

*"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." Luke 2:7 KJV*



“Swaddling clothes” refers to ancient burial practices in the Middle East. Journeys often lasted months, and it was not unusual for sickness or death to occur in route. Each person would take a long, thin, gauze-like cloth and wrap it around their waist many times. This cloth would be reserved should they die during the journey. This "swaddling cloth" would be used to wrap them from head to toe so they could complete the journey. Myrrh was often used as “perfume for the dead” to cover the odors that would arise. Jesus was probably wrapped in some of the burial cloth of His earthly father, Joseph. This was the first of the two signs given to the shepherds, “*Ye shall find the babe WRAPPED IN SWADDLING clothes lying in a manger.*” The mission of God, the Son, was to die; the innocent for the guilty. “*For He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*” In His death, we find the same cloth being used. The body was tightly bound and, as was the Jewish custom, His prayer shawl was used to wrap His head. Upon His resurrection, it was neatly folded and laid aside as it would no longer be needed and to prove that He physically folded it. They were folded in a special manner much like the folding of a flag. The swaddling lay empty! It is symbolic of the “new birth” in Christ. Believers are “wrapped” in the burial “swaddling” of flesh. We are to be “living sacrifices” that are dead to self and the lusts of the flesh, so we can walk in “newness of eternal Life.” We should keep the “shawl” of prayer constantly on our mind as we await our resurrection day! We are here with a unique purpose; to announce the “Good News.” We cannot afford the luxury of putting down roots. We are pilgrims with a peculiarity about us. We, “*look for a city whose Builder and Maker is God.*” We will rest when our journey is over. We will triumph victorious when our race is run and we’ve finished our course! In the meantime, we “*endure hardness as a soldier*” that is miles from home in enemy territory. We can’t afford to be “comfortable” or relax. Our journey is rife with peril from our enemy. Stay armed! Stay prepared! “*Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.*” Did you expect Him yesterday? Today? Tomorrow?

Our swaddled Lord in manger lay,  
He came to die, our debt to pay,  
If we will also “die” each day,  
We’ll surely see His Face one day! ~CGP

Born to Die! We are all born to die someday. The real question is will you only die once, or will you be cast into outer darkness to die the “*second death.*” Those who are born once, die twice. First physically then forever spiritually! “*And Death and Hell were cast into the Lake of Fire. This is the SECOND Death. And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the Lake of Fire.*” For the believer, “*to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.*” That means God is always right where you are and when you die your flesh will fall away to reveal the glory of Eternity’s Sovereign at your bedside! Believers will trade their swaddling flesh and faith for snowy robes and full sight leaving their prayer shawl neatly folded for eternity!

*"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He (Christ) shall appear, we shall be like Him; (for we [believers] shall all be changed) for we shall see Him as He is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as He is pure." 1 John 3:2-3 KJV*