

Luke 2 (NRSV)

8 In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: 11 to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. **12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.**" 13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favours!"

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us." 16 So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. 17 When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; 18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. . . . 20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

Luke 23 (NRSV)

50 Now there was a good and righteous man named Joseph. . . . 51 . . . He came from the Jewish town of Arimathea, and he was waiting expectantly for the kingdom of God. 52 This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. 53 Then he took it down, wrapped it in a linen cloth, and laid it in a rock-hewn tomb where no one had ever been laid. . . . 55 The women who had come with him from Galilee followed, and they saw the tomb and how his body was laid.

Luke 24 (NRSV)

5 The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. 6 Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, 7 that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again.' 8 Then they remembered his words, 9 and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest. 10 Now it was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told this to the

apostles. 11 But these words seemed to them an idle tale, and they did not believe them. 12 But Peter got up and ran to the tomb; stooping and looking in, he saw the linen cloths by themselves; then he went home, amazed at what had happened.

The Most Meaningful Gift

- A gift of good news, of great joy
- *sémeion*: sign, miracle, indication, mark, omen, given to confirm, or authenticate; foreshadowing; a pre-announcement by which the future is announced; a sign emphasising the end-purpose of the one giving it
- **This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.**
