



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 2

THE BIRTH OF JESUS

In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son.



MONDAY

THE STORY: LUKE 2:1-7 & MATTHEW 2:1-6

Mary and Joseph Return to Bethlehem. God ordained the census to bring Mary to Bethlehem, where the Savior was to be born. At first glance it may appear to happen by chance. But that is not the case. Matthew records the words of Micah 5:2: “But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old from ancient days.” Paul tells us that Jesus was born at just the exact moment according to a predetermined plan. In Galatians 4:4 we read, “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law.”

TALK ABOUT IT:

How do we know that Jesus came according to God’s plan? (Paul tells us in Galatians 4:4 that God sent forth His Son when the fullness of time had come. That is just another way to say “according to His plan.” Just like we might set an alarm clock and plan to get up at a certain time, God set a time to send His Son Jesus. When God’s planned time came, Jesus was born.)

How should God's ability to plan all things encourage us? (Not only was Jesus born at the perfect time, so were we! Read Acts 17:26. We are all a part of God's perfect plan!)

PRAY:

Thank God for His wonderful plan, for making us all a part of it, and for allowing us to know and believe the Gospel.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: LUKE 2:8-21

The angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. And there were a lot of shepherds in Israel. Not only did the people use the animals for food and clothing, they also used them as sacrifices. It is interesting to note that the perfect sacrifice, Jesus the Lamb of God, would be first publicly announced to shepherds!

After the heavenly concert from the angels, the shepherds traveled to see the baby Jesus. When they arrived to see Jesus, the shepherds told those gathered there about what they had seen and heard. Mary treasured these things in her heart. Though she knew from her encounter with the angel Gabriel that this was going to be a special birth, Mary didn't know exactly how it would unfold. How wonderfully blessed she must have felt as the shepherds recounted their story!

TALK ABOUT IT

Who did the angels say God's peace would come to? (The angels proclaimed peace to those with whom God is pleased.)

Is it possible for us to earn God's favor in order to find His peace? Can we force God to like us? (No. We cannot earn God's favor. No matter how hard we try, we could never please God by our works. This is because we are sinful. That is why Jesus had to be born. Jesus took the penalty for our sin on the cross. When God

saves us and gives us peace, He does so because of Jesus' work, not ours. Here the angels were praising God for His plan to bring peace to those He loves through His Son Jesus.)

PRAY:

Pray that God would open your eyes to the gospel, bringing His peace to your heart and life through Jesus.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: LUKE 2:11-14

If a person is drowning in a pool, a lifeguard who rescues the person would be their savior. A lifeguard would be savior a with lower case "s." Jesus is Savior with an upper-case "S" because He is God and is the Savior of the world. All other saving from danger is a reflection of God's image in man.

Though Jesus was King, He did not come in full display of His glory, might and power. Instead he came in humility that He might become a servant of all, dying on the cross for our sins. This humility was evident from His birth, where He was born in a stable and placed in a manger. Jesus gave up His glory to come to earth because He loved us. Later He would die for our sins so we could be saved from the penalty of sin. Isn't it amazing that God Himself came as a baby?

TALK ABOUT IT:

What happened in the heavens after one angel announced the coming of Jesus? (A great many angels suddenly appeared and began to praise God.)

How should we be like the angels? (Once we understand why God sent Jesus, and how Jesus came in humility to save us, we should show our gratitude for God's saving plan by proclaiming his glory in worship and praise. God is worthy of our praise!)

PRAY:

Pray that God would place the truth of His Word richly in our hearts and pray that He would place a love for worshipping Him there as well.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: MATTHEW 2:7-21

God's plan is unstoppable. It was not long after Jesus was born that King Herod sought to destroy Him. Herod did not want another king. So he tried to discover where Jesus was so that he could kill the baby king. God's plan to bring a Savior to His people would not be stopped even by a powerful king. God warned the wise men to travel home by a different route, warning Joseph to take his family to Egypt until Herod was dead.

Herod was so determined to destroy Jesus that he had all the baby boys ages 2 and under killed. After a time, Herod died, and then an angel directed Joseph to bring Jesus back to Israel. In Hosea 11:1, the prophet foretold this: "Out of Egypt I called my son..." God was not surprised by Herod's threats. For even those threats were a part of God's predetermined, invincible plan.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Can anyone stop God's plan? (No, nobody can stop or thwart the plan of God.) Why do you think Matthew 2:15 cited Hosea's prophecy? (Matthew tells us that these events happened on purpose according to God's plan. One might be tempted to wonder if God was really in control when reading about Herod's threats. Instead - we see that God is greater than any threat to His plan. God always knew what would happen and worked everything as part of His plan.)

PRAY:

Thank God that He is powerful and can work all things together for our good.



**FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS**

THE STORY: HOSEA 11:1,2

Sometimes when we read an Old Testament passage, we would not see its connection to Jesus if it were not for the Bible itself making the connection. Hosea 11:1, 2 is such a passage. Matthew applies Hosea as a typological picture of Jesus. Just as Israel went down to Egypt, so did baby Jesus. And as Israel was led by God out of Egypt, so was Jesus. God called Jesus out of Egypt, and Jesus followed His Heavenly Father perfectly (see John 5:19).

TALK ABOUT IT:

When did God call Israel out of Egypt? (God used Moses to bring Israel out of the slavery of Egypt.)

What slavery did Jesus conquer and leave behind? (Jesus was not a slave, but conquered sin by living a perfect life and taking our punishment for sin by His death on the cross. Jesus extends His righteousness to us so that we can be free from the bondage and slavery of sin.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for conquering sin and releasing us from the control of sin so that we might be free to worship and obey God.