

# A CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Charles Dickens

## SYNOPSIS

A *Christmas Carol* is set in Victorian England. It is a story of a broken man, Ebenezer Scrooge, whose wealth has become his only passion in life. As a young man, Ebenezer Scrooge had love and family in his life, but after many setbacks, he lost the desire to be part of society, part of a family, and in essence, a caring human being. One lonely and cold Christmas Eve, Scrooge goes to bed and is “visited” by four ghosts: his old business partner, the Ghost of Christmas Past, the Ghost of Christmas Present and the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come. After an eye-opening adventure, traveling through time and memories, as well as a chillingly visit to the future, Scrooge learns the error of his miserly ways and wakes up Christmas morning a new man.

## MAIN CHARACTERS

- Ebenezer Scrooge—miserly moneylender who is anti-Christmas and shows no mercy to others
- Bob Cratchit—kindhearted employee of Scrooge
- Tiny Tim—son of Bob Cratchit, who is physically disabled
- Jacob Marley—deceased business partner of Scrooge who returns as a ghost
- Ghost of Christmas Past—ghost who comes to Scrooge to show him his past
- Ghost of Christmas Present—ghost who comes to Scrooge to show him his present
- Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come—ghost who comes to Scrooge to show him his future

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Published in 1843
- Inspired by the treatment of the poor, indebted, and unfortunate
- After reading an 1843 report on child labor in Britain, Dickens decided to write something that would grab the attention and pull at the heartstrings of those who had the ability to effect change
- *A Christmas Carol* promotes charitable giving, or **philanthropy**
- Met with immediate success

## THEMES

- Greed
- Poverty
- Individual/Social Reform
- Charity
- Death
- Afterlife and Legacy