



Christianity:

Why does Christmas matter to Christians?

Topic Overview

- Christians believe that Jesus is God and that he was born as a baby in Bethlehem.
 - The Bible says that his birth showed he was extraordinary and that he came to bring good news.
 - Christians celebrate Jesus' birth.
 - Advent for Christians is a time of getting ready for Jesus' coming.
 - Christians believe Jesus was God on earth.
 - Jesus brought good news to very poor people.
 - Christmas is a time for giving - the wise men gave presents when Jesus was first born.
 - It's also a time to remember that poorer people (shepherds) visited Jesus, who came for both rich and poor people.
 - As Christmas is a time for both giving and thinking of the poor, lots of Christians like to give presents and help those in need at Christmas time.
- **Gospel of Matthew**
After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, Wise Men came looking for the King of the Jews. When King Herod heard this, he was worried. King Herod sent the Wise Men to find the child so that he could worship him. The Wise Men followed the star until they found Jesus. They bowed down and worshiped him; giving him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. They were warned in a dream not to return to Herod.

Links with other religions

- **Chanukkah** (Judaism). Both are winter festivals, celebrated by retelling the story and giving gifts, special foods and customs, and remember God giving gifts to his people.
- **Jesus** (Judaism). Jews do not believe Jesus was the Son of God.
- **Jesus** (Islam). Muslims believe Jesus is a messenger of Allah (God). They do not believe Jesus is the Son of God.

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Incarnation	'in the flesh'
Wise Men	Men of great learning.
Kingship	Being a king.
Gold	A yellow precious metal.
Frankincense	A scented resin used in incense and perfume.
Myrrh	Natural resin used as perfume, incense, and medicine.
Carol	A religious song or popular hymn, particularly one linked to Christmas.
Magi	Another word for 'Wise Men.'
Messiah	'Anointed one'. This is a title given to the person believed to be the saviour. Christians believe that the Messiah was sent by God to save humans.
Worship	Love and devotion shown to a holy being or an object.
King Herod	A king of Judea.

