

## Good News!

*Theme: Christmas. Matthew chapter 2 and Luke: 1 and 2.*

Whether it's a sensationalised gossip magazine story, or a serious factual report in a broadsheet, the birth of Jesus is good news! Because, whether you know the history behind the coming of Jesus or not, Jesus is still the Son of God, destined to grow up and become the king who saves us.

*Dad and daughter sat in their lounge, Dad reading "The Guardian" with headline "Good News!" and daughter reading "OK!" gossip magazine with headline "Good News!". They are talking back and forth about the same story, the good news of the birth of Jesus, as reported in their respective reading material.*

Daughter: I'm so excited! Mary's had her baby. That family's all about the drama! It was her cousin Elizabeth who caused the "how old is too old to have a baby" debate last year, and then this one got pregnant and her husband Joseph isn't the father! They should go on the Jeremy Kyle show.

Dad: Show some respect! You know who the father is.

Daughter: I know! It's God! Because the angel explained it to Mary, then Joseph, then some totally random shepherds. And I do respect Mary, I love her dress. Look at that (*showing Dad photo in magazine*), beautiful blue and white. I wonder where she got it from?

Dad: (*looking at photo in magazine*) That's been Photo-shopped. There's no way they could have afforded something that posh.

Daughter: I can't believe she gave birth in a stable!

Dad: It's a salutary lesson for us all

Daughter: Yes, when Travelodge are doing saver rates, you've got to snap up a room or else!

Dad: I was thinking more about how differently God does things than we would. If we had absolute power we wouldn't choose to make our public appearance as a baby of low income parents, camping out in a stable.... Does your rag say about the shepherds?

Daughter: It says "Angel's Delight!" ...and that knitwear looks set to be making a comeback what with all the publicity surrounding everything sheep-related. This story is amazing! The next page is "UFO spotted over Bethlehem! Wise men with expensive gifts in hot pursuit"

Dad: You mean the part where astronomer priests from Persia follow the tail-less comet, possibly a nova, that appeared in constellation Aquila?

Daughter: That's what I said! *(sigh)* I'd like to be pursued by a wise man with an expensive gift...

Dad: Investigators say the evidence is as clear as day – Herod is guilty of the murder of 40 baby boys in Bethlehem, and more deaths may yet be reported. He'll get away with it, of course. *(shaking head)* Shocking.

Daughter: Ugh! *(shudder)* King Herod's been voted least eligible man ever AGAIN. Why's he so bothered about a little baby anyway?

Dad: Because the astrologer priests, *(interrupting himself to change to language his daughter will understand)* sorry, the "wise men", told him this baby will grow up to be the most famous and powerful king ever, therefore Herod feels threatened by Jesus.

Daughter: Threatened by a little baby. He is SO insecure.

Dad: Do you listen to anything I say?

Daughter: *(reading)* Hmm?

Dad: Jesus is not going to stay a little baby. He's going to grow up to be a king. You do believe he's the Son of God don't you? His mother's a virgin; born in Bethlehem; a descendent of King David; has to hide out in Egypt because of King Herod's murderous rampage, but then gets to come back; ends up living in Nazareth; and all confirmed by the supernatural revelation of the messages the angels brought to Mary, and Joseph and the shepherds, and also verified by Simeon and Anna at the Temple.

Daughter: Yeah, of course I know he's the Son of God

Dad: Because Jesus fulfils the prophecies?

Daughter: No, because it says so here... I can't wait to read what happens next...