



FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

YEAR 1

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WELCOME TO *Generations of Grace*



This curriculum has been designed to deepen your own study of God's word so that you might be able to properly understand and accurately teach each lesson. It's our prayer that this curriculum would be a blessing to your ministry and home as God uses it to encourage your family.



Share the Lesson

- **Five-Day Devotionals** – Guides the family through the Generations of Grace lesson, a cross-reference passage, and a passage about Christ to lead the family through the whole counsel of God.
- **Generations of Grace Passages** – Reinforces the lesson that your child learned in Sunday School.
- **Cross-Reference Passage** – Points to another passage that reinforces the central truth of each week's lesson.
- **Christ-Centered Passage** – Connects each week's lesson to Jesus Christ and to the gospel.
- **Explain** – Helps parents clarify key truths from the passage for their children.
- **Ask** – See what the children learned and help them remember key facts from the passage.
- **Discuss** – Help parents counsel their children in real life based on the passage.

Additional Resources

Use these additional resources to help support your lessons and to knit together the church and the home, ensuring that what is taught on Sunday matches what is learned throughout the week.

- **Coloring Book**
- **Craft Book**
- **Activity Book**
- **Student Journal**
- **Teacher Book**

CONTENTS

GENESIS

- 6** WEEK 1: *God creates the heavens and the earth* • Genesis 1:1–2:3
- 10** WEEK 2: *God creates man and woman* • Genesis 1:26–31; 2:7–24
- 14** WEEK 3: *Man rebels against God* • Genesis 2:15–17; 3:1–24
- 18** WEEK 4: *Cain rebels against God* • Genesis 4:1–15
- 22** WEEK 5: *God floods the earth* • Genesis 6:5–7:24
- 26** WEEK 6: *God preserves Noah* • Genesis 8:1–9:17
- 30** WEEK 7: *God judges the nations at Babel* • Genesis 11:1–9
- 34** WEEK 8: *God makes a promise to Abram* • Genesis 11:27–12:9
- 38** WEEK 9: *Abraham and Sarah doubt God* • Genesis 16:1–6; 17:15–21; 18:1–15
- 42** WEEK 10: *God judges Sodom and Gomorrah* • Genesis 18:16–19:29
- 46** WEEK 11: *God sends baby Isaac* • Genesis 21:1–14
- 50** WEEK 12: *God tests Abraham* • Genesis 22:1–19
- 54** WEEK 13: *God chooses Jacob over Esau* • Genesis 25:21–34; 27:1–28:5
- 58** WEEK 14: *Jacob wrestles with God* • Genesis 32:1–33:20
- 62** WEEK 15: *God preserves Joseph* • Genesis 37:1–36
- 66** WEEK 16: *God delivers Joseph* • Genesis 39:1–50:26

EXODUS

- 70** WEEK 17: *God prepares Israel for deliverance* • Exodus 1:1–2:25
- 74** WEEK 18: *God raises Moses to lead Israel* • Exodus 3:1–4:31
- 78** WEEK 19: *God sends plagues on Egypt* • Exodus 7:1–10:29
- 82** WEEK 20: *God ordains the Passover* • Exodus 14:1–13:22
- 86** WEEK 21: *God parts the Red Sea* • Exodus 14:1–15:21
- 90** WEEK 22: *God preserves Israel* • Exodus 15:22–17:7
- 94** WEEK 23: *God prepares Israel for the covenant* • Exodus 19:1–25
- 98** WEEK 24: *God gives the Ten Commandments* • Exodus 20:1–21
- 102** WEEK 25: *God ordains the tabernacle* • Exodus 25:1–27:19; 30:1–10
- 106** WEEK 26: *God punishes Israel's idolatry* • Exodus 32:1–35
- 110** WEEK 27: *God's presence fills the tabernacle* • Exodus 33:1–34:35; 40:1–38

LEVITICUS

- 114** WEEK 28: *God ordains the sacrificial system* • Leviticus 1:1–7:38
- 118** WEEK 29: *God establishes the priesthood* • Leviticus 8:1–10:7
- 122** WEEK 30: *God ordains the Day of Atonement* • Leviticus 16:1–34
- 126** WEEK 31: *God requires holy living* • Leviticus 19:1–37

CHRISTMAS – A SAVIOR IS BORN

- 150** WEEK 1: *God promises to send the Messiah, Part 1* • Genesis 3:15; 12:1–3; 49:10
- 154** WEEK 2: *God promises to send the Messiah, Part 2* • Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2
- 158** WEEK 3: *God sends John the Baptist* • Luke 1:5–25, 57–67, 76–79
- 162** WEEK 4: *God announces the Messiah's birth* • Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38
- 166** WEEK 5: *The Wise Men worship Jesus* • Matthew 2:1–18

NUMBERS

- 130** WEEK 32: *Israel rejects God's provisions* • Numbers 11:1–12:16
- 134** WEEK 33: *Israel rejects God's plan* • Numbers 13:1–14:45
- 138** WEEK 34: *Israel rejects God's prophet and priest* • Numbers 16:1–17:11
- 142** WEEK 35: *God offers Israel healing from sin* • Numbers 20:2–13; 21:4–9
- 146** WEEK 36: *God blesses Israel through Balaam* • Numbers 22:1–24:25

EASTER – THE RISEN SAVIOR

- 170** WEEK 1: *Jesus enters Jerusalem as King* • Matthew 21:1–23:39
- 174** WEEK 2: *Judas betrays Jesus* • Matthew 26:1–16, 47–56; 27:3–10
- 178** WEEK 3: *Jesus endures the cross* • Matthew 26:57–27:2, 11–66
- 182** WEEK 4: *Jesus rises from the dead* • Matthew 28:1–20



SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 1

God promises to send the Messiah, Part 1

Genesis 3:15; 12:1-3; 49:10



DAY 1

The Messiah would destroy Satan's power • Genesis 3:15

READ

Genesis 3:1-24

EXPLAIN

The truth of Genesis 3:15

The story that unfolds in Genesis and in the entire Old Testament points expectantly to the coming **Messiah, who is God's specially chosen Savior and King**. Because man is the head of creation, his sin brought about pain and death (Gen 3:16-17). God's perfect creation, and God's perfect plan for mankind, appeared to be completely destroyed. But God is more powerful than Satan and human sin. In the middle of the curse, God pronounced a blessing: a descendant of Eve would come who would destroy the serpent's power (3:15). The second half of the verse is talking about one specific human, and yet a very special human who is powerful enough to crush Satan (Rev 20:1-10). He would not only bring people back to a right relationship with God, but He would also set all creation free from the curse and make a new and perfect heaven and earth (Rom 8:21; Rev 21:1). He is the second Adam, undoing the harm that the first Adam did (Rom 5:14-19).

ASK

1. What were the consequences of Adam and Eve's sin?
They lost their right relationship with God. They experienced conflict with Satan and sin. They suffered and died.
2. What did God promise after they sinned?
God promised that a man descended from Eve would crush the serpent's head, destroying Satan's power.
3. Who is the second Adam?
Jesus (Rom 5:14-19).

DISCUSS

1. Identify any consequences of sin currently experienced by your family.
2. Compare and contrast the first Adam with the second Adam (Rom 5:12-21).

DAY 2

The Messiah would bless the nations • Genesis 12:3

READ

Genesis 11:27–12:9

EXPLAIN

The truth of Genesis 12:3

God promised to bless Abraham by giving him many descendants (Gen 12:2a). This blessing was fulfilled physically when Abraham eventually had many physical descendants, but it is truly fulfilled in the Messiah, who saves Abraham's many spiritual descendants (Gal 3:6–9). These spiritual descendants are those who demonstrate faith, just as Abraham did (Gen 12:1; Rom 4:2–5). The Messiah brings salvation to all men (Gen 12:3; 1 Tim 4:10), but salvation must be received by faith. God also promised to make Abram's name great (Gen 12:2b). God did give Abram a new name: Abraham, which means "father of many" (17:5). But the real great name is God's own name, which He gave to Israel (Dan 9:19), and which the Messiah gives to all who believe (John 17:11; Rev 3:12). God promised great blessing, Abraham believed, and God counted his faith as righteousness (Gen 15:6). Because of his faith, Abraham's sins were taken away by the Messiah (Rom 3:25). If we want to experience the blessing of being God's people, we must follow Abraham's example and believe in Jesus the Messiah (Acts 16:31).

ASK

1. What did God promise Abraham?
God promised that one of his descendants would bless the earth.
2. How did Abraham respond to God's promise?
Abraham showed he believed God's promise by trusting God and doing what God said.
3. Why did God call Abraham?
God called him to be the father of the nation from whom the Messiah would be born.

DISCUSS

1. Explain how we can experience the blessing of being God's people.
2. Discuss the role of faith in experiencing God's blessing.

DAY 3

The Messiah would reign over all forever • Genesis 49:10a

READ

Genesis 49:10

EXPLAIN

The truth of Genesis 49:10

The *gospel*—the good news that God saves people from sin through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus—began in Genesis. In Genesis, God explained why He would send the Messiah, and He also included several specific promises about the coming Savior. The third promise was spoken prophetically by Jacob as he blessed Judah. Jacob gave Joseph the double portion due to the firstborn (Gen 48:5), but he gave

Judah the leadership position of the firstborn (49:10). Judah was the fourth son, but Reuben, Simeon, and Levi had all disqualified themselves from acting as the firstborn (49:3–7). Judah was far from perfect, but he had demonstrated repentance and spiritual maturity when he offered himself as a substitute in order to save Benjamin (44:33). So Jacob foretold that the scepter and staff would not depart from Judah (49:10a). These objects represented kingship. Although the line of kings would be interrupted through disobedience, the kingship would never be permanently taken away from Judah.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. What did God promise Judah?
God promised that one of his descendants would rule the earth.
2. Who was God talking about in all these promises?
Jesus. He fulfills these promises.
3. What do the scepter and staff represent?
These objects represented kingship.

DISCUSS 

1. Define and explain the “gospel”.
2. Discuss how we should respond to Jesus, who is king.

DAY 4*The Messiah will rule as Prince of Peace • Genesis 49:10b***READ** 

Genesis 49:10

EXPLAIN **The truth of Genesis 49:10**

The second half of this verse has been translated in various ways, but it overwhelmingly points to the Messiah. Depending on how it is translated, it has the sense either of one who has the right to rule, or one who deserves to be paid tribute, or one who brings peace. The third view seems to be supported by 1 Chr 22:9–10, where God names David’s son Solomon (very similar to Shiloh in Hebrew) because Solomon would bring peace to the kingdom. Whatever the case, all three support the traditional view that this is speaking of the Messiah. He is the one who has the right to rule (Ezek 21:27), all people will bow the knee to Him (Phil 2:10–11), and He is the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6; Ps 72). Still there is a sense of “already, but not yet.” Jesus has defeated Satan with His work on the cross but has not yet wiped out sin from the world. We look forward to His second coming when He will complete His victory.

ASK 

1. To whom does the second half of Genesis 49:10 refer?
To the Messiah.
2. How does Jesus fulfill the three promises in Gen 3:15; 12:3; 49:10?
First, Jesus defeated Satan by dying and rising again, and He will one day throw Satan into the lake of fire forever. Second, Jesus provides a blessing to all nations because He provides salvation from sin to all who believe. Third, Jesus is the King of kings and the Prince of peace; every knee will bow to Him.
3. When will Jesus completely remove sin from the world?
Jesus’ second coming.

DISCUSS 

1. Discuss why sin still remains in the world even though Jesus has already defeated Satan on the cross.
2. Discuss how knowing that Jesus will reign over all forever affects the way we live our lives.

DAY 5

Jesus is the Lion of the tribe of Judah • Revelation 5:5

READ

Revelation 5:1-14

EXPLAIN

The truth of Revelation 5:5

In chapter 5 John describes: (1) the search for the worthy one (vv. 2-4); (2) the selection of the worthy one (vv. 5-7); and (3) the song of the worthy one (vv. 8-14). The scroll John saw in God's hand is the title deed to the earth. Who would be able to inherit the scroll and open its seals for the search turned up no one worthy? One of the elders points to the Lion of the tribe of Judah, Jesus. He is a lion who will tear up and destroy His enemies. But Jesus could not be the Lion of judgment unless He was first the Lamb who was slain, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29). The response to the appearance of the Lamb as He moves to take the scroll is praise. Worship resulted from the realization that Jesus will return to earth in triumph, establish His glorious millennial kingdom, and defeat sin, death, and Satan once and for all.

ASK

1. What was the scroll that John saw?
The scroll John saw in God's hand is the title deed to the earth which He will give to Christ.
2. How is Jesus the Lion of the tribe of Judah?
Jesus is from the tribe of Judah. He is a strong and powerful ruler.
3. Why was Jesus worthy to take the book?
Jesus is worthy because He is the Lamb, the Prince of peace, who redeemed men by His own blood, and He is the Lion, the King of kings, who will destroy His enemies.

DISCUSS

1. Discuss how Jesus is like a lion.
2. Discuss how Jesus is like a lamb.

NEXT WEEK

God promises to send the Messiah, Part 2

Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2



SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 2

God promises to send the Messiah, Part 2

Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2



DAY 1

The Messiah would be born of a virgin • Isaiah 7:14

READ

Isaiah 7:10–16

EXPLAIN

The truth of Isaiah 7:14

God had promised that David's house and throne would last forever (2 Sam 7:16), but when Isaiah prophesied to Ahaz, king of Judah, around 734 B.C., it seemed like the line of David was about to end. They were afraid because Pekah the king of Israel and Rezin the king of Aram were attacking Jerusalem. God was using Israel and Aram to punish Ahaz for leading Judah into terrible idolatry (2 Chron 28:1–5). When hope seemed gone, God sent Isaiah to Ahaz to promise that Judah's enemies would go away just like two smoldering coals about to go out (Isa 7:3–4). But Ahaz wickedly rejected God's offer by pretending to be too humble to ask for a sign (Isa 7:12). So Isaiah stopped speaking to Ahaz and instead spoke to the entire house of David (Isa 7:13). The sign was that a virgin would bear a child. This is a specific virgin who would miraculously be pregnant without being married or pretending to be married. The virgin birth shows that the Messiah is unique (Matt 1:18–25).

ASK

1. Why was King Ahaz afraid?
Two kings wanted to destroy his kingdom, Judah.
2. What sign did God promise to prove that there was hope for Judah?
God promised that a virgin would have a baby.
3. Why was the virgin birth unique?
The Messiah would have only an earthly mother (no earthly father) while all other children have both an earthly mother and an earthly father.

DISCUSS

1. This prophecy was given long before the birth of Jesus. Discuss what this reveals about God's salvation plan.
2. Identify the child referred to in Isaiah's prophecy (Matt 1:18–23)

DAY 2

The Messiah is Immanuel—“God with us” • Isaiah 7:14

READ

Isaiah 7:14

EXPLAIN

The truth of Isaiah 7:14

The virgin birth shows that the Messiah is unique. As one born from a woman, He is human and the promised “seed of the woman” (Gen 3:15; Gal 4:4). As one born by the power of the Holy Spirit, He is divine, the Son of God, and also holy, uncorrupted by Adam’s sin (Luke 1:35). Because Joseph was not His biological father, He is free from the curse on Jeconiah (Jer 22:28–30). Finally, in His divine and human birth, we see the beginning of peace between God and man. The name Immanuel, which means “God with us,” also shows that the Messiah would be both God and man. Because Jesus would be God, Isaiah could refer to Judah as a land belonging to Immanuel (Isa 8:8), and he could call Him Mighty God and Eternal Father (Isa 9:6). The Messiah had to be God because only God can forgive sins (Luke 5:21), only God deserves credit as the Savior (Isa 43:11), and only God can rule to restore His creation (Matt 8:27; 14:33).

ASK

1. Why was Jesus, the Messiah, uncorrupted by Adam’s sin?
He was born by the power of the Holy Spirit; Joseph was not His biological father.
2. What was the baby’s name and what does it mean?
His name is Immanuel, which means “God with us.”
3. What kind of a person is the Messiah since He was born from a virgin and is called “God with us”?
He is both God and man. As God, He can forgive and save from sin. As man, he lived a holy life and died a perfect death on behalf of mankind.

DISCUSS

1. Discuss why Jesus had to be fully God and fully man in order to save us from our sin.
2. Discuss why sinful man is not at peace with holy God.

DAY 3

The Messiah would be born in Bethlehem • Micah 5:2

READ

Micah 5:2

EXPLAIN

The truth of Micah 5:2

Micah was prophesying in Judah at the same time as Isaiah. He rebuked the rulers of Judah because they unjustly abused the people for their own benefit (Mic 3:1–3). Micah looked forward to the coming Messiah who would take over the throne of David and rule justly forever. Micah predicted that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, and his prediction came true (Matt 2:1–6). Bethlehem was so small it was not even

listed among the cities of Judah when the land was first divided (Josh 15:21–63). So the Messiah would come in a humble way, just as Isaiah had said. But Bethlehem was important as the birthplace of David (1 Sam 16:1). Micah emphasized the direct connection between the Messiah and David. The Messiah would be the righteous and eternal king promised to David, born in the same place David was born (2 Sam 7:13). God said He would rule “for Me.” He would not be like those who ruled for their own benefit. Instead, Jesus came to serve rather than to be served, and to give up His life to save many (Mark 10:45).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Why did Micah rebuke the rulers of Judah?
The rulers of Judah were abusing the people for their own benefit. They were hurting their own people.
2. Where was the baby going to be born?
In Bethlehem, the small village where King David had been born.
3. What do these accurate prophecies show us about God, about the Bible, and about Jesus?
They show us that God knows the future, that the Bible is true, and that Jesus is the promised Messiah.

DISCUSS 

1. Explain what it means to “prophecy”.
2. How does the rule of Jesus differ from sinful, earthly kings (Mark 10:45).

DAY 4*The Messiah is eternal • Micah 5:2***READ** 

Micah 5:2

EXPLAIN **The truth of Micah 5:2**

Although the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, His origins are from long ago. On a human level, this is again connecting the Messiah to His ancient royal ancestry in the line of David. But on a divine level, this is indicating that the Messiah has existed from all eternity, as Jesus later confirmed (John 8:58). Because Micah and Isaiah predicted the details of Christ’s birth over 700 years beforehand, we can be confident that God is **omniscient**: He knows all things, including the future. We can also be sure that the Bible is the Word of God and that Jesus is the Messiah. Even today we have copies of Isaiah from 250 years before Jesus was born, so no one could have added these details after Jesus’ birth. Thus we have a choice: like Ahaz and Herod, we can reject the promise and die in our unbelief; or like Isaiah, Micah, and the magi we can look to the Messiah as our King, letting Him rule our lives and trusting Him to save us.

ASK 

1. Did the Messiah exist before His birth?
Yes. The Messiah has existed from all eternity, as Jesus later confirmed (John 8:58).
2. How many years before the birth of Christ did Micah and Isaiah prophesy?
Over 700 years before the birth of Christ.
3. What does it mean that God is “omniscient”?
He knows all things, including the future.

DISCUSS 

1. Define “eternal”.
2. Discuss what Jesus’ eternal existence teaches us about His nature.

DAY 5

Jesus is God • John 1:1–5

READ

John 1:1–13

EXPLAIN

The truth of John 1:1–5

John begins his gospel by declaring that Jesus has always existed, “In the beginning was the Word” (John 1:1). Jesus was continuously in existence before the beginning of the universe. Jesus was already in existence when the heavens and the earth were created. He is not a created being but has existed from all eternity. The beginning of John’s gospel also contains a direct statement concerning the deity of Jesus. John declares that “the Word [Jesus] was God (John 1:1). Numerous direct statements of Scripture affirm that Jesus is God. Throughout the gospel of John, Jesus repeatedly refers to Himself by the divine name “I am” (cf. 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8). Thomas addressed Jesus as “My Lord and my God” (20:28) and Jesus praised him for his faith (20:29). Jesus’ reaction implies that He is God. Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for those who believe in His name so that they would have the right to become children of God, being born not of blood or flesh or the will of man, but of God.

ASK

1. How does John begin his gospel?
By declaring that Jesus has always existed (John 1:1).
2. What else does John declare about Jesus at the beginning of his gospel?
John declares that “the Word [Jesus] was God (John 1:1).
3. How does Jesus repeatedly refer to Himself throughout the gospel of John?
Jesus repeatedly refers to Himself by the divine name “I am” (cf. 4:26; 8:24, 28, 58; 13:19; 18:5, 6, 8).

DISCUSS

1. Explain how we know that Jesus is God.
2. Give reasons why people reject the truth that Jesus is God.

NEXT WEEK

God sends John the Baptist

Luke 1:5–25, 57–67, 76–79

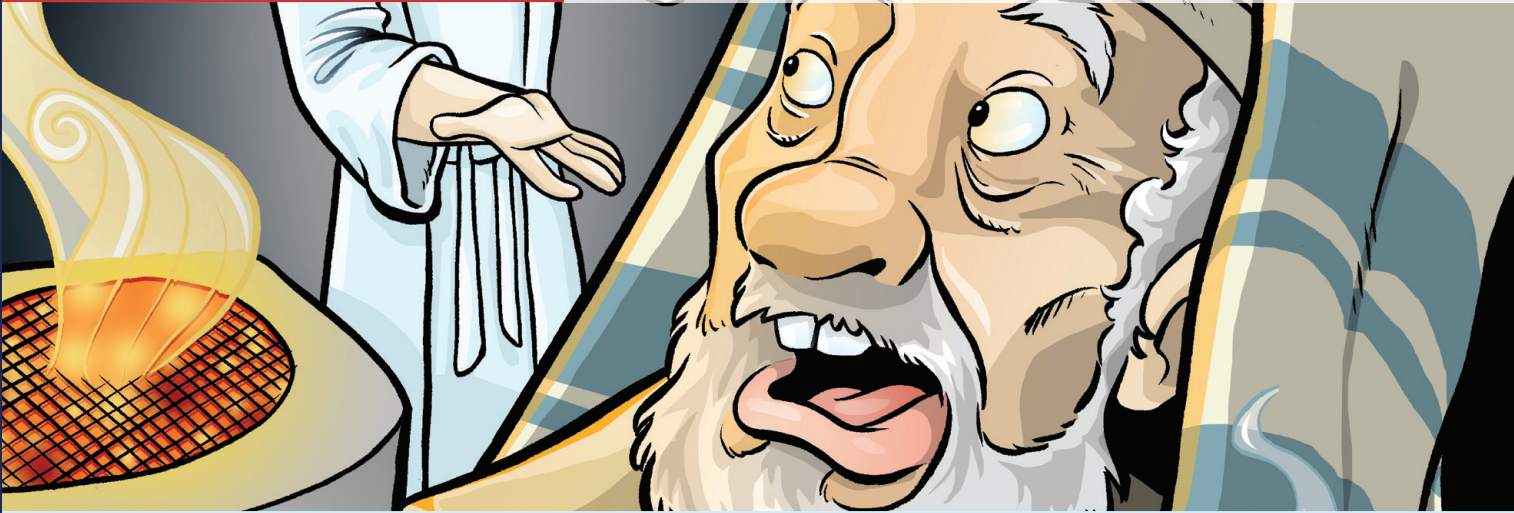


SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 3

God sends John the Baptist

Luke 1:5-25, 57-67, 76-79



DAY 1

Gabriel told Zechariah he would have a son • Luke 1:5-17

READ

Luke 1:5-17

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 1:5-17

Zechariah and Elizabeth were two of those who hoped for the Messiah's coming. Zechariah was a priest, Elizabeth was from a family of priests, and both were righteous and blameless (Luke 1:5-6) like Noah (Gen 6:9). But Elizabeth was barren, just like Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel (Luke 1:7). For years Zechariah and Elizabeth had prayed for a son (Luke 1:13), but like Abraham and Sarah, they seemed too old to have children. God announced His plan while Zechariah was in the holy place in the temple (Luke 1:8-11). It was at this time that a brilliant angel suddenly appeared to him (Luke 1:12). The angel said that Zechariah and Elizabeth's prayers had been heard: they would have a son named John (Luke 1:13). But this would be no ordinary boy. John would announce God's ultimate provision of grace. The angel explained John's special mission: he was to go before God in the spirit and power of Elijah in order to make the people ready for their Lord (1:17).

ASK

1. An angel visited Zechariah in the temple. What did he say? *He said Elizabeth would have a son named John.*
2. Where was Zechariah when the angel appeared? *Zechariah was in the holy place in the temple (Luke 1:8-11).*
3. What was John going to do? *John was going to prepare people to believe in Jesus by teaching them about sin, repentance, and forgiveness.*

DISCUSS

1. Discuss why John the Baptist was no ordinary boy.
2. Talk about our need for repentance.

DAY 2

Zechariah did not believe Gabriel • Luke 1:18–23

READ

Luke 1:18–23

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 1:18–23

John's mission was to prepare the people for the coming of the Lord by turning their hearts back toward God. All Israel longed for a Messiah to restore Israel's glory, but few realized that this couldn't happen without repentance (Luke 1:17). John was to help the people realize the weight of their sin and show them that their hearts were far from God (Isa 29:13). Zechariah struggled to believe such an incredible message (Luke 1:18). So in response to Zechariah's doubt, the angel announced his name and his mission (1:19). Gabriel was a special messenger who had come from the very presence of God to announce the climax of God's plan of salvation. To show that Zechariah should have believed Gabriel, Zechariah became unable to speak until the son was born (1:20). When Zechariah came out of the temple, the people knew that something extraordinary had happened (1:21–22). This extraordinary revelation hinted at the even more miraculous birth of the coming Messiah. After 400 years of spiritual darkness, God was about to visit His people, and John would be His messenger to prepare the way.

ASK

1. What was John's mission?
To prepare the people for the coming of the Lord by turning their hearts back toward God (Luke 1:17).
2. Did Zechariah believe the angel?
At first he did not.
3. What happened when Zechariah did not at first believe?
He could not speak until the child was born and named John.

DISCUSS

1. Discuss which is greater: Our need for physical deliverance or spiritual deliverance.
2. Examine your life to see if you are prepared to one day stand in God's presence.

DAY 3

Zechariah named the baby John • Luke 1:57–67

READ

Luke 1:57–67

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 1:57–67

After Malachi, no prophetic word was recorded. Israel turned to legalism and human tradition instead of turning to God (Mark 7:8). But there were always a few faithful believers who were sustained by the hope that one day the **Messiah**, *God's chosen King and Savior*, would appear. When Elizabeth became pregnant, she knew that God was kind to her (Luke 1:24–25), and when John

was born, all the neighbors and relatives knew that the baby was a gift of God's mercy (1:57–58). Zechariah and Elizabeth proved their faith by obediently naming the boy John, even though this was against the custom of naming according to family names (1:59–63). As soon as Zechariah had demonstrated his faith, he was able to speak again, and the first thing he did was to praise God (1:64). When the people saw, they feared God and expected the boy would become someone special (1:65–66). They were right, for John would announce the coming of God to earth.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. How did God demonstrate His kindness to Elizabeth?
God allowed Elizabeth to become pregnant (Luke 1:24–25).
2. How did Zechariah and Elizabeth prove their faith?
By obediently naming the boy John, even though this was against the custom of naming according to family names (Luke 1:59–63).
3. When was Zechariah able to speak again?
Immediately after he named his son John (Luke 1:63–64).

DISCUSS **DAY 4***John would prepare people for the Messiah • Luke 1:76–79***READ** 

Luke 1:76–79

EXPLAIN **The truth of Luke 1:76–79**

Zechariah then prophesied, filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:67–79). He praised God, because He realized how incredible it was that his son was about to announce the coming of the Lord. God had promised blessing and salvation through the line of David (1:69–71) and through His covenant with Abraham (1:72–75). But the center of these blessings was the joy of serving God in holiness and righteousness without fear in His presence (1:74–75; Exod 19:5–6). Unless there is a way for sins to be forgiven, the blessings of the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants are worthless, and instead man can only expect the curses required by God's just law given through Moses. He can only expect death (Rom 6:23) and separation from God forever (Isa 59:2). Zechariah realized his own son would be a **prophet**, a person used by God to speak His words and reveal His plan, proclaiming salvation through forgiveness of sins (Luke 1:76–77; 3:3).

ASK 

1. What did Zechariah do after he was able to speak again?
Zechariah prophesied, filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:67–79).
2. After John was born, why did Zechariah praise God so joyfully?
Zechariah praised God because all the promises God made to Abraham and David could only come true if sins are forgiven. Zechariah realized that his son John was the messenger for the Messiah who would provide forgiveness from sin.
3. What is the center of the blessings announced by Zechariah?
The joy of serving God in holiness and righteousness without fear in His presence (1:74–75; Exod 19:5–6).

DISCUSS 

1. Describe the job of a prophet.
2. Discuss why it's a fearful thing for sinful man to come into the presence of holy God.

DAY 5

John's ministry pointed to Jesus the Messiah • John 3:25–30

READ

John 3:22–36

EXPLAIN

The truth of John 3:25–30

Jesus' disciples were baptizing those who came to hear Him preach and who heeded His message of repentance. Even as Jesus' ministry was growing, crowds were still coming to John and being baptized. During the prolonged time when Jesus' disciples were baptizing, John's following gradually diminished. John's disciples were envious and saw Jesus as a competitor who was gaining popularity. They missed the point of John's ministry. John's ministry was to point the nation to Jesus the Messiah. John was not bothered because he knew his purpose. John affirmed and embraced his subordinate role as the herald of the Messiah (John 3:27). He maintained that he was the forerunner of the Messiah, not the Messiah Himself (3:28). John found joy in his diminishing role because that meant that Jesus' role was increasing (3:30). He was like the best man of a groom in a wedding (3:29). The best man oversees certain details but the wedding isn't about him; rather, he rejoices in the bride and groom. John understood the necessity of giving way to Jesus (3:30). The herald was irrelevant once when the king had arrived.

ASK

1. Why were John's disciples envious of Jesus?
Because they saw Jesus as a competitor who was gaining popularity.
2. What was John's purpose?
John's purpose was to point the nation of Israel to the Messiah (Jesus). John was like a herald proclaiming the coming of a king.
3. How did John react to his disciples who were envious of Jesus' ministry?
He affirmed and embraced his subordinate role (3:27). He maintained his earlier teaching that he was not the Messiah but rather His forerunner (3:28). He found joy in his diminishing role (3:29). He understood the divine necessity of giving way to Jesus the Messiah (3:30).

DISCUSS

1. Talk about the need to submit every area of our lives to Jesus.
2. Discuss the reasons John the Baptist gave his disciples to accept the absolute supremacy of Jesus Christ (John 3:31–36).

NEXT WEEK

God announces the Messiah's birth

Matthew 1:18–25;

Luke 1:26–38



SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 4

God announces the Messiah's birth

Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–38



DAY 1

Gabriel told Mary she would have a son • Luke 1:26–38

READ

Luke 1:26–38

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 1:26–38

Mary is given no introduction except that she was a virgin betrothed to Joseph. Betrothal at that time was like an engagement, but much stronger. Betrothal was like being legally married, even though a year might pass before they celebrated the wedding feast and lived together as husband and wife. God chose her not because of something unique in her but because of His own **grace**. Grace is God's blessing, pleasure, or delight that He shows based on His choice, not based on what a person deserves. So when Gabriel called Mary “favored one” (Luke 1:28), he was literally calling her “one who has been shown grace,” or “one God has chosen to delight in.” By His own grace, God chose Mary to carry out a special role as part of His salvation plan. Gabriel explained that God had chosen to show his kindness to young Mary by choosing her to be the mother of the Messiah (1:30–31).

ASK

1. After appearing to Zechariah in the temple, where did Gabriel appear next?
He appeared in the small village of Nazareth to a young virgin named Mary.
2. What did Gabriel tell Mary?
She would become the mother of the Messiah.
3. Was this promise more difficult than God's promises to Sarah and to Elizabeth?
Yes. Sarah and Elizabeth were barren and old, but Mary was a virgin. She was not even married and had never acted like she was married.
4. So how could Mary have a baby?
The Holy Spirit would cause her to become pregnant. Because of this, Jesus would be a holy child and the Son of God.

DISCUSS

1. Discuss what we deserve for our sins.
2. Talk about who deserves God's grace.

DAY 2

The virgin birth shows Jesus' purpose to save • Luke 1:26–38

READ

Luke 1:26–38

EXPLAIN

The truth of Luke 1:26–38

There was a problem: Mary was a **virgin**, someone who was not married and had never acted as if she was married. Mary asked how it was possible for a virgin to have a child (Luke 1:34). Gabriel answered that the Holy Spirit would cause her to become pregnant, which showed two important things about her child (1:35). First, the virgin birth shows that Jesus was free from the stain of Adam's first sin that polluted the entire human race (Heb 4:15). If Jesus were not sinless, He could not have satisfied the law or provided a spotless sacrifice (1 Pet 1:19). Second, the virgin birth shows that Jesus is the Son of God. As the Son of God, Jesus is fully God (Heb 1:2–3). If Jesus were not God, He would not have the authority to forgive sins (Luke 5:21–24), to grant life in and of Himself (John 11:25; 1 Tim 6:13), to save in His own name (Acts 4:12; Isa 43:11), to mediate with authority before God (Job 33:23), or even to reveal God to us (John 1:18).

ASK

1. What was Mary's problem?
Mary was a virgin, someone who was not married and had never acted as if she was married.
2. The Holy Spirit caused Mary to become pregnant. What did this reveal about the Messiah?
First, the virgin birth shows that Jesus was free from the stain of Adam's first sin that polluted the entire human race (Heb 4:15). Second, the virgin birth shows that Jesus is the Son of God.
3. Why was it vital that Jesus be sinless?
If Jesus were not sinless, He could not have satisfied the law or provided a spotless sacrifice (1 Pet 1:19).

DISCUSS

1. Discuss why Jesus had to be free from sin in order to save man from sin.
2. Discuss why Jesus had to be God in order to save man from sin.

DAY 3

The angel announced Jesus' birth to Joseph • Matthew 1:18–25

READ

Matthew 1:18–25

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 1:18–25

Mary's faith was incredible, because she knew people would think she was pregnant due to immorality. In fact, even the man she was going to marry thought this. This man, Joseph, was from the line of David (Matt 1:16–19), again confirming that Jesus was the promised Son of David who would reign forever (21:9). When he found out Mary was pregnant, he planned to divorce Mary,

since betrothal was so strong that it required a divorce to cancel it (1:18–19). But God made sure to protect Mary and the baby inside her. An angel told Joseph what he had already told Mary: Mary's baby was from the Holy Spirit (1:20). Gabriel had told Mary that Jesus would be the eternal King. But since the Messiah is also Savior, the angel told Joseph that Jesus would be the one would save His people from their sin (1:21). The angel reminded Joseph of Isaiah's prophecy about the virgin birth (1:22–23). Jesus is the Messiah who was promised with such accuracy. He is both sinless man and God become flesh.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Who was Joseph?
He was a descendant of David, a righteous man, and the one Mary was going to marry.
2. What did the angel tell Joseph?
He should take Mary as his wife, because her baby was from God, the Savior that Isaiah had talked about long ago.
3. What was Joseph about to do when he found out Mary was pregnant?
He was about to cancel the wedding because he thought Mary had done something immoral.
4. How did the angel change Joseph's mind?
He explained that the baby was from God, he reminded Joseph that this is what Isaiah had prophesied, and he said that Jesus was the promised Savior.

DISCUSS 

1. Talk about why Mary's faith was so incredible.
2. Discuss why it's important to obey God's word rather than the opinion of the world.

DAY 4*Jesus is superior to the angels • Hebrews 1:4–14***READ** 

Hebrews 1:4–14

EXPLAIN **The truth of Hebrews 1:4–14**

Although angels announced Jesus' birth, Jesus is superior to angels in every way. Jesus is superior to angels because He has a better title (Heb 1:4). The author of Hebrews uses seven Old Testament quotes to show the supremacy of the Jesus. The three quotations from Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:14, and Deuteronomy 32:43 teach Jesus' superiority over angels because He is the Son. The two quotations from Psalm 104:4 and Psalm 45:7–8 teach the Son's superiority over angels because He is the heir of all things. In Psalm 104:1–4 angels are subject to their Creator, who is Jesus (Heb 1:2). The angels can be changed to wind or lightning but the Son is the same yesterday, today and forever. Psalm 45 is a royal psalm for a royal wedding. Psalm 45:7–8 emphasize the close association of the Davidic king and God. The quotation of Psalm 102:25–27 emphasizes the Son's status, His lordship in creation and consummation of the universe. The quotation of Psalm 110:1 teaches the Son's superiority because He has a more exalted position.

ASK 

1. In what way is Jesus superior to the angels?
In every way.
2. How does the author of Hebrews show the supremacy of Jesus?
The author of Hebrews uses seven Old Testament quotes to show the supremacy of the Jesus.
3. How do the three quotations from Psalm 2:7, 2 Samuel 7:14, and Deuteronomy 32:43 show the supremacy of Jesus?
They teach Jesus' superiority over angels because He is the Son.

DISCUSS 

1. Describe what "superior" means.
2. Discuss why Jesus alone deserves our praise and worship.

DAY 5

Jesus is the eternal God in human flesh • 1 Timothy 3:14–16

READ

1 Timothy 3:14–16

EXPLAIN

The truth of 1 Timothy 3:14–16

The Ephesian believers had started to drift away from the basic truths of the Christian faith. In response, Paul wrote to Timothy, his son in the faith, about how believers were to behave in the church (1 Tim 3:15a). All believers have to understand: (1) the Master of the Church (v. 15b); (2) the mission of the Church (v. 15c); (3) the message of the Church (v. 16). The message of the church is summarized in six truths. First, Jesus was fully man and fully God. He was human yet without sin (Heb 4:15). Second, Jesus was vindicated by His sinless life of obedience to God and by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. Third, Jesus was seen by angels, signifying divine approval. Fourth, Jesus was proclaimed among the nations, for Jesus is the Savior of the whole world (1 John 2:2; 4:14). Fifth, the preaching of Jesus resulted in saving faith in many lives (Acts 2:41). Finally, Jesus was taken up in glory showing that the Father was pleased with Him and accepted His work.

ASK

1. How did Paul respond to the Ephesian believers who had started to drift away from the basic truths of the Christian faith?
Paul wrote to Timothy, his son in the faith, about how believers were to behave in the church (1 Tim 3:15a).
2. What did the preaching of Jesus result in?
Saving faith in many lives (Acts 2:41).
3. How did the Father show that He was pleased with Jesus and accepted His work?
Jesus was taken up in glory.

DISCUSS

1. Discuss on what basis we believe that Jesus was fully God and fully man.
2. Talk about why Jesus must be at the center of the church's message.

NEXT WEEK

The Wise Men worship Jesus

Matthew 2:1–18



SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

CHRISTMAS WEEK 5

The Wise Men worship Jesus

Matthew 2:1-18



DAY 1

The Magi saw a star and came to Jerusalem • Matthew 2:1-8

READ

Matthew 2:1-18

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 2:1-8

The **Magi** were originally a priestly tribe among the Medes. They are often called wise men because they were highly educated, especially in astrology (studying the stars to predict the future). They were the chief advisors to the kings of Babylon and later of Persia. The Magi came because they saw a star, specifically, “His star” (Matt 2:2). The Magi came to Herod at Jerusalem, the place they would have expected the King of the Jews to be born. Herod was troubled because he was afraid that someone might replace him as king. He knew that the “King of the Jews” was the Messiah, so he found out where the Messiah was to be born (2:4). There was no dispute: according to Micah’s prophecy, He would be born in Bethlehem (2:5-6; Mic 5:2). Unfortunately, neither Herod nor the religious leaders submitted to Jesus as King. Herod tried to trick the Magi in order to kill Jesus (Matt 2:7-8, 16). The religious leaders didn’t care enough to do anything. They did not submit to Jesus as King and eventually turned against Him (12:30).

ASK

- Who came to worship Jesus?
Magi, wise men from the east, came to worship Jesus because they saw His star.
- Why did they come to find Him?
They saw His star and knew that it meant that the King of the Jews had been born.
- How did the religious leaders know where the Messiah would be born?
Micah had prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, the City of David.
- How did the people in Jerusalem respond to the Magi?
Herod and all the people were troubled. Herod feared the Messiah would take away His kingdom.

DISCUSS

- Talk about other reasons why people refuse to submit to Jesus as King.
- Discuss what submitting to Jesus as King looks like.

DAY 2

The Magi worshiped Jesus • Matthew 2:9–12

READ

Matthew 2:1–18

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 2:9–12

Only the Magi, foreigners, worshiped the King of the Jews (Matt 2:11). They were so eager to worship Him that they didn't just rejoice; they "rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" when they came to the house where Jesus was (2:9–10). They proved their devotion with gifts fit for a king. Gold was a sign of royalty (Ps 21:3). Frankincense was very expensive incense made from tree sap. When burned in the temple, the sweet smelling smoke symbolized prayers rising up to God (Ex 30:7, 34). So frankincense was a sign of the Child's deity. Myrrh was a valuable perfume also made from tree sap; it was used for many things, including pain relief (Mark 15:23) and burials (John 19:39). Myrrh was a sign that Jesus was a human who would suffer and die. As these powerful Magi bowed and offered gifts, they showed that Jesus was King over all.

ASK

1. How did the Magi prove their devotion to Jesus?
They proved their devotion with gifts fit for a king.
2. What did the Magi give Jesus?
They gave Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
3. What did the Magi's gifts show about Jesus?
He is a King worthy of gold, God worthy of frankincense, and a man in need of myrrh for His suffering and death.

DISCUSS

1. The Magi, foreigners, traveled far to worship Jesus while those near Jesus rejected or ignored Him. Discuss who you most resemble: the Magi or Herod and the religious leaders.
2. Discuss why going to church does not necessarily mean that you have worshiped Jesus.

DAY 3

Joseph and his family fled to Egypt • Matthew 2:13–18

READ

Matthew 2:1–18

EXPLAIN

The truth of Matthew 2:13–18

After an angel warned the Magi to leave without going back to Herod, he also warned Joseph to flee with his family to Egypt (Matt 2:13). Joseph obeyed (2:14–15). When Jesus returned from Egypt, He fulfilled Hosea's prophecy that the Messiah would come from Egypt (Hos 11:1). Israel's exodus from Egypt was a type: it was an event that foreshadowed Jesus coming out of Egypt. Another prophecy was

fulfilled when Herod brutally murdered all the infants in and around Bethlehem (Matt 2:16–18; Jer 31:15). Again, this prophecy was fulfilled as a type. Rachel weeping at Ramah represented grief over all Israel when the Babylonians gathered them at Ramah to be exiled (Jer 40:1). Herod's massacre fulfilled this as another instance of mothers weeping for their children. Matthew wrote to call the Israelites back to their Messiah, just as Jeremiah's prophecy offered hope of a return to the Lord (Jer 31:16). God's promise is still secure that the Deliverer will save all Israel by removing Israel's sins (Rom 11:26–27).

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. Who warned Joseph to flee to Egypt with his family?
An angel.
2. How did Jesus fulfill Hosea's prophecy about coming out of Egypt?
Joseph took Jesus to Egypt to flee from Herod; after Herod died they came back from Egypt, just like the people of Israel had long ago.
3. How was Jeremiah's prophecy fulfilled by Herod's slaughter of the children?
Mothers wept for their dead children, and there would also be grief over all of Israel for rejecting their Messiah.

DISCUSS 

1. Talk about God's perfect timing. Herod could not harm Jesus. Jesus would one day die on the cross, but He would die at exactly the time that God had set.
2. Discuss how God's faithful promise keeping in the past gives us confidence and assurance that He will keep His promises concerning the future.

DAY 4*Jesus is God and is to be worshiped • Philippians 2:6-11***READ** 

Philippians 2:6-11

EXPLAIN **The truth of Philippians 2:6-11**

Paul called the Philippians to unity through humility (Phil 2:1-3). The supreme example of humility is Jesus. Jesus eternally existed and will forever exist in the divine form of God (2:6a). By His very nature Jesus is, has always been, and forever will be fully divine. Yet He refused to hold on to His divine rights, although He had all the privileges of God which He can never lose. But He did not cling to His position; rather, He willingly set them aside for the benefit of others. He emptied Himself temporarily of His divine glory (John 17:1, 5), of independent divine authority (John 5:30; cf. 10:30), of voluntary exercise of some of His divine attributes (John 1:47; cf. Matt 24:36), of His eternal riches (2 Cor 8:9; Matt 20:28), and of His unique, intimate and face-to-face relationship with the Father (2 Cor 5:21). Jesus took the form of a slave (Phil 2:7), one who owns nothing and is completely owned by his master. He was obedient to the point of a horrifying and humiliating death (2:8). But God exalted Him and we must worship Him (2:9-11).

ASK 

1. Who is the supreme example of humility?
Jesus.
2. How did Jesus demonstrate His humility?
Jesus refused to hold on to His divine rights, although He had all the privileges of God which He can never lose. But He did not cling to His position; rather, He willingly set them aside for the benefit of others.
3. How did Jesus demonstrate his obedience to the Father?
He was obedient to the point of a horrifying and humiliating death (2:8).

DISCUSS 

1. Discuss what we can learn from Jesus' example of humility.
2. Talk about ways we can follow Jesus' example of humility in our own lives.

DAY 5

Jesus is the King of kings • Revelation 19:6

READ

Revelation 19:11–21

EXPLAIN

The truth of Revelation 19:6

In Revelation 19:11–21, John describes the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. In this section the King is described by three names. In Revelation 19:12 Jesus has a name no one else knows, expressing His essential deity. In Revelation 19:13 Jesus is called “The Word of God,” expressing His incarnation as the Son of God. The final description of the King is that of a banner around His robe and on His thigh. The banner would be across His chest and hanging down on His leg as He rode down from heaven. On this banner is written “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” This third name expresses His sovereign triumph and His absolute rule. The seemingly invincible army of the beast awaits the arrival of the Rider. But before the final battle even begins, it is all over. Instantly the two demonically empowered political and religious leaders are dealt a horrible blow and are cast into hell. After this battle is over, Satan is bound (20:1–3), and Jesus will reign for a thousand years (20:4–10).

ASK

1. What three names are used to refer to Jesus in Revelation 19:11–21?
A name that no one knows except Jesus (Rev 19:12), “The Word of God” (19:13), and “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (19:16).
2. What does each of these names mean?
The first name expresses His essential deity, the second name expresses His incarnation as the Son of God, and the third name expresses His sovereign triumph and absolute rule.
3. What happens after the battle and Satan is bound for a thousand years?
Jesus will reign for a thousand years (20:4–10).

DISCUSS

1. Discuss how Jesus’ power compares to that of earthly kings.
2. Talk about how we should live in light of the reality that the King, Jesus, will one day return again.