

The Real Story Behind the Nativity

After a lifetime of Christmas pageants and nativity scenes, we have grown numb to the amazing story of the birth of Jesus. In fact, it has been relegated to a children's story replete with newborn babies, angels and adorable little lambs, not to mention the petting zoos of camels and goats.

Most nativity scenes also have three kings bearing gifts even though they were not in Bethlehem for the birth of Jesus. They came a good year—if not two—later. But let's not disappoint the children with the facts!

If we stop and take a grownup's look at the Christmas story, we find so much more than meets the eye. For example, have you ever stopped to wonder why Jesus was born in the area of a home where the animals were kept? Yes, it was because the guest chamber was full, and Mary needed privacy. But could it be that the Lamb of God was born in a cave used to birth lambs for temple sacrifice?

Ever wonder why the angels entrusted shepherds with their announcement? The angels said the sign of the babe lying in a feeding trough and wrapped in swaddling cloths was for them. Many teach that is because the gospel was for the lowliest of the low. Actually, the chances are those shepherds were anything but lowly. After they found the baby, they spread the news far and wide as though they had some level of respect. Who were they really?

Join me this week on the *Out of Zion* podcast titled *The Birth of Jesus*, and we will tell the amazing story behind the famous Christmas nativity scene. This study is part 2 of our *3D Jesus* series. {eo}

Dr. Susan Michael is USA Director of the International

*Christian Embassy Jerusalem and host of the Out of Zion
podcast.*