

The Christmas Story from Five Translations

These parallel accounts provide an opportunity for a Bible class to discuss significant points in the Christmas story and the pro's and con's of traditional versus updated translations. The red letters help track some of the key terms.

<p>KJV And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.</p> <p>⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)⁵ to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.</p> <p>⁶And so it was, that, while they were there, the days</p>	<p>ESV In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ And all went to be registered, each to his own town.</p> <p>⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David,⁵ to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.</p> <p>⁶And while they were there, the time came for</p>	<p>CSB In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole empire should be registered.² This first registration took place while Quirinius was governing Syria.³ So everyone went to be registered, each to his own town.</p> <p>⁴ Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family line of David,⁵ to be registered along with Mary, who was engaged to him and was pregnant.</p> <p>⁶While they were there, the time came for her to</p>	<p>NIV 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 their own town to register.</p> <p>⁴So 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.</p> <p>⁶While they were there, the time came for the</p>	<p>EHV In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.² This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governing Syria.³ And everyone went to register, each to his own town.</p> <p>⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the town of Nazareth, into Judea, to the town of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was from the house and family line of David.⁵ He went to be registered with Mary, his wife, who was pledged to him in marriage and was expecting a child.</p> <p>⁶And so it was that while they were there, the time</p>
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<p>were accomplished that she should be delivered. ⁷And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.</p> <p>⁸And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.</p> <p>¹⁰And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.</p>	<p>her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.</p> <p>⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.</p> <p>¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."</p>	<p>give birth. ⁷Then she gave birth to her firstborn Son, and she wrapped him tightly in cloth and laid him in a manger because there was no guest room available for them.</p> <p>⁸In the same region, shepherds were staying out in the fields and keeping watch at night over their flock. ⁹Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.</p> <p>¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, for look, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people: ¹¹Today in the city of David a Savior—was born for you, who is the Messiah the Lord. ¹² This will be the sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger."</p>	<p>baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.</p> <p>⁸And 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.</p> <p>¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."</p>	<p>came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.</p> <p>⁸There were in the same country shepherds staying out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified!</p> <p>¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. For behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all people: ¹¹today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger."</p>

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<p>¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,</p>	<p>¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,</p>	<p>¹³ Suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:</p>	<p>¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,</p>	<p>¹³Suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude from the heavenly army, praising God and saying,</p>
<p>¹⁴Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.</p>	<p>¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”</p>	<p>¹⁴Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people he favors!</p>	<p>¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”</p>	<p>¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward mankind.”</p>
<p>¹⁵And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.</p>	<p>¹⁵ When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”</p>	<p>¹⁵When the an gels had left them and returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”</p>	<p>¹⁵When 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.”</p>	<p>¹⁵When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Now let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.”</p>
<p>¹⁶ And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the</p>	<p>¹⁶And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. ¹⁷And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.</p>	<p>¹⁶ They hurried off and found both Mary and Joseph, and the baby who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷After seeing them, they reported the message they were told about this child,¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.</p>	<p>¹⁶So 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.</p>	<p>¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they told others the message they had been told about this child. ¹⁸And all who heard it were amazed by what the shepherds said to them.</p>

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<p>shepherds.</p> <p>¹⁹But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.</p> <p>²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.</p>	<p>¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.</p> <p>²⁰And the shepherds returned, ^oglorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.</p>	<p>¹⁹But Mary was treasuring up all these things in her heart and meditating on them.</p> <p>²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard, which were just as they had been told.</p>	<p>¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.</p> <p>²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.</p>	<p>¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.</p> <p>²⁰And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.</p>

Some points to discuss using commentaries:

- v 1 *All the world*: The Greek term, “the whole *oikoumene*,” “ the whole inhabited world,” does not include India and China and other regions in Africa and Asia, only the areas that were under Roman control.
- v 2 *Quirinius* is the Latin form of this name, which is used by historians.
- v 2 As far as we know, *Quirinius* never held the formal office of governor of Syria, but was placed in charge of the province.
- v 2 The date of this census or registration is not known, and the year of Christ’s birth is not certain,
- v 5 Mary and Joseph were already legally married, but were not yet living together as husband and wife.
- v 7 *Swaddling cloths* is the way Amazon spells it in their catalog. *Swaddling cloths* seem to be making a comeback.
- v 7 No translation changed the term *manger*. *Manger* is still the term used by farmers and ag catalogs today.
- v 7 An inn and a house with guest rooms were pretty much the same thing. Think B&B.
- v 13 The word traditionally translated *hosts* refers to armies. In this case, to the army of angels.

- v 14 The *good will* in verse 14 is God's gracious saving will for all people.
- v 16 Why do all recent translations give up the traditional translation *babe*?