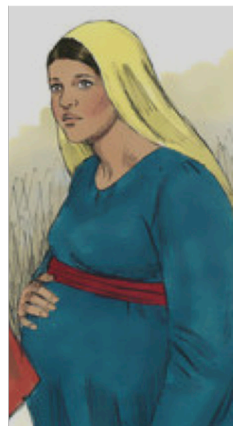


What is the story of Christmas?

Who is this girl? Her name is Mary (*Maryam*). She was a good girl. She was from a good family. She was promised to marry a man named Joseph from her village of Nazareth.



the angel Gabriel (Jibril)



Mary (Maryam)

One day the angel Gabriel (*Jibriil*) came to her. He said: *"The Lord is with you. Don't be afraid. God is happy with you. You will have a baby boy. His name will be Jesus (Cisse). He will be great. He will be called the 'Son of the Most High'. He will be King (Masih). His kingdom will never end."*

Mary asked a question: *"How will this be? I am a virgin."* (She had never slept with any man.) Gabriel said, *"Nothing is impossible with God."*

This is an old story. When did this story happen? About 2015 years ago.

Where did this story happen? Did it happen in America? No, it happened far away in Israel.

Israel is next to Egypt, near Saudi Arabia. Can you find it on the map? Egypt (*Massir*).



Who is this man? His name is Joseph. He was a good man. He was from a good family. He was a carpenter (*nijar*). He promised to marry a girl, Mary, in his town of Nazareth.

One day the girl came to talk to him. *"I have serious news - I am pregnant!"*



Joseph

How did Joseph feel? Angry? Jealous? It was not his baby.

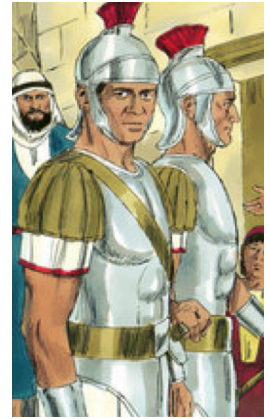
Mary said: *"Listen Joseph. This baby is from God. I promise I did not sleep with any man."*

Joseph thought about it. At night, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said: *"Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is in her is from the Holy Spirit."*

Joseph believed.

Did you know? - Just like Somalia was a colony of Italy, Israel was a colony of Rome? Every man had to pay taxes. Every man had to travel back to the place of his grandfather (*awoowe*) to pay the tax.

Joseph traveled with Mary to Bethlehem. She was very pregnant. When they got there they could find no house to stay but the baby was coming! They tried to stay at a hotel but there were no rooms. They had to go outside. That is why Jesus was born outside with the animals.



**Roman
soldier**



Did you know Jesus had visitors (*martid*)?

- 1) Shepherds were taking care of their sheep in fields nearby. At night an Angel told them that they would find a special baby if they went to the town. They went and saw him just as the angel had said.



Shepherds

- 2) Wise men from the east (Iran? Iraq?) followed a star in the sky until they found Jesus. They knew a new king was born. They brought gifts of gold (*dahab*), frankincense (*foox*) and myrrh (*malma*).



Wise Men

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

So Christmas is the story of how Jesus was born. But why do we call it Christmas? **Christmas** is about Christ. *Christ* is a Greek word. In English it means *Messiah* - in Arabic and Somali, *Masih*.

Do you remember the Somali tradition of "caano shub?" when they anoint a man's head with camel's milk to show he is the new sultan or *ugaas*? Christ, or *Masih*, means "Anointed One".



D.A.

**Did you know Jesus and his family were refugees?
They were refugees in Africa!**



There was a bad king named Herod in Jerusalem (*Al Quds*). He was jealous (*masayrsan*) when he heard there was a new baby king. He did not know where Jesus was living so he told his soldiers to kill all the baby boys in that area.

How did they escape? An angel woke up Joseph and told him to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt (*Massir*). They lived in Egypt until that bad king Herod died. Then they moved back to Nazareth where Jesus grew up. That's why Jesus is called a Nazarene (*Nasrini*).

That's the story of Christmas.

What did Jesus do when he grew up?

What will he do when he comes back?

Can you tell the story?