

An Angel Talks to Mary and Joseph

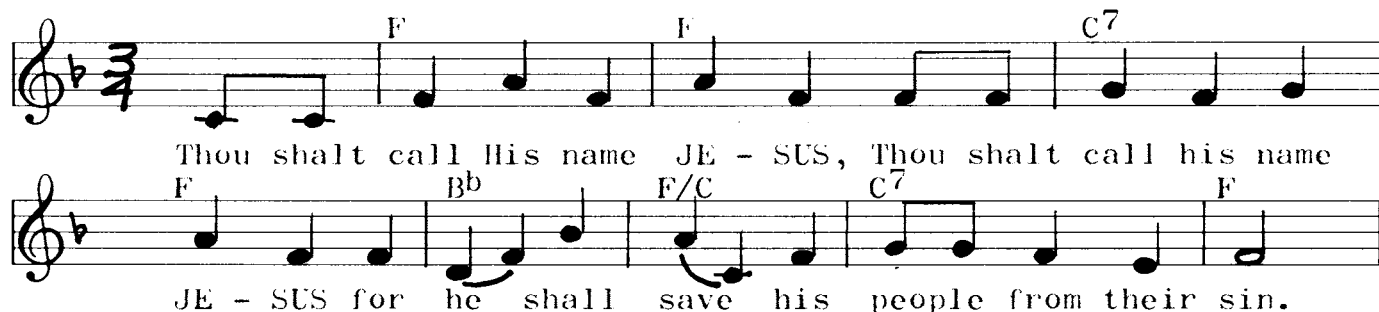
TEXT Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-25

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 7:14; Luke 2:21,26-32

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to recount the announcement of the angel to Mary and Joseph regarding Jesus and will be able to tell that He was a special baby because God was His Father.

MEMORY VERSE Thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. — Matthew 1:21

MEMORY VERSE SONG



Thou shalt call His name JE - SUS, Thou shalt call his name
JE - SUS for he shall save his people from their sin.

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

THOU SHALT CALL — hands cupped around mouth
HIS NAME JESUS — right middle finger to left palm,
left middle finger to right palm
FOR HE — point up
SHALL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS —
with cupped hands draw a cross in the air

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Cut apart the large word “Jesus” surrounded by sections containing an angel and praying figure. (See pattern at end of lesson.) Assemble the puzzle piece by piece as the students learn each portion of the verse.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Use an angel doll (a Christmas tree ornament, perhaps) or a picture of an angel to open your

lesson. Discuss what it would be like to have an angel appear and speak to you.

Progression of events:

1. An angel appeared to Mary and told her she was highly favored and blessed.
2. He explained that she would bear God’s Son, Jesus.
3. Mary showed her willing spirit.
4. After Mary was found with child, an angel appeared to Joseph.
5. The angel told him the child was conceived of the Holy Ghost.

Climax: Mary and Joseph believed the message of the angel.

Conclusion: Jesus was a very special baby because God was His Father.

Response: Have your students retell the announcement of the angel to Mary and Joseph and tell why Jesus was a special child.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Christ was to be born in the family of David and in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2-5). But Mary and Joseph lived about 100 miles from Bethlehem. A decree of Rome required them to go to Bethlehem just at the time the child was to be born. God had planned this birth for years and His time chart always falls into place. Historical records place the enrollment of Quirinius (Cyrenius) in A.D. 7, which was 10 to 12 years after Jesus was born. In recent years, ancient papyri have been found from which was learned that Quirinius was twice governor of Syria. Luke says it was the first enrollment.

An angel appeared to Mary, a young virgin, and announced to her that she would conceive through the Holy Spirit and bring forth a son who would be called Jesus (Luke 1:31), Emmanuel (Matthew 1:23), and the Son of God (Luke 1:35).

At this time Mary was probably about twenty years of age. She was unmarried but was betrothed to Joseph. Because of this she was in danger of two things: 1) she could be called a harlot, or 2) Joseph could legally divorce her. It was the custom in that day for parents to arrange a marriage when children were still quite young. For a period of one year the couple was espoused, or betrothed, to each other before they came together. This betrothal could be broken only by a legal divorce because of the unfaithfulness of one of the partners. It was at great personal cost that Mary submitted to God and said, "Be it unto me according to thy word" (Luke 1:38). Mary, no doubt, suffered from the cruel words of those who did not understand the great miracle of God. John 8:41 shows how the Pharisees misunderstood Christ's birth and accused Him of being born of fornication.

This whole incident was also very costly to Joseph. He was a righteous man (Matthew 1:19), but his espoused wife was found with child. He obviously loved Mary and did not want to cause her any disgrace so he thought to secretly divorce her (Matthew 1:19). But an angel also appeared to Joseph and assured him this was a miraculous birth from God! Mary and Joseph dared to believe God and obeyed Him in the face of public disgrace and social pressure.

It was at great cost to God also that all these things were accomplished. Jesus was willing to become intimately identified with His creation by setting aside His glory to be clothed in human flesh and yet He maintained His deity by being conceived by the Holy Spirit and born in the flesh (Philippians 2:6-11). He truly was *Emmanuel* which means "God with us."

According to the angel who spoke to Mary and Joseph, the Child was to be called "Jesus." Jesus was a com-

mon name in Israel at that time. It was the Greek form of the Hebrew name *Joshua* and it means "Savior" (Matthew 1:21). Perhaps many Jewish mothers had hoped their son would be the Promised Child who should deliver God's people from political oppression, but this Child was unique. He would be the true and final Deliverer from the oppression of sin.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

A book could be made from old Christmas cards telling the Christmas story.

Make a peek box, perhaps with an angel talking to Joseph or Mary, or both.

Bring a Viewmaster with reels showing the Christmas story.

The New Testament Bible Stories Magic Pad is fun for children from two to twelve years old, and covers the whole Christmas story.

Make a cloud and have an angel behind it. Tell the children the angel was sent from God, and came to tell Mary and Joseph about Baby Jesus (see Patterns).

Make an angel for each child (see Patterns). Cut out and fold head on dotted line. Fold half circle to form a cone and tape together. Tape wings onto back of cone.

Use a tape recording to simulate the voice of the angel as you tell the story in class.

QUESTIONS

What prophet spoke of Jesus' birth, and what did he say?

What other names have been given Jesus (Isaiah 9:6)? How would you feel if an angel appeared to talk to you? How could a prophet know so many years before that Jesus was to be born and where?

The angel told Joseph that the baby's name was to be Jesus, and Emmanuel. How did the angel know and what did the angel mean by calling Mary "highly favoured"?

What was Mary's reaction to the angel's appearing? Did the angel know how she felt? Explain.

PRE-SCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

There is a Viewmaster story of the annunciation available. Small children like to look at the scenes in this way, but be prepared to switch the pictures yourself. Also, allow plenty of time for "turns"!

Use finger puppets of Mary and the angel to illustrate the story (see Patterns).

Bring a real baby (or a photograph of one), some articles that one might get in preparation for a baby (rattle, bottle, sweater, blanket, etc.) to build on the "special" baby idea.

Allow your children to put an angel sticker on a small picture of Mary and then take it home.

REVIEW IDEAS

Have a pre-recorded puppet show — the only thing necessary would be to move the puppets. One or two persons could do this.

First scene: Angel talks to Mary.

Second scene: Angel talks to Joseph in a dream.

The moderator will tell the students that next Sunday they will learn that Jesus really was born.

Make an overhead presentation of the story. Overlay can be used to make angel "appear" to Mary; the same technique to show the angel coming to Joseph. Thought balloons can appear to show thoughts. In

some cases you may wish to write in the thoughts or spoken words as you tell what is happening. Try to make some action — writing, overlays, or other forms of movement — in each scene on the screen.

Present a skit using some of your students as Mary, Joseph, and the angel. Costumes from Christmas programs can help lend an authentic touch. Backgrounds may be drawn and projected from an overhead, or simple props such as a table or bed used.

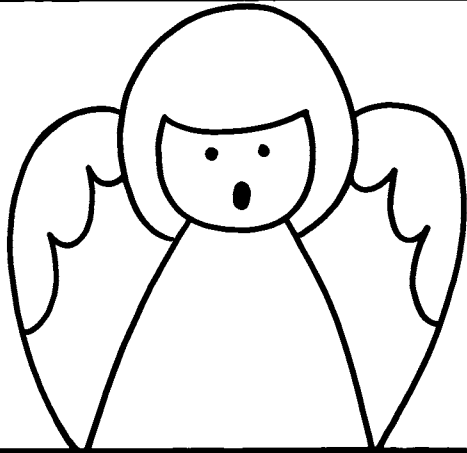
SUPPORT MATERIAL

"Mary's Story" — Arch book available with cassette, also available with filmstrip and cassette, Concordia The Bible Story Set, Volume 7 — by Arthur S. Maxwell, Pacific Press Publishing Association

The A,B,C's of Christmas — by Jane Belk Moncure (for beginners), Standard Publishing

"Primary Cutouts" — a cutout flannel set that can be used all year for small children, available at Learning Palace.

NOTES



Thou shalt call his name

JESUS

For he shall save his
people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

