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Daily Devotional - Wednesday, October 23, 2024 - Baby Clothes

OCTOBER 23RD 2024 BY DEE LOFLIN

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This past Christmas, our family visited the Art Institute of Chicago to view a special Nativity scene, a crèche from Naples, Italy, that dates to the eighteenth century. More than 200 figures (including people and animals), each made with exquisite care and artistry, were displayed. The scene included vendors and musicians alongside the shepherds and wise men. But Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus were clearly at the center of it all.

The birth of Jesus was a long-awaited, life-changing event. But despite the importance of His birth, the moment was marked by humility. One would think the incarnate Son of God would be wearing a silk onesie or a royal baby outfit, but this wasn't the case. Instead, Jesus was wrapped in simple "cloths"—linen strips that snugly swaddled the newborn to make Him comfortable (v. 7). In other words, He was dressed much as we might dress a baby today, although we use flannel blankets and baby clothes.

The circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus were also humble, to say the least. Mary gave birth on the road, in Bethlehem. Jesus was born among animals and laid in

a feeding trough. Many scholars now believe the family was staying with relatives, though no guest room was available (v. 7). Instead, they were housed on the first floor with the animals, a common arrangement at the time.

Nonetheless, Jesus was a descendant of David and God’s promised Messiah. Matthew’s genealogy shows Joseph to be of the line of David (Matt. 1:1–17; see also Luke 1:27). Luke 3:23–38 seems to trace His line via Mary, who was also of the line of David. The Roman Empire appears to be in control in the story, since the government ordered the census that took Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem (v. 1). But God was sovereignly orchestrating every detail to fulfill His promises of redemption.

What was the significance of Jesus’ baby clothes? Why do you think He arrived with such humble beginnings?

Jesus, at the incredible moment in history, You came into this world, full of sorrow. You came as a baby in humble surroundings, yet You bring good news to the lost and comfort those who mourn. We love You and praise You!

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