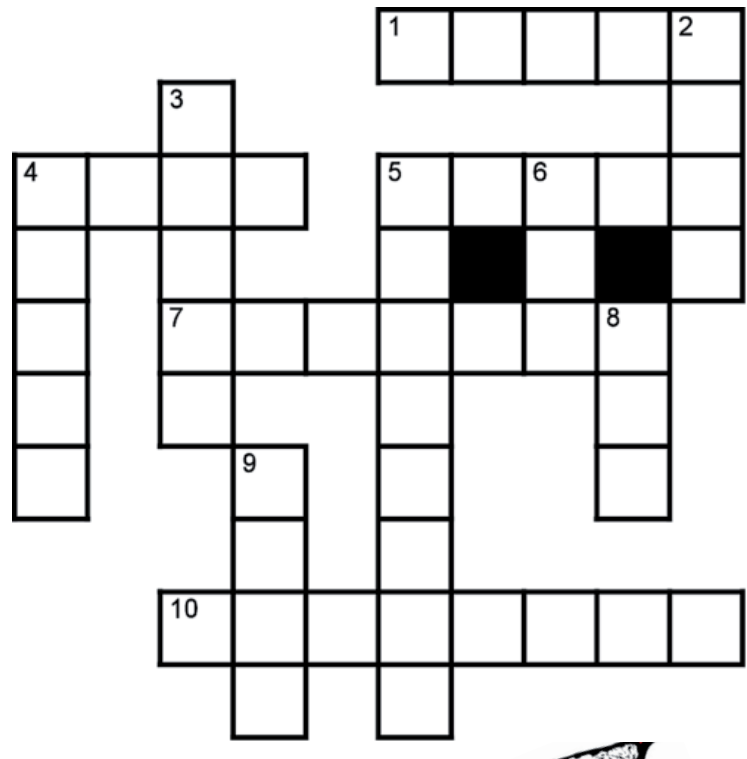




## Christmas Crossword



- Across**
- 1. Jingle \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 4. Send a Christmas \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 5. Mr. Claus.
  - 7. Stingy old man.
  - 10. Animals that pull the sleigh.



- Down**
- 2. Something to put at the top of the tree.
  - 3. It covers your window.
  - 4. \_\_\_\_\_ cane.
  - B It hangs above the fireplace.
  - 6. Egg \_\_\_\_ A Christmas drink.
  - 8. Santa's helper.
  - 9. The presents are under the \_\_\_\_\_.



## Children's Letters to God

*Dear God, Are you really invisible or is that just a trick?*

*Dear God, Did you mean for the giraffe to look like that or was it an accident?*

*Dear God, Instead of letting people die and having to make new ones why don't you just keep the ones you got now?*

*Dear God, Who draws the lines around the countries?*

*Dear God, I went to this wedding and they kissed right in church. Is that OK?*

*Dear God, It's OK that you made different religions but don't you get mixed up sometimes?*

*Dear God, I am English. What are you? Dear God. Are you really invisible or is that just a trick?*

*Dear God, Thank you for the baby brother but what I prayed for was a puppy.*

*Dear God, How come you didn't invent any new animals lately? We still have just all the old ones.*

*Dear God, Please put another holiday in between Christmas and Easter. There is nothing good in there now.*

*Dear God, Please send Dennis Clark to a different camp this year.*

*Dear God, Maybe Cain and Abel would not kill each other so much if they had their own rooms. It works with my brother.*

*Dear God, I bet it is very hard for you to love everybody in the whole world. There are only 4 people in our family and I can never do it.*

*Dear God, If you watch in Church on Sunday I will show you my new shoes.*

*Dear God, I am doing the best I can.*



# The story of the birth of Jesus ...

In those days the government decided that they should count everyone that lived in that area of the world. So Joseph had to take Mary to his town, Bethlehem, to register.

It took Mary and Joseph a long time to get to Bethlehem. They didn't have cars back then, so it probably took them a lot longer to get there. This was very tiring for Mary because she was soon going to have a baby.

When they reached the town, all the hotels were full and there was nowhere that they could stay.

Finally, someone felt bad for them, and offered them a place to stay.

The Bible doesn't say for sure where they stayed but most people think that they stayed in a small barn where animals were kept. In any case, doesn't it seem strange that Jesus, the King of the Jews wasn't born in a fancy palace or even a hospital?

Mary and Joseph were thankful that they at least had a place to lay down. It was warm, and there was plenty of straw to lie on.

That night an exciting, wonderful thing happened. Mary and Joseph had a baby! But it wasn't just any baby, it was Baby Jesus!

The creator of the whole world,

the King of Kings, the one who would save the world.

The little baby boy fell asleep in Mary's arms and she wrapped him in cloths and laid him in a manger on some clean straw.

Mary and Joseph soon fell asleep, they were so glad to have this special baby join their family.

Some shepherds who lived near Bethlehem, were out at night in their fields watching over their sheep. They were worried a bigger animal might come and hurt the sheep, so that sat on a hill visiting and watching their sheep together.

Suddenly there was a bright light. Now this wasn't just any bright light, the light was so bright that they had to close their eyes for a minute because the light hurt their eyes.

When they opened their eyes to see what was going on, a beautiful angel was standing in the air just above them with his arms opened wide.

The shepherds looked at each other in disbelief, but realized it must be real, because they were all seeing the same thing. All at once they were very afraid, but they didn't run because they were too stunned to do anything.

Then the angel spoke to them.

"Do not be afraid. I'm here to bring you good news for all people. Today in Bethlehem a baby has been born. He is the one that will save the world. You will know the baby because He will be wrapped in cloths, and laying in a manger."

Suddenly, just as quickly as the first angel came, there was a large group of angels, and they said together, "Glory to God, and peace to all people on earth." After they spoke, they floated away.

The shepherds were amazed and excited. Did everyone know this news, or just them? They had to go see this baby the angels were talking about.

They ran as fast as they could, and soon found Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. The shepherds fell to their knees when they saw Jesus, they



were filled with joy that they had found the Lord.

During the time when Jesus was born there was a very mean king who ruled the land, his name was King Herod. Remember his name, because we will talk about him later.

Soon after Jesus was born, wise men were traveling on their camels; one night they noticed a very strange star in the sky. They knew that this star meant that the King of the Jews, the One who would save the world had been born.

When the mean King... (what was his name again?) Herod heard this he got very worried.

He called a meeting with all the other important people in the area and asked them where this special baby had been born. The people replied, "In Bethlehem, because they heard that one day a special person would come from there and take care of all the people."

Then King Herod called the wise men to a secret meeting and found out from them exactly where they saw the star. He then told them, "Go and find this child. As soon as you find him, tell me, so that I can go and worship him."

After they had spoken to the King, the wise men left to find the baby.



They didn't know exactly where the baby was, but at night they followed the star in the east. They followed the star until it hung right over the very place where Jesus was.

Since it took the wise men a while to get to baby Jesus, they probably didn't arrive the day Jesus was born but sometime later. When they finally had arrived they were very excited and happy. They found Jesus laying in Mary's arms, and they bowed down and worshipped him.

After that they opened the gifts they had brought Jesus. They were gold, frankincense and myrrh. These were very expensive gifts, gifts that you would give to a King, not to a baby.

The story of Christmas is special, full of miracles and strange visitors all coming to visit a King and someday the Savior of the world.