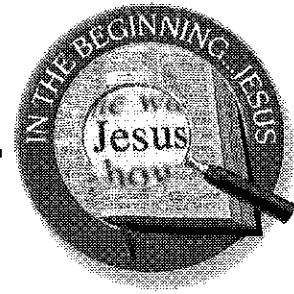


In the Beginning...Jesus



Lesson 31

The Promised King and Savior Is Born

Themes:

- God prepared the way for Jesus with the birth of John the Baptist.
- Jesus was born to Mary, a virgin, fulfilling the Old Testament promise.
- Jesus was born in Bethlehem, fulfilling the Old Testament promise.

Scripture:

Luke 1:26-33; Matthew 1:18-23; John 19:36; Luke 2:1, 3-7

Memory Verse:

John 1:12 (and review verses 1-11)

Visuals for Lesson:

- Bible.
- *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster.
- Resource Packet:
 - Timeline with MORE THAN 400 YEARS taped to the beginning (from previous lesson).
 - JOHN: GOD'S MESSENGER IS BORN (from previous lesson).
 - JESUS: THE KING AND SAVIOR IS BORN.
 - GOD—MAN visual (from previous lessons).
 - CLUES (from Lesson 1).
 - 3 CHECK MARKS.
 - WHO?=?, WHAT?=?, WHEN?=?, WHY?=?, WHERE?=?.
- Small, wrapped gift box.
- A flashlight that uses two batteries—Take the flashlight apart (i.e., unscrew the lens cover and the battery compartment).
- Two batteries for the flashlight.

Lesson

Display the wrapped gift box. Tell the children to pretend for a moment that it is one week before Christmas and this gift has their name on it under the Christmas tree at home.

When would you expect to be allowed to open your present? Why? Suppose your parents say you can open it on Christmas...but not this Christmas? What would you think?

Suppose next Christmas your present is again placed under the tree, but when Christmas Day comes your parents again say, "You can open it on Christmas, but not this Christmas."

What if this goes on year after year? Would you still believe them? How would you feel? Would you still believe your parents are good and trustworthy?

Display MORE THAN 400 YEARS. In the previous lesson, what promise did God fulfill that His people had waited more than 400 years for? [The coming of God's messenger—John.] **Display JOHN: GOD'S MESSENGER IS BORN.**

Why was the birth of John so special? [Allow the children to respond.]

Point out that John's coming was special because he was born in order to prepare the way for the great and awesome day of the Lord—the coming of the promised King.

So God was faithful in keeping His promise to send His messenger before the coming of His King. But when would the King come? Would God's people have to wait another 400 years?

Point out that while Elizabeth was pregnant with John, one of her relatives also had some amazing news.

Divide the children into two groups (e.g., boys and girls). Assign each group to turn to one of the following passages: **Luke 1:26-33** and **Matthew 1:18-21**. Tell each group to quickly read the passage to themselves. Then ask each group the following questions:

According to the verses you read, who is going to have a Baby? [Mary.] Will His birth be "impossible" in human terms? Why? [She is a virgin and has no husband.] What will be His name? [Jesus.] What will He come to do? [From Luke: He is coming to be King on David's throne. From Matthew: He is coming to save His people from their sins.]

Display JESUS: THE KING AND SAVIOR IS BORN and place it on the timeline to

the right of **JOHN: GOD'S MESSENGER IS BORN**. Remind the children that God did promise His people a King—one who would sit on David's throne and reign forever. But having a King would not solve their other problem. What was that? Point to the **LOCKED HEART** on **CAPTIVES** on the **GOD—MAN** visuals. [They were sinners.]

Point out that during the year we have collected all kinds of clues from the Old Testament. All of these clues point to one special Person and one special event: Jesus and His death on the cross.

Display CLUES. Explain that you first showed the children this visual in the very first lesson. Read through the verse on the visual:

***For these things took place that the Scripture might be fulfilled.
(John 19:36a)***

Does anyone remember what this verse means? It means all of the events involved with the great mystery of Jesus' death on the cross happened so that all of the clues in the Old Testament would be fulfilled or completed.

Have all the children turn to **Matthew 1:22**:

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet.

This verse is talking about the events involved in Jesus' birth. According to this verse, did these events happen by chance? What did they fulfill? What did the prophet say?

Choose a child to read **Matthew 1:23**:

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

These words had been spoken hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus by the prophet Isaiah. Did we have a clue revealed on our poster about this? Which one is it?

Display a **CHECK MARK** and choose a child to come up front and tape it within the picture clue: **GOD WITH US**. Explain that the events of Jesus' birth also fulfilled another important clue from the Old Testament.

According to the verses we read from Luke and Matthew, was the birth of Jesus to Mary possible in human terms? No. But what did God promise to Mary? That she would have a baby. Did God keep His promise? Yes. Do you remember another woman, in the Old Testament, who couldn't possibly have a baby? Who was it? [Sarah.] But what had God promised? [She would have a baby.] Did God keep His promise to her? Did we have

a clue on our poster about this? What was it?

Display another **CHECK MARK** and choose a child to come up to the front and tape it within the picture clue: **CHILD OF PROMISE**. Explain that even though Isaac was the miraculous child of promise born to Sarah, Isaac's birth was a clue pointing to the future and an even greater Child of promise—Jesus.

So now Mary, a virgin, is going to give birth to Jesus, to a Child of promise, just as the clues in the Old Testament said. However, there was one problem—another important clue also needed to be fulfilled.

Display these signs in the following order: **WHO?=JESUS, WHAT?=HE WILL BE BORN TO MARY, WHEN?=IN A FEW MONTHS, WHY?=TO SAVE HIS PEOPLE AND BE KING**. Ask the children if there is a missing question not being asked. [Where?] **Display WHERE?** Would it matter where Jesus is born? Is there a clue from the Old Testament that says where Jesus must be born in order to fulfill the Old Testament clues? [**RULER FROM BETHLEHEM.**]

There is a problem with this. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. Nazareth is not even close to Bethlehem. But maybe this won't matter if the rest of the Old Testament clues are correct. After all, it's only one little clue.

Illustration: Choose two children to come up to the front. Explain to them that you have a simple flashlight to put together. Lay all the pieces on the table and give them any necessary instructions for putting it together, but only give them one of the two batteries. If they comment on the fact that there is only one battery, tell them it won't matter since we have all the other pieces. When the flashlight is fully assembled with the one battery inside, turn on the switch. Why doesn't the flashlight work?

Does it really matter if one little thing is missing? Why?

Point out that if God is to be faithful to all His promises and if Jesus is to be proven to be the One God sent to save His people and to be the King who will reign forever, Jesus must fulfill ALL the Old Testament clues perfectly—every single one!

So even though Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, Jesus must be born where? [In Bethlehem.] How will this happen?

Have the children turn to **Luke 2:1, 3-7** and choose children to read the verses:

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of

David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn Son and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Explain that Caesar Augustus was the ruler of Rome. He was a very powerful ruler. When he made a law, the people had to obey.

Was it just "luck" that he made this law right at the time Mary was going to have Jesus? Was it just "by accident" that of all the towns in Israel, Joseph "just happened" to be from Bethlehem and must return there to be registered?

Display WHERE?= again. What can now be put there? [Bethlehem.] Write the word Bethlehem on the sign. Next, choose a child to come to the front. Give him the last **CHECK MARK** and have him tape it in the picture clue: **RULER FROM BETHLEHEM.**

Point out that at Jesus' birth, we have seen how three of our Old Testament clues were fulfilled. All of these clues could not have "just happened" this way. God was the one who gave each clue in the Old Testament and then made sure each one was fulfilled exactly as He had planned.

Do you think that for God's people living during this time the birth of Jesus was a big deal? Did they all recognize Him as their great King, sent by God, who had finally come to save them? Or, did He seem very ordinary—like any other baby?

Explain that we still have a lot of clues to be fulfilled. But, as we have seen throughout the Bible, over and over again: God is faithful to ALL His promises!

Application

- **WORKBOOK**—Have the children turn to Lesson 31 in their workbooks. In the notebook section, have the children write the three Old Testament clues Jesus' birth fulfilled. (Or have the children glue in the **BIBLE PICTURE CLUES** available on the CD that came with the Resource Packet.) Talk about the story of Jesus' birth with the children. Using a white board or piece of paper have the children recall some familiar details about His birth—for example: the manger, no room at the inn, the wise men, the shepherds in the fields, the angels announcing His birth, etc. Point out that many people look at this story as a nice story, not understanding that Jesus' birth and the who, what, where, when, and why are all very important as they fulfill clues from the Old Testament. Have the children read the additional Old Testament clues on their workbook

page and have them match these clues with their fulfillment at Jesus' birth.

- ❑ Point out that Caesar Augustus was the most powerful ruler on earth at the time of Jesus' birth. He was a Roman and did not believe in the one true God. Read **Proverbs 21:1**. *How did God use Caesar to fulfill His Old Testament promise? Did Caesar know that he was fulfilling God's plans? Does a person have to agree with God's plans in order for God's plans come true? Have you seen how God has used someone—even someone who doesn't believe in Him—to fulfill His purpose? (If possible, try to give a personal example of this.) Are you ever worried that there may be something God cannot do? Is there a person you worry about because he is not trusting in Jesus? Is anything too hard for God to do if He chooses to do it? How can knowing and believing Proverbs 21:1 help you pray for others and the things that happen around you?*
- ❑ Read portions of Mary's response from **Luke 1:46-55**. Does it sound as if Mary is one of the Jewish people who doubted God would keep His promises from long ago? Why not? Was she proud that of all the women in the world, she alone was chosen to give birth to God's Son? What verses show her attitude? Whom does she give all the credit to and why? Ask the children if they ever feel like boasting about something wonderful that they have been given. *Why would it be wrong to boast? Why can't you boast about a gift that has been given to you? How was the birth of Jesus' like a gift to God's people?*
- ❑ Remind the children that God's people were waiting for a great King like David. *Do the events surrounding Jesus' birth seem "kingly"? Why not? Were His parents royal people? Were they rich and important? Was He born in a palace? Who were some of the first people to whom the angels announced His birth? Do you think all of these things would make it more or less likely for people to believe He was the long awaited King? Why do you think God did things this way? What is more important: To judge things by what you think they should be like or to judge things by what God's Word says is true? Is this sometimes hard for us to do? Why? (Give the children an example of this, such as in school they may be told that the world evolved and was not created by God. This may "appear" to be true to people, but God's Word says He created the world, etc.)*

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