped for joy, and the mother heard a soft voice coming from the region of her leaping baby, and the voice said:

6,8. "Mother, go, go quickly; for it is the mother of my and your Lord, of my and your God, who is knocking at the door and comes to you in peace!"

The Birth of Jesus Christ

6,9. Elizabeth, as soon as she heard this, threw down everything she was holding, ran to open the door for Mary,

6,10. gave her blessings according to custom, embraced her with open arms and said to her:

6,11. "O Mary, blessed are you among women! Blessed are you among all women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

6,12. O Mary, purest virgin of God! – Why do I deserve such grace, that the mother of my Lord and my God should come to me?!"

6,13. Mary, however, who did not grasp the meaning behind these words, spoke to Elizabeth:

6,14. "O dear aunt! – I have just come to pay you a friendly visit; how is it that you speak of things about me that I do not understand? – Am I then really pregnant, that you call me a mother?!"

6,15. Elizabeth however replied to Mary: "As you knocked at the door for the second time, the baby in my womb leaped for joy and spoke to me and greeted you in advance!"

6,18. Elizabeth however spoke: "O Mary, chosen by God, come into my house and fortify yourself; let us talk and jointly praise and glorify God with all our might!"

6,19. And Mary soon followed Elizabeth into her house and ate and drank and refreshed herself, and was happy in spirit.

6,32. Thus Mary spent three full months with Elizabeth and helped her with the housework just like a maidservant.

6,33. In the meantime, Joseph had completed his construction and was back at home with his sons, working on his small, merely leased, property.

6,34. One evening, he spoke to his eldest son: "Joel, make my pack animal ready for tomorrow morning. I must go and fetch Mary!"

6,35. The maiden has already been away from my house for three months, and I do not know how she is faring.

(...Maria is just around the corner)

6,42. Although Joseph would have willingly rebuked her for her long absence, he could not bring himself to do so, as firstly, Mary's voice had deeply touched his noble heart, and secondly, he recognized his own culpability, as he had not fetched Mary through a messenger for such a long time.

6,46. During this time, it seemed to Joseph that psalms were being sung in front of his house.

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The visibility of Mary's pregnancy. Joseph's premonitions and prophecies.

7,1. Joseph was filled with lofty premonitions and spoke to Mary: "Child of the Lord! You have brought great joy into my house, and my soul is filled with lofty premonitions!

7,15. Mary's body, however, grew bigger every day; as she noticed this, she tried to hide her pregnancy from Joseph and his sons as much as she could.

7,16. After some time, however, it was not possible to hide it anymore, and Joseph began to be suspicious and secretly consulted with his friends in Nazareth about Mary's strange condition.

Joseph interrogates Mary. Mary's explanation.

8,1. Joseph's friend was a knowledgeable person; for he was a doctor, who knew about herbs and often aided the midwives during difficult childbirths.

8,2. He went with Joseph and secretly looked at Mary, - and after observing her, he spoke to Joseph:

8,3. "Listen to me, brother from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, a great misfortune has befallen your house, - for look, the maidservant is highly pregnant!

8,5. But Joseph replied: "At the time, Mary was confined to the house for nearly three weeks, and that only in the beginning when she arrived; afterwards she spent three full months with her relative Elizabeth!"

8,10. But I know now what I will do to get at the truth in this matter. – You, friend, may leave in peace, and I will conduct a thorough investigation in my house!"

8,11. Joseph's friend soon left the house; Joseph, however, immediately turned to Mary and spoke to her:

8,12. "Child! With what face shall I look up to my God? What shall I now say about you?"

The Birth of Jesus Christ

8,13. Have I not received you as a pure virgin from the temple, and have I not faithfully guarded you with my daily prayer and through the trustworthy people in my house?

8,14. I implore you therefore to tell me who it is who dared to betray me and bring such a terrible shame on me, a son of David, and to you, who are also descended from the same house!

8,17. Now answer my question! Go and take hold of yourself; for you will not succeed in deceiving me!" – In grief, Joseph threw himself down on his face upon a sack full of ashes and wept.

8,18. Mary trembled with great fear, began to weep and sob and was unable to speak, so great was her fear and sadness.

8,19. Joseph then arose from the sack and spoke to Mary in a somewhat subdued voice:

8,20. "Mary, child of God, who He protected Himself, why have you done this to me? – Why have so profoundly degraded your soul and forgotten your God?!"

8,22. Here Mary gathered courage and spoke: "Father Joseph, you justly hard man! I tell you: As God lives, I am pure and innocent and till this hour have never known a man!"

8,23. Joseph asked: "Then how did it happen that you became pregnant?"

8,24. And Mary replied: "I am still merely a child and do not comprehend God's mysteries! Just listen to me, and I will tell you what happened to me! As a just God lives over us, what I say is true!"

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Mary's narration of the mysterious holy occurrences.

9,1. And Mary told Joseph everything that occurred to her; what she encountered as she was still working on the purple, and then ended her story with this solemn declaration:

9,2. "That is why I say to you, father, once again: As God lives, the Lord of the heavens and earth lives, I am pure and do not know a man and I also know as little of God's mystery that I must carry under my heart, to my great anguish!" –

9,3. Here Joseph suddenly became silent and was extremely frightened; for Mary's words deeply pierced his troubled soul, and trembling, he got confirmation of his secret premonition!

9,4. He began to ponder to and fro as to what he should do, and spoke to himself:

9,5. "If I conceal her irrefutable transgression from the world, as it is now, even when I do not recognize it as a transgression, I will be considered an evildoer against the law of the Lord and will not escape a certain punishment!"

9,6. If, on the other hand, I expose her as a consummate sinner before the sons of Israel, with

what she is carrying under her heart, being - according to her unambiguous declaration - originating from an angel,

9,7. I will be considered by God as one who delivers innocent blood to the tribunal of death?!"

An angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream. Mary remains in the house of Joseph.

9,8. What shall I do with her then? – Should I leave her secretly, i.e., should I secretly send her away from me and conceal her in the mountains near the Greek border? – Or shall I wait for the day of the Lord so that he will then tell me what I should do?

9,12. Joseph sank under his multifarious thoughts in slumber; and behold, an angel appeared to him in a dream and spoke to him:

9,13. "Joseph, do not be anxious about Mary, the purest virgin of the Lord! – For that which she carries under her heart has been created by God's Holy Spirit, and when He is born, you shall name him Jesus!" –

9,14. At this point Joseph awoke from slumber and praised the Lord God that He had shown him such mercy.

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The Birth of Jesus Christ

The Roman census. Joseph's non-participation in the council in Jerusalem. The traitor Annas.

10,1. Two weeks after this event a great council was held in Jerusalem, since it had been heard from some Romans residing there, that the Emperor was going to count and register all the Jewish people.

10,3. Therefore the high priest called a large assembly, at which all the elders and the craftsmen, such as Joseph, were to attend.

10,4. Joseph however, had undertaken a trip into the hills to collect timber and was away for several days.

10,6. Joseph already returned home the next day. His son, Joses, informed him immediately about the news from Jerusalem.

10,7. But Joseph said: "Since I have been climbing around in the hills for five days and I am very tired, my legs will not carry me any further if I do not rest for a few days. So this time I am not compelled to follow Jerusalem's summons.

10,8. Besides, this assembly is worthless, since the mighty Roman Emperor, who now wields his power even over the lands of the Scythians, will take little notice of our advice and will do whatever he pleases! That's why I will stay put at home!"

10,9. But after three days a certain Annas came from Jerusalem, who was an important scribe there, and said to Joseph:

10,10. "Joseph, you who are skilled in the crafts and the scriptures and who are from the tribe of David! – I must to ask you, why you did not come to the assembly?"

10,11. Joseph turned to Annas and said: "See, I was in the hills for five days and did not know that I had been called.

10,12. When I came home and received the news from my son Joses, I was too tired and weak to be able to travel to Jerusalem at once! – Besides, I anyhow recognized at first glance that this whole assembly would be of very little use, if at all."

10,13. While Joseph was telling this, Annas looked around and unfortunately discovered the highly pregnant virgin.

10,14. At this, he left Joseph without a word, and hurried as fast as he could to Jerusalem.

10,15. Arriving completely out of breath, he hurried to the high priest and told him:

10,16. "Listen to me, and do not ask me why David's son did not come to the assembly; for I discovered scandalous horrors in his house!

10,17. See, Joseph, to whom both God and you bore witness by entrusting him with the care of the virgin, has failed in front of both God and you so profoundly and coarsely that it is beyond words!"

10,18. The high priest was appalled by Annas' message and asked shortly: "Why, how come? – Tell me the whole truth or you will die this very day!"

10,19. Annas said: "See, the virgin Mary, who as God bore witness left the temple of our Lord to be placed in his care, has been most thoroughly dishonoured by him. Her advanced pregnancy is a living proof of it!"

10,20. But the high priest said: "No, Joseph would never do such a thing! – Can God fail in bearing witness?!"

10,21. But Annas said: "So send your most trusted servants there and you will be convinced of the virgin's state of advanced pregnancy. However, if she is not, you can have me stoned to death right here!"

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The death sentence of Joseph and Mary and their defence through a decree of God. Mary becomes Joseph's wife.

11,1. However, the high priest reflected for a while and then said to himself: "What shall I do? Since the choice was made for the virgin, Annas has become very jealous and one should never listen to the advice of a jealous man.

11,3. I want to send the servants to Joseph secretly, so that if this horrible situation should be confirmed,

they shall immediately bring the virgin here together with Joseph!"

11,4. Thus it was decided and settled. The high priest secretly called trusted servants and informed them of what had taken place in Joseph's house, and then sent them to Joseph with instructions about what they were to do if the situation should be confirmed.

11,5. In a great hurry, the servants went to Joseph and discovered the situation just as the high priest had told them.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

11,6. The oldest of them said to Joseph: "Look, we were sent here from the temple, to ascertain to for ourselves the condition of the virgin, since malicious rumours about her have come to the ears of the high priest.

11,7. Unfortunately we have found these sad speculations confirmed; therefore do not let this turn violent, and follow us, together with Mary, to the temple, where you shall hear the just decision from the mouth of the high priest!"

11,8. And, without any argument, Joseph followed the servants with Mary to the court in the temple.

11,9. As he appeared before the high priest, the astonished high priest asked Mary in a serious tone:

11,10. "Mary! Why did you do this to us and why did you degrade your own soul so profoundly ?

11,13. But Mary had to weep bitterly and, beneath bitter sobbing and weeping, spoke: "As truly as God, the Lord of Israel, exists, as truly am I pure and have never known a man! – Ask Joseph, the one chosen by God!"

11,14. And then the high priest turned to Joseph and asked him: "Joseph, I beseech you in the name of the eternal living God, tell me openly, how did this happen? Did you do such a thing?"

11,15. And Joseph said: "I tell you by all that is for you and I holy, as truly as the Lord, my God, lives, as truly I am untainted in front of this virgin, as in front of you and in front of God!"

11,16. And the high priest replied: "Do not bear false witness, but speak the truth in front of God! – And I tell you: You took your wedding into your own hands,

you did not inform the temple and you did not first bow your head beneath the hand of the everlasting Almighty, so He might have blessed your seed! – Therefore, tell us the truth!"

11,27. "Fine then, since you dispute your great sin in front of God, I will let you both drink of the accursed water of God the Lord; then your sin will be revealed before your eyes and the eyes of all people!" –

11,28. Immediately, the high priest took the accursed water, and let Joseph drink of it, and then sent him, according to the law, into the mountains near Jerusalem.

11,29. Likewise, he also gave such water to the virgin and sent her into the mountains as well.

11,30. However after three days they both returned absolutely unharmed, and all the people were surprised that no sin was revealed upon them.

11,31. The high priest, exceedingly astonished, then said to them; "Well, since the Lord our God did not want to reveal your sin, I also do not want to judge you, but instead declare you as innocent and unmarried.

11,32. However as the virgin is already pregnant, she shall become your wife as a penance, since she became pregnant unbeknownst to me, and she should never be given another husband, even when she would become a young widow! So be it! – And now leave in peace from here."

11,33. Now, Joseph took Mary and went with her to his home and was full of joy and praised his Lord. His joy was even greater now that Mary had become his rightful wife.

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Augustus' commandment for the assessment and census of all inhabitants. New sorrow and consolation.

12,1. Joseph then spent two months very contentedly in his house with Mary, who was now his wife, and he worked to support Mary.

12,2. However, after this time passed and Mary's delivery drew closer, a new blow occurred which caused Joseph great concern.

12,3. The Roman Emperor Augustus gave orders throughout his lands, whereby all people of his empire should be assessed and counted, in order to be classified for tax and recruitment purposes.

12,4. And as the Nazarenes were not excluded from this commandment, Joseph was forced to go to Bethlehem, David's city, where the Roman registration commission was set up.

12,5. Upon learning of this order, for which he had already been called to an assembly in Jerusalem, he said to himself:

12,6. "My God and my Lord, this is a hard blow for me at this time as Mary's delivery is so close!

12,7. What shall I do now? – I have to register my sons in any case, as they are unfortunately eligible

The Birth of Jesus Christ

for military service for the Emperor. But what, in heaven's name, O Lord, shall I do with Mary?!

12,15. Yes, I know what I will do now: I will wait for the day of the Lord! On this day, the Lord, my God will do what He thinks best and that will be for the best. And so be it then!"

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The consoling testament from above. The happy departure.

13,1. Still on the same day an old wise friend from Nazareth came to Joseph and said to him:

13,2. "Brother! See, the Lord leads his people through many deserts and steppes! – Those who willingly follow where he leads, will reach the right place!

13,5. Joseph well understood what his friend had told him and, as the friend blessed him and left, Joseph spoke to his sons:

13,6. "Listen to me! The Lord wants, that all of us go to Bethlehem; and so we have to accept His will and do what He wants.

13,7. You, Joel, saddle the she-ass for Mary and take the saddle with the backrest; and you Joses, bridle the ox and harness it to the cart, in which we will carry our food!

13,8. You three, Samuel, Simeon and James load the cart with stable fruits, bread, honey and cheese, and take enough to cover our needs for fourteen days; for we do not know when we will be called, and when we will be free, and what could happen to Mary on the way! So put fresh linen and napkins on the cart as well!"

13,9. The sons went and ordered everything as Joseph had requested.

13,19. He took Mary, and placed her as softly and comfortably as possible on the pack animal, and then took the reins in his hand and led the she-ass.

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The first signs of labour. Shelter in a nearby cave.

14,1. Thus, the devout group of travellers came within six hours of Bethlehem and rested there in the open.

14,9. But as they came closer to Bethlehem, Mary suddenly spoke to Joseph:

14,10. "Listen to me, Joseph! – That which is inside me starts to press strongly; therefore let us rest!"

14,11. Joseph was startled by Mary's sudden outcry, for he now saw that the moment he had most feared had arrived.

14,12. So he let them stop immediately. Then Mary spoke again to Joseph:

14,13. "Take me down from the she-ass; for That which is in me presses strongly and wants to come out! And I do can not resist Its pressure any longer!"

14,14. But Joseph said: "But for the Lord's sake! You can see that there is no shelter here – where shall I bring you?"

14,15. However, Mary said: "Look, over there in the hill is a cave; it can be hardly a hundred steps away! Take me there; it is impossible for me to go any further!"

14,16. Thereupon Joseph steered his cart there and in this cave, which the shepherds used as a stable in time of need, to his great joy he found some hay and straw, which he promptly used to prepare a provisional bed for Mary.

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Mary in the cave. Joseph's wonderful experiences. Joseph's meeting with the midwife.

15,1. As soon as the bed was prepared, Joseph brought Mary into the cave, and she lay on the bed and found some relief in this position.

The Birth of Jesus Christ

15,2. As Mary was thus lying relieved on the bed, Joseph said to his sons:

15,3. "You two eldest take care of Mary and care for her properly in case she needs it, especially you Joel, who have gained some knowledge in this regard from my friends in Nazareth!"

15,4. He ordered the other three to take care of the ass and the ox and to keep the cart in the cave which was quite large.

15,5. After Joseph had organised everything properly, he said to Mary: "Now I will go up on the hill to look for a midwife in my father's town as quickly as I can, and then I will bring her here to help you!"

15,6. After these words Joseph immediately left the cave, since it was already quite late in the evening and one could already pick out the stars in the sky.

15,7. And here we will tell about his extraordinary experiences after leaving the cave, in the same words he used to his sons upon his return to the cave with the midwife, and Mary had already given birth.

15,8. And Joseph's words were: "Children! we are on the threshold of great events! – Now I start to understand what the voice was telling me the night before our departure; indeed, if the Lord was not with us – albeit invisibly – such marvels as I have seen could not possibly have happened!"

15,9. Listen to me! – As I stepped out and went on my way, it seemed to me as if I went and yet did not move; – and I saw the rising full moon and the stars both rising and setting, and see, everything stood still, and the moon did not leave the horizon and the stars did not want to set at all!

15,10. Then I saw flocks upon flocks of little birds sitting on the branches of trees; their heads were all facing in this direction, and they were shivering as when large earthquakes are approaching, and they could not be chased away from their perches neither by shouting nor by throwing stones.

15,11. And I looked around again on the ground and, not far from me, saw a group of workmen who were sitting around a bowl filled with food. Some of them kept their hands motionless in the bowl, and were unable to take the food out of it.

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The visions near the cave. The midwife's dream and her prophetic words.

16,1. The woman agreed and followed Joseph to the cave; and when they arrived there, the cave suddenly

15,12. And those who had already lifted a morsel from the bowl, kept it near their mouth and were not able to open their mouth to eat it; and all faces were turned upwards as if they saw great things in the sky!

15,13. Then I saw sheep being driven by the shepherds; but the sheep just stood there motionless, and the shepherd's hand, which he lifted to hit the tarrying sheep, remained frozen in the air and he could not move it.

15,14. Again I saw a whole herd of bucks who held their snouts over the water but could not drink, for they were as if completely paralyzed.

15,15. I also saw a stream which had a steep drop down the hill, and look, the water stood still and did not flow down into the valley! – And everything on the ground was like this, as though it had no life and no motion.

15,16. Thus, as I stood there or walked, and did not know whether I was standing or walking, see, I finally saw life once again!

15,17. For a woman came down the hill towards me, and when she reached me, she asked: "Man, where are you going so late?"

15,18. And I spoke to her: "I am looking for a midwife; since over there in the cave is someone who needs to give birth!"

15,19. The woman replied and said: "Is she from Israel?" – And I replied to her: "Yes, my lady, she and I are from Israel; David is our father!"

15,20. But the woman went on and asked: "Who is she who wants to give birth in the cave? Is she your wife or a relative or a maidservant?"

15,21. And I replied to her: "Since a short time – only before God and the high priest - my wife. However, she was not yet my wife when she became pregnant, but had been given from the temple by the witness of God, into the care of my house, since she had earlier been raised in the Holy of Holies!"

15,22. But do not be surprised about her pregnancy; for That which is inside her has been conceived by the holy spirit of God!" – The woman was astonished and said to me: "Man, tell me the truth!" – But I said: "Come, look, and be convinced with your own eyes!"

became enveloped in a thick white cloud, so that they could not find the entrance.

16,2. The midwife was greatly surprised at this phenomenon and said to Joseph:

The Birth of Jesus Christ

16,3. "This day, my soul experienced something extraordinary! – I had a most wonderful vision this morning, where everything formed itself just as I now have seen it in reality, as I still see it and as I will see more of it!

16,4. You are the same man, who came towards me in my vision; and I also saw the whole world standing still in the middle of its activities, and I saw the cave, how a cloud covered it; and I spoke with you as I have just now spoken.

16,5. And I even saw something more marvellous in the cave, as my sister Salome arrived, who was the only one to whom I confided my vision this morning!

16,6. Therefore, I say now also in front of you and God, my Lord: Israel has experienced a great salvation! A saviour came, sent from above, in the time of our greatest need!"

16,7. After these words of the midwife, the cloud quickly drifted out of the cave and light of such power flowed out of the cave towards the midwife and Joseph that their eyes were unable to bear it, and the midwife said: "So everything is true, which I saw in the vision! – Oh man! you fortunate one, here is more than Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and Elijah!" –

16,8. After these words were spoken, the light became more and more bearable and the Infant became visible just as it took to the mother's breast for the first time.

16,9. The midwife now entered the cave with Joseph and looked at the Infant and its mother, and when she found everything so perfectly resolved, she said:

16,10. "Truly, truly, this is the saviour celebrated by all the prophets, he who will be free of bonds even in the womb, to signify that he will lift all the restrictions of the law!

16,11. But since when did anyone see a newly born child reach already for its mother's breast!?

16,12. This evidently shows, that this Child, when becoming a man, will judge the world by love and not by the law!

16,13. Listen, you fortunate husband of this virgin, everything is in the best of order; therefore, let me leave the cave, for I it now starts to weigh heavily on my breast since I feel I am not pure enough to bear the holy proximity of my and your God and Lord!"

16,14. Joseph was completely taken aback upon hearing these words of the midwife. – And she hurried out of the cave into the open.

16,15. As she stepped out of the cave, she met her sister Salome outside, who knew about her vision and had followed her, and immediately said to her:

16,16. "Salome, Salome! come and see my morning vision confirmed in reality! – In the fullest truth the virgin has given birth to what human wisdom and nature may never understand!"

16,17. Salome said: "As truly as God exists, I cannot believe that a virgin gave birth until I will have examined her with my own hands!"

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The doubting Salome's request to Mary. God's Judgment.

17,1. After Salome had said this, she entered the cave and said:

17,2. "Mary, my soul is preoccupied with a big conflict; therefore I ask you to prepare yourself, that I examine you with my experienced hands, and that we shall see how your virginity appears!"

17,3. Mary willingly agreed to the demands of the unbelieving Salome, got ready and allowed herself to be examined.

17,4. However, when Salome touched Mary's abdomen with her searching hand, she raised an enormous howl and she shouted very loudly:

17,5. "Woe, woe for my Godlessness and my great disbelief, that I wanted to test the everlasting God! – for look, look here! – my hand burns in the fire of the Divine wrath over woeful me!!!"

17,6. After these words she threw herself on her knees in front of the Infant and said:

17,7. "O God of my fathers ! You almighty Lord of all magnificence! Remember me, that I also am a seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob!

The Birth of Jesus Christ

17,8. Do not make a fool out of me in front of the sons of Israel, but give me back my healthy limbs!"

17,9. And look, thereupon an angel of the Lord stood next to Salome and said to her: "God the Lord has heard your entreaty; go to the Infant and carry It, and through this you will experience a great salvation!"

17,10. As Salome heard this, she kneeled in front of Mary and asked her for the Infant.

17,11. Mary willingly gave her the Infant and said to her: "May it serve your salvation according to the saying of the angel of the Lord; may the Lord have mercy upon you!"

17,12. Salome took the small Child in her arms and held it as she kneeled, and as soon as she had the Child in her arms, she said:

17,13. "O God! You almighty Lord of Israel, who rules and reigns from eternity! – In all the fullness of truth, a king of kings is born here in Israel, who will be

mightier than David was, the man after God's heart! I shall laud and praise You forever!"

17,14. After these words Salome was soon fully healed again, and she returned the Child to Mary with the most heartfelt contrition and left the cave vindicated.

17,15. As soon as she was outside, she wanted to scream out aloud about the greatest miracle of all miracles and had already begun to tell her sister about what had happened to her.

17,16. But suddenly a voice came from above and said to Salome: "Salome, Salome! Do not tell anyone what extraordinary events have happened to you; for the time will come, when the Lord will show Himself through words and acts!"

17,17. At this point Salome fell silent and, according to Mary's wish, Joseph stepped out to ask the two sisters to come back into the cave so that nobody should notice what marvel had happened there. – And both humbly returned into the cave.

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The angel's songs of praise in the morning. The adoration of the shepherds.

18,1. When all had gathered in the cave, Joseph's sons asked their father (viz Joseph):

18,2. "Father, what shall we do now? Everything is taken care of! Our bodies are tired from travelling; can we not lay down and rest?"

18,3. And Joseph spoke: "Children! you see what an infinite grace came to all of us from above; and to this end you shall stay awake and praise God with me!

18,6. Joseph's sons went and touched the little Child; and the Child smiled at them and stretched Its little hands out to them, as if It recognized them as brothers.

18,7. Thereupon everybody was greatly astonished and they said: "Indeed, this is no ordinary child! For who has ever experienced, that someone was greeted so ecstatically by a new-born child?"

18,8. Besides, we now also feel strengthened in all our limbs, as if we had never made a journey, and were at home on a morning with our bodies totally rested!"

18,9. Thereupon, Joseph replied: "See, so my advice was good. However, now I notice that it is starting to

get quite cool; therefore bring the ass and the ox here! The animals will lay around us and will give us some warmth through their breath and perspiration; and we shall also lay close to Mary!"

18,10. And the sons did as he said. And as they brought the animals close to Mary, they immediately laid down on the main part of Mary's bed and breathed diligently over Mary and the Infant and it warmed them quite well.

18,11. The midwife said: "Indeed, this can not be insignificant in front of God, even the animals serve, as if they had reason and sense!"

18,12. Salome said: "O sister! The animals here seem to see more than us! – While we hardly dare to think, the animals already worship the One who created them!"

18,13. Believe me, sister, as truly as God exists, as truly as the promised Messiah is here in front of us; for we know, that never during the birth of even the greatest prophets have such marvels occurred!"

18,14. But Mary spoke to Salome: "God the Lord showed great mercy in that you behold That before which my soul trembles!"

The Birth of Jesus Christ

18,15. Keep silent just like the angel of the Lord advised you; for otherwise you could be the cause of our bitter end!"

18,16. Salome solemnly promised to keep her silence forever and the midwife followed her sister's example.

18,17. And now everything in the cave became quiet. In the first hour before sunrise, mighty songs of praise were heard outside of the cave.

18,18. Immediately, Joseph sent his eldest son to see what it was and who was singing outside so powerfully in praise of the Lord.

18,19. Joel went out and saw that every space in the skies was filled from top to bottom with uncountable myriads of shining angels. Astonished, he hurried back to the cave to tell everyone what he had seen.

18,20. All were greatly astonished at Joel's report and went out to convince themselves of its truth.

18,21. After having witnessed such glory of the Lord, they returned to the cave and bore witness to Mary as well. And Joseph said to Mary:

18,22. "Listen you purest virgin of the Lord, the fruit of your loins is indeed conceived of the holy spirit of God, as all heaven now proves!

18,23. But what will happen to us, now that all the world will now surely come to know of what happened here? For not only we, but all other men now see the evidence shining for us through all the heavens – for I have just seen many shepherds, and how they turned their faces heavenward!

18,24. And they sang with the same voices along with the mighty choirs of angels, which now – visible to everybody – fill all the heavens from top to bottom all the way down to the earth!

18,25. And their song sounded like that of the angels: "Descend, o heavens, upon the righteous! May peace be with all people on earth who are of good will !' – And: 'God in heaven shall be honoured in Him, who comes in the name of the Lord!'

18,26. Look, oh Mary, the world will see and hear such things; therefore they will come here and they will follow us, and we will have to flee over hill and dale!

18,27. So I think that we should move from here as soon as possible and, as soon as I have been registered – which should already happen this morning –, we should return to Nazareth and from

there over to the Greeks, some of whom I know quite well. – Don't you agree with me?"

18,28. Mary said to Joseph: "But you can see that I cannot leave this shelter today; therefore let us trust in the Lord! He has led us and protected us so far; so He will surely continue to lead and truly protect us ever so faithfully!

18,29. If He wants to reveal us to the world, tell me: where shall we flee, where His heaven would not be able to discover us?!

18,30. Therefore His will shall be! – Whatever He wants will be right. Look, here on my breast rests the One, whom all this concerns!

18,31. And this One will stay with us, so the great glory of God will also not leave us, wherever we would want to flee!"

18,32. Mary had hardly finished speaking, when behold, two angels were already standing in front of the cave as leaders of a group of shepherds, and they made it known to the shepherds that the One, for whom their songs of praise were meant, was born here.

18,33. And the shepherds entered the cave, and kneeled in front of the Infant and worshiped It; and the angels came also in bands and worshiped the Infant.

18,34. But Joseph, together with his sons, looked astonished towards Mary and the small Child and said: O God, what is this? – Did You Yourself assumed flesh in this Child?

18,35. For how could it be possible then, that He is even worshipped by Your holy angels? If you are present, O Lord, then what is with the temple now – and with the Holy of Holies?!"

18,36. And an angel stepped towards Joseph and said to him: "Do not ask and do not worry yourself; for the Lord has chosen the earth as the scene of His mercy, and has now visited His people, as He has foretold through the mouths of His children, His servants and prophets!

18,37. What now takes place in front of your eyes, is according to His will, as He is holy, most holy!"

18,38. At this point the angel left Joseph, and went back to worshiped the little Child, who smiled with open hands at all the worshippers.

18,39. As the sun rose, the angels disappeared; but the shepherds stayed and inquired with Joseph,

The Birth of Jesus Christ

about how all these events could possibly have happened.

18,40. But Joseph said: "Listen, as miraculously as the grass grows out of the ground, so also did this

miracle occur! Now who knows, how the grass grows? – Just as little am I able to tell you about this wonder, too! God wanted it this way; this is all, that I can tell you!"

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The midwife's report to the Roman captain Cornelius.

19,1. The shepherds were satisfied with this answer and did not ask Joseph any further, and they left them and then brought various refreshments as offering to Mary.

19,2. When the sun had already been shining on the earth for an hour, Joseph asked the midwife:

19,3. "Listen to me, my friend and sister from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob! – See, the registration greatly worries me and I wish nothing else than to get it over with!

19,4. But I do not know where in the town it is taking place, so leave Salome here with Mary, but lead me and my sons to the Roman captain who conducts the registration!

19,5. Maybe we will be received immediately, for we will surely be the first to arrive there?"

19,6. And the midwife said to Joseph: "Gracious man, listen to me! – The captain, Cornelius from Rome, lives in my house, which is one of the first in the town.

19,7. And he has his office there as well. Although he is a pagan, he is otherwise a good and righteous man; I will go and tell him everything, except for the miracle, and I believe that everything will be solved!"

19,8. Joseph was pleased by this proposal, as he anyhow felt a great timidity towards the Romans, and especially regarding the registration; therefore he asked the midwife to do as proposed.

19,9. So the midwife went and found Cornelius, who was still young and liked to sleep late in the morning, still in his bed, and she informed him of all that was necessary.

19,10. Cornelius got up immediately, threw his toga on and said to the landlady: "Woman, I believe everything you say; but I still want to go there with you, as I feel a strong urge to do so!

19,11. According to your story it is not far from here, and I will be back in time at my workplace! So lead me there now!"

19,12. And the midwife was pleased about this, and brought the honest, young captain with whom she was well acquainted, to the cave, where he stood in front and said to her: "O woman, how easy it is to visit my Emperor in Rome, and yet how hard it is to step into this cave!

19,13. That has to be something exceptional! – Tell me, if you know any reason; for I know that you are an upright Jewess!"

19,14. The midwife said: "Good captain of the great Emperor! Just wait for one moment out here in front of the cave; I will go inside and bring you the answer!"

19,19. And Joseph led Cornelius into the cave. When he looked upon the Infant, and saw how It smiled at him, he was astonished at such behaviour and said: "By Zeus, that is rare! I feel like a newborn, and never have I felt such peace and joy inside me! – Indeed, today I shall have a holiday, and remain your guest."

End of the section of the birth of Jesus Christ

Subsequently:

- A 6-day stay in the cave
- Representation/circumcision Jesus in the Temple

- Crone Hanna greeted Jesus
- Visit of the 3 wise men from Persia
- The Flight into Egypt; Herod's infanticide