

Calvary Chapel  Philadelphia



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY TEACHER'S PACKET

1st Grade

Sunday Morning

Study 1

The Birth of Jesus

The Birth of Jesus

The Objective is the key concept for this week's lesson. It should be the main focus of the study.

These are the key verses that you will find helpful in teaching your study this week. The "Main passage" is the basis of the study, where the other verses support the objective of the lesson.

There is a memory verse for the students that relates to every study. If a student can memorize the verse for the following week you may give them a prize from the "reward box" found on your cart.

An introductory activity or question that will settle the class, draw their attention to the study and prepare their hearts for God's Word.

Objective To teach the students that God sent Jesus to save us from our sins as the ultimate solution to man's greatest problem.

Key Verses

Matthew 1:18-2:23—Main Teaching Passage

Luke 24:25-27

Revelation 13:8

Memory Verse - 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."

Hook

As this is the first week with your new class, spend some time at the beginning learning the children's names.

Ask the class about their study through the Old Testament last year. Have them tell you how God solved various problems (e.g. how did He protect Israel at the Red Sea? How did He save Daniel and his friends?) Then ask if there were any problems left unsolved. If no one else says it, point out that there was still the problem of sin.

What does the Bible say? This is where we will read a passage or series of passages that teach on the subject of the day.

BOOK

In Matthew's account of Jesus' birth, Joseph's role in these events is front and center. Joseph is a godly young man who is engaged to be married to a woman named Mary. As they awaited their marriage, Mary became pregnant. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and told him that the Child was no ordinary baby. This Child was from the Holy Spirit, and He would save the people from their sins. His name would be Jesus, which means "Yahweh (the Lord) is salvation." The child was born, and Mary and Joseph named Him Jesus, just as the angel said.

After Jesus' birth, some wise men came from the east and asked King Herod, who was the ruler of Israel, where they could find the newborn King so they could worship Him. Herod had not heard of any such king, and was angered at this news. He told the wise men to go to Bethlehem, where it was said this King would be born, and find Him. Then they were to tell Herod where He was.

When the wise men found Jesus in Bethlehem, they rejoiced and gave Him great gifts. However, an angel warned them of Herod's plot, so they returned home without seeing Herod. Then Joseph was warned to take his family and flee to Egypt. When Herod found out the wise men had disobeyed him, he was furious and ordered all children under 2 years old in Bethlehem to be destroyed. However, Herod soon died, and an angel told Joseph that it was now safe to return home from Egypt.

LOOK

All last year, we went through the Old Testament and saw how God helped all sorts of people deal with a wide range of problems. God delivered men and women like Daniel from danger. He gave Israel victory in battle. He provided Abraham and Sarah with a child. Yet despite all these victories, one problem, the greatest problem, remained unsolved. There was never a permanent solution for sin. God put sacrifices and laws in place to deal with the consequences of sins, but the problem itself remained. Mankind needed to be totally saved from sin.

Jesus is God's answer to man's ultimate problem. Right here in the beginning of Matthew's Gospel, Matthew makes it clear that even Jesus' own name indicated His primary objective. He had come to save the people from their sins. Jesus would perform many healings, deliver sermons on living for God, and break all kinds of social and cultural barriers, but all these things came second to Jesus' ultimate goal, to save all of humanity from our sins.

The interpretation/exegesis of the passage. What does this passage mean? How does this passage apply to my life?

LOOK (Continued)

It is important to notice that this plan was not out of the blue. God was not pondering what to do about sin for thousands of years before finally deciding to send Jesus. In Matthew 1:22-23, 2:5-6, 2:15, 2:17-18, and 2:23, it says that the various aspects of Christ's birth were fulfillments of prophecies spoken hundreds of years before Jesus was born. Jesus was the goal of the entire Old Testament, with the prophets repeatedly telling us that He was coming. From Genesis to Malachi, the Old Testament points to Jesus as the ultimate solution for sin, as Luke 24:25-27 shows us. Revelation 13:8 calls Him "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," showing that from the beginning, God knew He would send His Son into the world.

Obviously, Satan was not happy about Christ's birth. We see him using Herod in an attempt to stop God's plan from being completed. Yet God was not going to allow Satan to touch His Son. From Genesis 3 on, Satan has tried to keep humanity trapped in sin. Now, as God's plan was put into motion to set the world free, Satan was going to do everything in his power to stop Jesus. However, God has the final say, and He would allow nothing to prevent His Son Jesus from rescuing the people He loved from their sin.

What is my response to this passage of Scripture? How should my life change according to what this passage teaches me? What are the practical things I can do throughout the week to make this true in my life?

TOOK

As a class, memorize Matthew 1:21.

Review the lesson by asking the class what Jesus' name means. Ask why He came into the world.

Pray: Thank the Lord for sending His Son Jesus Christ into the world. Ask Him to bless the class as you begin to study the New Testament and learn all about Jesus.

Parent Question: Why did Jesus come into the world?

FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on Matthew 1:18-25 by David Guzik

B. The Birth of Jesus Christ.

1. ([Matthew 1:18](#)) Mary, while engaged to Joseph, is found to be with child as a result of a miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

a. **Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows:** Matthew doesn't really tell us about the *birth* of Jesus; Luke does that. Matthew instead tells us *where Jesus came from*, and it tells the story through the eyes of Joseph.

b. **After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph:** There were essentially three steps to marriage in the Jewish world of Jesus' time.

•*Engagement:* This could happen when the bride and groom to be were quite young, and was often arranged by the parents.

•*Betrothal:* This made the previous engagement official and binding. During the time of betrothal the couple were known as husband and wife, and a betrothal could only be broken by divorce. Betrothal typically lasted a year.

•*Marriage:* This took place after the wedding, after the year of betrothal.

c. **She was found with child of the Holy Spirit:** Matthew plainly (without the greater detail found in the Gospel of Luke) presents the virginal conception and subsequent birth of Jesus. However, the virgin birth was difficult for people to believe back then, even as it is also doubted now by some.

i. We should consider what a great trial this was for a godly young woman like Mary, and for Joseph her betrothed. "Her situation was the most distressing and humiliating that can be conceived. Nothing but the fullest consciousness of her own integrity, and the strongest confidence in God, could have supported her in such trying circumstances, where her reputation, her honour, and her *life* were at stake." (Clarke)

ii. The truth of the supernatural conception of Jesus was disbelieved by many then and was later twisted into lies about the parentage of Jesus. References are made to these suspicions in passages like [John 8:19](#) and [8:41](#). Lies spread that Mary had become pregnant from a Roman soldier. Here, Matthew set the story straight — both then and now.

iii. "There was no other way of his being born; for had he been of a sinful father, how should he have possessed a sinless nature? He is born of a woman, that he might be human; but not by man, that he might not be sinful." (Spurgeon)

2. ([Matthew 1:19](#)) Joseph seeks a quiet divorce.

Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.

a. **Joseph her husband:** The previous verse told us that *Mary was betrothed to Joseph*. This comment shows that even though they were not formally married, Joseph was still considered Mary's **husband** by betrothal.

b. **Being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example:** Being a **just man**, Joseph knew that

if Mary had been unfaithful to him it would be impossible to go through with the marriage. Yet his nature as a **just man** also did not want to make this an unnecessary hardship or stigma upon Mary. Joseph made the understandable decision to seek a quiet divorce.

c. **To put her away secretly:** This refers to breaking an engagement by divorce. In Jewish culture of that time, a betrothal was binding and one needed a divorce to break the arrangement.

i. "Their being betrothed was a thing publicly taken notice of, and he could not put her away so privately but there must be witnesses of it; the meaning therefore must be, as privately as the nature of thing would bear." (Poole)

ii. "When we have to do a severe thing, let us choose the tenderest manner. Maybe we shall not have to do it at all." (Spurgeon)

3. ([Matthew 1:20-21](#)) **An angel speaks to Joseph in a dream, convincing him not to divorce Mary.**

But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins."

a. **Behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream:** This was not *the* Angel of the LORD, but simply **an angel of the Lord**. Perhaps it was Gabriel, who is prominent in the announcements made to Mary and Zacharias ([Luke 1:19](#) and [1:26](#)). Yet those were actual angelic visitations; this was presented to Joseph **in a dream**.

i. The dream came **while he thought about these things**. Joseph was understandably troubled by Mary's mysterious pregnancy, her future, and what he should do towards her. Though he had decided to *put her away secretly*, he was not comfortable with that decision.

b. **Joseph, son of David:** The address **son of David** should have alerted Joseph that something was particularly significant about this message. **Son of David** is a reference to Joseph's legal lineage to the throne of David.

c. **That which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit:** It seems that Mary had not told Joseph that she was pregnant by the Holy Spirit. This shouldn't surprise us; how could she (or how could anyone except God) explain such a thing? This angelic word to Joseph was persuasive.

i. There is no explanation as to *how* this happened, other than what we have in [Luke 1:35](#). "This wonderful conception of our Saviour is a mystery not much to be pried into, and is therefore called an overshadowing, [Luke 1:35](#)." (Trapp)

ii. "There is no hint of pagan deity-human coupling in crassly physical terms. Instead, the power of the Lord, manifest in the Holy Spirit who was expected to be active in the Messianic Age, miraculously brought about the conception." (Carson)

d. **You shall call his name JESUS:** The name **JESUS** ("The Salvation of Yahweh") was fairly common in that day (Josephus mentions 12 different men named "Jesus" in his writings), but it is supremely blessed in our day. As was later said by the Apostle Peter, there is *no other name under heaven by which men must be saved* ([Acts 4:12](#)).

i. "The name which the angel commanded Joseph to give to Mary's Child was one that was common at the time...its full significance was 'The Salvation of Jehovah.'" (Morgan)

e. **For He will save His people from their sins:** The angelic messenger briefly and eloquently stated the work of the coming Messiah, Jesus. He will come as a *savior*, and come to **save His people from their sins**.

i. This description of the work of Jesus reminds us that Jesus meets us *in* our sin, but His purpose is to save us **from** our sins. He saves us first from the *penalty* of sin, then from the *power* of sin, and finally from the *presence* of sin.

ii. "Salvation *from sins* is an element in the Old Testament hope (e.g. [Isaiah 53](#); [Jeremiah 31:31-34](#); [Ezekiel 36:24-31](#)) and in later Messianic expectation...but not the dominant one. Its isolation here warns the reader not to expect this Messiah to conform to the more popular hope of a national liberator." (France)

iii. Wonderfully, it says "**His people**." If it had said, "God's people," we might have thought it was reserved for the Jewish people alone. But it isn't belonging to Abraham that brings salvation from sin; it is belonging to Jesus, being one of **His people**.

4. ([Matthew 1:22-23](#)) The virgin birth as the fulfillment of prophecy.

So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us."

a. **That it might be fulfilled:** This is the first use of this important phrase which will become a familiar theme throughout Matthew.

b. **"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel":** Matthew rightly understood that the supernatural conception of Jesus was prophesied in [Isaiah 7:14](#).

i. There has been some measure of controversy regarding this quote from [Isaiah 7:14](#), primarily because the Hebrew word *almah* can be translated as either **virgin** or "young woman."

ii. We know the Isaiah passage speaks of Jesus because it says **the virgin shall be with child**, and that conception would be *a sign* to David's entire house. Those who deny the virgin birth of Jesus like to point out that the Hebrew word in [Isaiah 7:14](#) translated **virgin** (*almah*) can also be translated as "young woman." The idea is that Isaiah was simply saying that a "young woman" would give birth, not a virgin. While the *near fulfillment* of the Isaiah prophecy may have reference to a young woman giving birth, the *far* or *ultimate fulfillment* clearly points to a woman miraculously conceiving and giving birth. This is especially clear because the Old Testament never uses the word in a context other than **virgin** and because the Septuagint translates *almah* in [Isaiah 7:14](#) categorically **virgin** (*parthenos*).

c. **Immanuel:** This title of Jesus refers to both His deity (**God with us**) and His identification and nearness to man (**God with us**).

i. Jesus is truly **Immanuel**, *God with us*. "Christ, indeed, was not called by this name Immanuel that we anywhere read of...but the import of this name is most truly affirmed and acknowledged to be fully made good in him." (Trapp, on [Isaiah 7:14](#))

ii. "In what sense then, is Christ GOD WITH US? Jesus is called Immanuel, or *God with us*, in his *incarnation*; *God with us*, by the influences of his *Holy Spirit*, in the *holy sacrament*, in the *preaching of his word*, in *private prayer*. And *God with us*, through every *action* of our life, that we begin, continue, and end in his name. He is *God with us*, to *comfort*, *enlighten*, *protect*, and *defend* us, in every time of *temptation* and *trial*, in the hour of *death*, in the day of *judgment*; and *God with us* and *in us*, and we *with* and *in* him, to all eternity." (Clarke)

iii. We can deeply meditate on the meaning of this name – **Immanuel**.

- It shows how low God bent down to save man; He added the nature of one of His own creatures to His own divine nature, accepting the weaknesses, frailties and dependency that the creature experiences.
- It shows what a great miracle it was that God could add a human nature to His own and still remain God.
- It shows the compatibility between the unfallen human nature and the divine nature; that the two could be joined shows that we are truly made in the image of God.
- It shows that we can come to Him; if He has come to us, then we can come to Him. "Then, if Jesus Christ be 'God with us,' let us come to God without any question or hesitancy. Whoever you may be you need no priest or intercessor to introduce you to God, for God has introduced himself to you." (Spurgeon)

iv. "John Wesley died with that upon his tongue, and let us live with it upon our hearts. – 'The best of all is God with us.'" (Spurgeon)

5. ([Matthew 1:24-25](#)) Joseph marries Mary after the angelic announcement.

Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name JESUS.

a. **Did as the angel of the Lord commanded:** Joseph's obedience is notable. He did not doubt nor waver; he instantly understood the truth and the importance of the angelic messenger that came to him in the dream.

b. **Did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son:** The words **did not know her till** imply that Joseph and Mary had normal marital relations after Jesus' birth.

i. This emphasizes that Jesus was conceived miraculously. "Matthew wants to make Jesus' virginal conception quite unambiguous, for he adds that Joseph had no sexual union with Mary until she gave birth to Jesus." (Carson)

ii. This also denies the Roman Catholic dogma of the perpetual virginity of Mary. "The marriage was thus formally completed, but not consummated before the birth of Jesus. The Greek expression for *not until* would normally suggest that intercourse did take place after the end of this period...There is no biblical warrant for the tradition of the 'perpetual virginity' of Mary." (France)

iii. This is an unbiblical doctrine which did not appear earlier than the fifth century after Jesus. It should be placed with the dogmas of Mary's Immaculate Conception, assumption into heaven, and present role as a mediator for believers. Each one of these is man's invention, meant to exalt Mary in an unbiblical manner.

c. **And he called His name JESUS:** They did what God told them to do. Though it was a fairly common name, it had a genuinely great meaning and would come to be the greatest name, the name above all names.