

STORY

Announcing a Miracle Child - Luke 1:26-56, Matthew 1:18-25

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in heaven, the truths I am about to present with this lesson are doubted and attacked so mightily today, yet they are so important in assuring Your children that Jesus is indeed their Savior. Bless me, Your servant, as I carry Your Word to those in my care. May the students' faith in Your amazing power and love be strengthened and move them to praise You with faith, word, and deeds, now and into eternity. Amen

VOCABULARY

Galilee - The northern province of Israel during Roman occupation, with King Herod allowed to rule.

Nazareth - means "verdant" or "offshoot" and brings to mind the prophecy in Isaiah 11:1 that Jesus would come from the stem or shoot of the tribe of Jesse (cf. Matthew 2:23).

Betrothed - pledged to be married, the commitment had already been made to be husband and wife." *found with child*" - she was pregnant.

public example - charge her with adultery and refuse to marry her.

Jesus - the name literally means "Savior".

Immanuel - literally it means "God with us", a testimony that Mary's Son would be God in human flesh.

OUTER AIM

God announces the miracle of Jesus' birth.

INNER AIM

Believers show faith in the miracle within Jesus' birth.

BACKGROUND

(*Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 2, pp. 11-16*)

When everything was ready, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman (Gal. 4:4). (The study of how human history converged to make this the right moment is beyond the scope of this lesson.) Jesus' forerunner, John, was on his way. So God sent His angel to a humble virgin (unmarried girl) of the tribe of David. (cf. Isaiah. 7:14 "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son..."). Various events emphasize how the birth of Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies and reveal that Jesus was the promised Messiah and Savior.

Below are notes on each verse of the account:

Luke 1:26

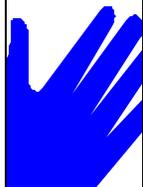
- ▶ in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy.
- ▶ Gabriel: the same angel sent to Zacharias (and Daniel).

v. 27

- ▶ betrothed (see above) to Joseph of the house of David: note that both mother and stepfather were of the house of David, just as God has prophesied.
- ▶ Joseph's family tree is traced in Matthew 1:1-18 and Mary's in Luke 3:23-38.
- ▶ Virgin : repeated twice to emphasize the fulfillment of God's prophecy of Isaiah 7:14.

v. 28

- ▶ Rejoice, highly favored one: (sometimes "Hail, Mary") The angel's greeting to Mary has been twisted to support the worship of Mary, a modern idolatry in some churches.
- ▶ The greeting announces that Mary should rejoice because of the blessing God is giving her.



v. 29

- ▶ Troubled : Mary was perplexed, confused about the angel's words;
- ▶ considered : She thought intently about the unusual greeting.

vs. 30-33

- ▶ Do not be afraid, Mary : Like all sinful people, Mary was afraid in the presence of the holy angel.
- ▶ Jesus : Savior, Redeemer cf. with Matt 1:21.
- ▶ Called the Son of the Highest : Son of God because Jesus is exactly that.
- ▶ Throne of His father David : Jesus would be a descendent of King David according to promise and would rule over the house of Jacob (spiritual Israel) forever.

v. 34

- ▶ How can this be? : Mary was confused about the means how this would be accomplished, because pregnancy could only happen by sexual intercourse.

v. 35

- ▶ Holy Spirit shall come upon you, ...overshadow you : the Third person of the divine trinity would accomplish this mysterious miracle of uniting God with human flesh.
- ▶ So the Son of God from eternity also took on human flesh and became God and man, the Holy One, Jesus, the Incarnate (in flesh) Son of God.

vs. 36-37

- ▶ barren: without having children and assumed unable to have children because of age.
- ▶ This message was given as encouragement to Mary that God has the power to do anything.

v. 38

- ▶ maidservant of the Lord : Mary's humble acceptance of her miraculous conception demonstrates a humble willingness to take God at His Word and to serve in faith according to it.

vs. 39-40

- ▶ with haste, to .. Judah, hill country : Mary hurried the 80 miles or so to be with Elizabeth, pregnant with John, to share the good news with someone.

v. 41

- ▶ the babe leaped : John, a human baby at 6 months, reacted favorably to the mother of Jesus greeting his mother.
- ▶ Elizabeth's words show that the Holy Spirit revealed the nature of God's blessing upon Mary.

vs. 42-45

- ▶ Elizabeth spoke out : With exuberance, Elizabeth rejoiced with Mary, humbly accepted the fact of the miracle taking place within Mary and marveled that Mary should be visiting her.
- ▶ Elizabeth also encouraged Mary in her faith that the Lord would indeed fulfill His promised blessing.

vs. 46-55

- ▶ My soul magnifies the Lord : declares the greatness of the Lord in awe of His amazing blessing.
- ▶ Mary looked with joyful faith to the special baby in her womb to save her also from sin.
- ▶ All but one of the statements in Mary's song were from the Old Testament.
- ▶ has regarded the lowly state : Mary in humbleness praised God for the honor given her, despite what might be considered her low position in the world's eyes.
- ▶ Mary realized that God with great mercy was fulfilling His centuries-old promises of a Savior for her and all believers.

Matt 1:18-19

- ▶ birth of Jesus Christ : the unusual circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth needed to be explained,

especially to Mary's intended husband who would be Jesus' stepfather.

- ▶ Before they were formally married, Mary was known to be expecting a baby.
- ▶ In all other circumstances, that would have been considered a sin which according to Mosaic Law (Deuteronomy 22:13-21) could have meant her death or at least a private divorce.

vs. 20-21

- ▶ in a dream : God chose to send Joseph a message this way.
- ▶ Joseph should not fear the consequences of accepting Mary as his wife because God was working a special miracle here.
- ▶ Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit, resulting in a boy to be named Jesus.
- ▶ Notice that the message emphasizes Joseph is David's descendent and that Mary is his wife.
- ▶ Jesus' name fits His sole purpose on earth, namely, to save His people from their sins.

vs 22-23

- ▶ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet : Matthew was writing to the Jewish people, showing them that Jesus was their Savior.
- ▶ Matthew, by the Holy Spirit, quoted Isaiah 7:14 to emphasize that Jesus had to be both "God with us" and conceived of a virgin in fulfillment of God's promise.

vs 24-25

- ▶ Joseph, ..., did as the angel of the Lord commanded him : Joseph also believed the miracle within Jesus' birth and followed the instructions of the Lord.
- ▶ They called Mary's firstborn son, "Jesus."

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father in Heaven, You teach us today that Jesus is both Your only-begotten Son and also a human being born of a virgin named Mary. This miracle made Jesus both God and Man and so our perfect, holy Savior; we know this is a matter of faith. O Lord, strengthen our faith in this and all other mysteries of Scripture, that we may remain Your children now and into eternity. Help us to show our faith with words of praise and deeds of obedience that blessing may come through us as Your servants. In the name of Jesus, our Savior, we pray. Amen.

PRESENTATION

Discuss the different ways that Christians show their love and faith in God's Word: read and meditate on the Bible; hear it in church; live, believing God's sometimes difficult truths and obeying Him in their lives; being kind and helpful to friends, relatives and neighbors. Mary and Joseph (and Elizabeth) showed that they believed God's Word. As Mary told the angel that she believed what he had told her, she praised God for this great blessing; Joseph also did as the angel said and married Mary.

Briefly review previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account. When scripture records the story in more than one place, you may want to harmonize the accounts (including extra details found in each account.) Let the students know where they can find the additional details in the Bible.

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

APPLICATIONS

1. As the announcement of John's birth showed that God keeps His promises, this one shows us that God is able to do so in seemingly impossible ways, if He chooses. We learn that His power and love, although hard to grasp intellectually, are acceptable in faith. Only by faith do we understand that Jesus is indeed both God and human according to God's plan (Galatians 4:4-5). As a human being He could die in payment for our sins; as God His obedience and sin-payment could be flawless, holy and acceptable.
2. Faith in God's Word shows itself in praise of God for His amazing Grace and in obeying His directions in our lives. What blessings can result when we live God's way! We show our faith in the way we treat everyone around us. God blesses our lives and others as we live according to His Word.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

Matthew 1:21 - "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

Luke 1:37 - "For with God nothing will be impossible."

Middle any of the above and...

Isaiah 7:14 - "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Galatians 4:4 - But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.

Upper any of the above and...

Galatians 4:4-5 - But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

1 Timothy 3:16 And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh.

HYMN CHOICES

"Savior of the Nations, Come" (TLH 95 vs. 3-4)

"Praise We the Lord This Day" (TLH 274)