

TEXT	Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38
OBJECTIVE	The students will be able to recount how the angel announced the birth of God's own Son to Mary and Joseph.
MEMORY VERSE	She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. — Matthew 1:21

The Angel Talks to Mary and Joseph

MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

SHE SHALL BRING — Extend both hands out, palms up, move toward body.

FORTH A SON — Point up.

AND THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME — First two fingers of both hands should be tapping at right angles.

JESUS — With right middle finger, touch left palm. With left middle finger, touch right palm.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Our memory verse for this week is illustrated by five choir children reciting the verse together. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the five sections on the heavy black lines. Reassemble the picture with your group as each portion of the verse is learned.

BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Make an angel puppet as described under In-Class Activities. Use this 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 and 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

Man's religion is a story of his search for God, how he might find enlightenment or appease some angry deity. The Christian religion, however, is a story of God's search for lost mankind. Because of an eternal love for His own creation, God was willing to make the supreme sacrifice of His only begotten Son that we, too, could become the children of God. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (I John 4:10). What better time than at Christmas to reflect upon God's love when He gave to us His Son. Jesus "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (Philippians 2:7). See also John 1:12-14; Romans 5:8; I John 3:1.

Angels are created, holy beings, sometimes described as "spirits" although often appearing in bodily form to man. Scripture doesn't say when they were created but assuredly before man was created, because some of them fell from their original state of purity and innocence and were cast out of Heaven.

The work of good angels is ordered by God and includes assisting, protecting, and guiding God's children. Hebrews 1:14 says, "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"

The Bible records many instances when angels were used as messengers for God, sometimes bringing warnings, sometimes words of comfort, or glad tidings such as to Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds.

SPECIAL NOTE FOR THIS LESSON

Refer to Lessons 4a and 28a for additional ideas.

IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

For a touch of the dramatic, use a hidden tape recorder to

play the words the angel spoke to Mary and Joseph when you come to that part of the story.

Use an angel puppet to tell today's story (see Patterns). Trace the pattern onto a piece of white paper and color in the hair and details of dress using fabric crayons. Transfer the design to white fabric, following the instructions given on the crayon box. Cut around the figure allowing a half-inch seam allowance. Cut a second piece to be used as back of puppet. With right sides facing, sew the two pieces of the puppet together, leaving the bottom open. Trim and clip the seams. Turn the puppet right side out.

Give each child a copy of the picture of the angel talking to Mary (see Patterns). Have the children write, in simple words, or draw a picture of what the angel told Mary.

Let the children make Christmas-card angel bookmarks (see Patterns). Provide plenty of old Christmas cards. Let the children choose a card and cut around the angel outline of the pattern. Punch a hole, and thread a piece of yarn or ribbon through it. Have the children write the memory verse or attach pre-printed verse cards (which you may provide) to the back of their bookmarks.

QUESTIONS

What is the greatest Gift ever given?

For what purpose did God send Jesus to earth? Was it a good plan? How does it affect you?

Why do you think God chose Mary to be the mother of His Son, Jesus? Was she different from the other women? What made her special?

Joseph was a humble man who trusted God. How do you think he felt about the Baby Jesus?

Why was Joseph told to name the Baby *Jesus*?

What are some of the other names for Jesus?

Will God ever ask you to do something for Him? Talk about things that God may ask a child to do.

Tell about something that has happened to you that shows God loves you.

How can we show God we are thankful for His Gift — Jesus?

PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Children love to hear about angels and babies so this will be an exciting time. Use puppets or cutouts from Christmas cards to act out the story of the angel's visit to Mary and Joseph. Explain that this Baby was a promise from God and God always keeps His promises.

Take a batch of clay to class. Using an angel-shaped

cookie cutter, let your students cut out an angel shape. Make a small hole at the top so a ribbon can be strung through. Allow the angels to dry, and then attach the ribbon and send them home with the children the next Sunday. (Write the children's names on the angels they made.) Following is a simple recipe for play dough which will harden without baking.

Clay for Play and Posterity

Mix: 1 cup cornstarch, 2 cups baking soda (1 lb.), and 1 1/4 cups cold water. Stir in a saucepan over medium heat for about four minutes until the mixture thickens to moist mashed potato consistency. Remove from heat, turn out onto a plate and cover with a damp cloth until cool. Knead as you would dough. Store in an airtight container or bag. For color add a few drops of food coloring to the water before it is mixed with the cornstarch and soda. Or, objects may be left to dry and then painted with water (tempera) colors or acrylics. Dip in shellac or brush with clear nail polish for a sealer.

For each child, prepare a set of the Mary and angel figures (see Patterns). Attach a small round tube to the back of each one so it will stand alone. (A portion of a paper towel tube works very well for this.)

REVIEW IDEAS

Make a recording of the angel's talking first to Mary and then to Joseph. Also record their responses. For your review, use an overhead projector with yellow transparency which has an angel shape cut out of it (so it will be white). Project the image on a screen behind Mary as she and Joseph pantomime while they listen to the angel and respond.

Using Christmas program costumes, act out the angel's appearing to Mary.


On a chalkboard or large posterboard, write out a significant verse from the lesson in code form. For example, across the top write the question, "What did Mary reply to the angel?" Then write her response in code. Put the chart showing the code solution to one side. Call on volunteers from your group to write in one letter at a time, until the whole answer is written out.

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 cut-out flannel set that can be used all year for small children, available at teachers' supply stores.

MEMORY VERSE SONG


♩ = 90



She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JE - SUS. Thou shalt



call his name JE - SUS, thou shalt call his name JE - SUS. She shall bring forth a

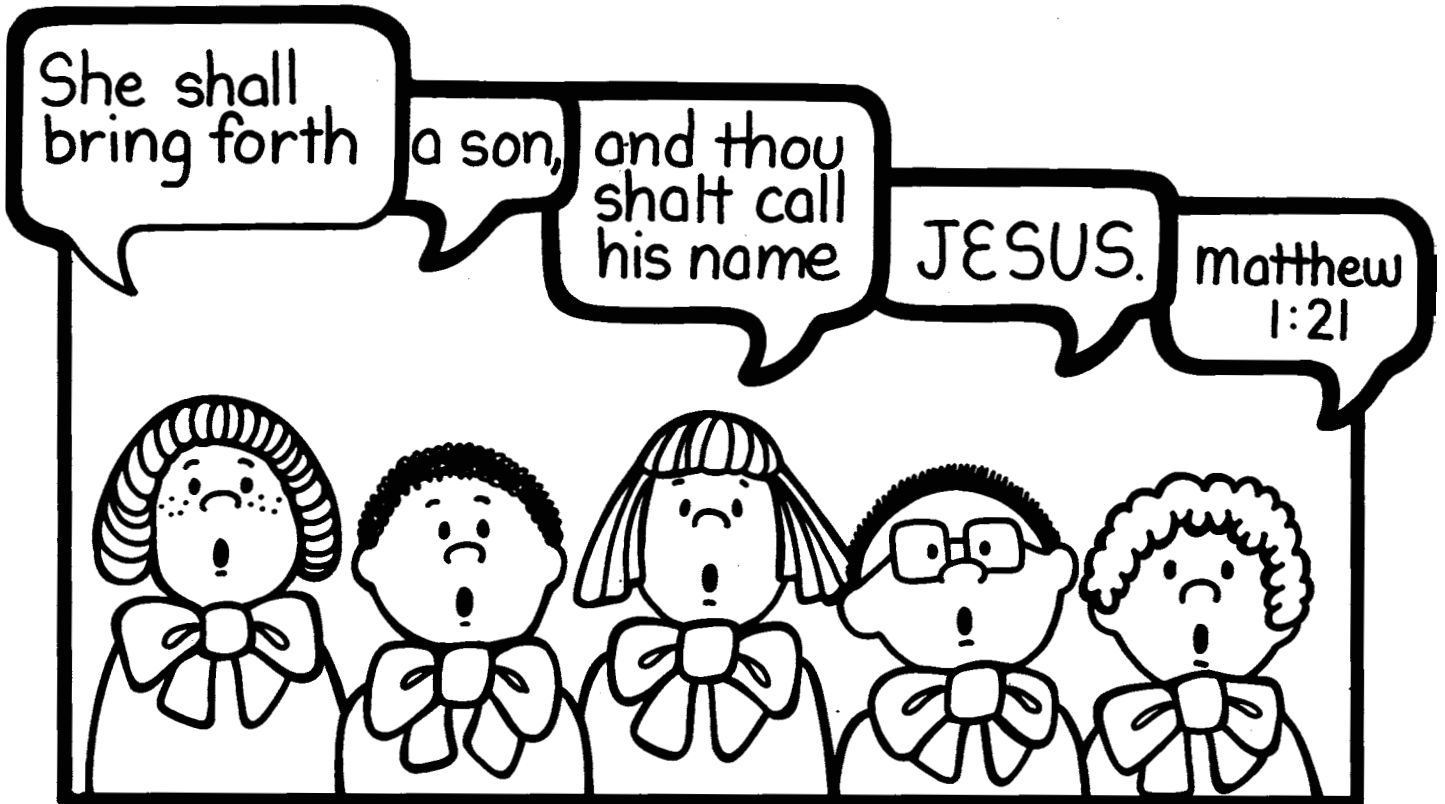


son, and thou shalt call his name JE - SUS, Mat - thew one: verse twen - ty -



one.

MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED



She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS. matthew 1:21