

Key Vocabulary

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| Significant | Something that is important enough to be spoken about. |
| Interpret | To decide on the meaning of something based on the evidence you have. |
| Recount | To retell the events of something that has already happened. |
| Compare | To find the similarities and differences between things. |

Christians all believe that the Christmas Story is **significant**. However, some Christians view the story in a **metaphorical** way while other Christians believe the story is literally true.



Christmas Customs

There are lots of different ways that people celebrate Christmas and Advent:

- Christmas trees **symbolise** the everlasting life of God;
- Mistletoe is a **symbol** of peace and joy and is used to show friendship and goodwill;
- **Advent** calendars, wreaths and candles are different ways of counting down to Jesus' birthday;
- Christingles symbolise the importance of Jesus and the **gospel**.

Different Advent Celebrations Around the World

Christmas is celebrated in different ways around the world. In Sweden, it is celebrated on 13th December as Saint Lucia's Day. It is to honour a girl who was put to death for her Christian beliefs in Roman times (when people were expected to worship Roman Gods). Saint Lucia was caught feeding Christians, who were hiding in caves.



St Matthew's Account of the Nativity

Interpretations of the Nativity are different in the Bible. St Matthew's account of The Christmas Story focuses on power. He focuses on:

- the importance of the sign of the star after Jesus' birth;
- the visitors to Jesus being very clever people – the wise men;
- the expensive gifts given to Jesus by the Wise Men;
- Herod, the king, being jealous of the birth of a new king and feeling angry.

St Luke's Account of the Nativity

Interpretations of the Nativity are different in the Bible. St Luke's account of The Christmas Story focuses on the poor and vulnerable. He focuses on:

- the angel appearing to Mary to say a baby would be born;
- Mary and Joseph having to go to Bethlehem because of the census;
- Mary and Joseph having to stay in a stable and Jesus being born there;
- the visitors to Jesus (the shepherds) seeing an angel and being poor;
- Jesus being laid in a manger (a food trough).

