

THE BIRTH OF CHRIST



Passage to Study: Luke 2:1-20.

Read with the class: Luke 2:11

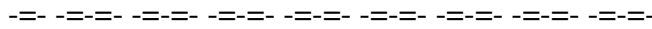
Text for memorization:

Younger:
Older



OBJECTIVES: To show that:

1. God is at work behind every happening, moving events so that His will is carried out.
2. The circumstances and place where Jesus was born had the purpose of:
 - (A) making very evident the lowly condition in which He was born into the world, and
 - (B) showing the shepherds Which One was the newborn child they sought.
3. The shepherds willingly took action on the basis of the revelation they received and acted in faith.
4. God reveals Truth, and expects the sinner to respond to it.



SCENE No. 1. In a Bethlehem street.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- Carrying out the command of Augustus Caesar, Joseph and Mary must travel to Bethlehem.
- Despite being about to give birth, Mary is obliged to make the trip on account of a government decree.
- Upon reaching Bethlehem, Joseph must concern himself with finding a place to stay while carrying out the business related to the census.
- Cmt.** Despite being the order of a pagan Emperor, they obey it because Augustus Caesar is their Head of State.
- Apl.** It would be well to mention the civil responsibilities that are binding on all citizens. Rom.13:1. Joseph and Mary exemplify this.
- Despite looking in all appropriate places, it is impossible for them to find a place to stay.
- Due to Mary’s condition, they urgently needed a roof over their heads.
- Cns.** The birth of Jesus was completely normal. He came into the world the same way any other child does.
- The stable might have been located within a caravansary, a place where caravaneers, companies of traders, stopped to rest. These were a sort of a “Servicenter” for travelers, with stables for the animals.
- Within the framework of 1) the lack of hospitality, 2) their obligation to carry out the law, and 3) the stable in which they found refuge, the will of God was being carried out, just as the Scriptures teach.
- Cmt.** It is always wise to refer to the Sovereignty of God and His will being carried out in every event.
- The coming of the Son of God into this world in humble circumstances had for its purpose that of saving sinners and thereby enriching them. Cns. 2 Cor. 8:9.
- God incarnate, God made flesh, was present in this world but no room was found for Him in the Inn.
- Apl.** Is there room for Christ in the lives of people today?
- Once Christ was born, the Glory of God overflowed into the world.
- Cns.** The light of the glory of God penetrated into the darkness of the world!
- An angel makes the announcement to the shepherds.
- Apl.** God needed just one to give out the good news of the gospel.

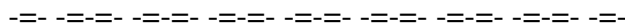
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SCENE No. 1. (Continued).

- **FEAR NOT** It was an amazing experience.
- **GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY** News of extraordinary importance.
- **TO ALL (THE) PEOPLE** No one should ignore it. None are excluded.
- **I BRING YOU ... UNTO YOU IS BORN** -
 - To **YOU**, 1) to the lowly shepherds and
 - 2) to everybody else (vss.18, 20).
- Bethlehem is identified as:
- **THE CITY OF DAVID:** It has royal relevance.
- And identified with:
- **A SAVIOUR:** There is moral relevance.
- **CHRIST THE LORD:** There is national y spiritual relevance.

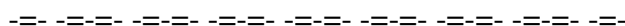
Cns. The newborn child is not identified here by His name Jesus. This name was given to Mary and Joseph prior to the Lord’s birth and was applied on the eighth day when he was officially named.



SCENE No. 2. In a field outside Bethlehem.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- The angels from heaven rejoice at the coming of Christ to this world, because through Him, God would solve the problem of sin.
- Apl.** If the heavens rejoiced at the coming of Christ, why should not a sinner rejoice also?
- While in the city most were asleep, in the fields those who were working and awake saw the heavenly vision.
- What is important is not the angels, but their announcement of the birth of the Messiah.
- Apl.** The shepherds were given the message, then they acted in faith and with the desire to “see this thing which is come to pass”.
- Even though the shepherds are afraid at the start, afterwards they realize the importance of the message they have received.
- They leave their work and head for Bethlehem to worship the Saviour.
- Apl.** God wants everyone to seek the Saviour.
- Sug.** Ask the students what they would have done with the news received. Would they consider it a hoax? Something too good to be true? Lead them into considering why perhaps some of them have not responded to the call of the Gospel.
- The only address given the shepherds for locating Christ was that He was “wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger”, not a usual place to find a baby.



THE BIRTH OF CHRIST



SCENE No. 3. In a stable.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- Moved by faith and guided by the word of God, the shepherds arrive as soon as possible at the place where the Messiah is to be found, and they worship Him.

(The next lesson deals with the arrival of the Wise Men seeking the **KING**. Here, the shepherds seek a **SAVIOUR**, the long awaited Messiah.)

- Would Mary recount the miraculous conception of Christ? It would seem that she was quiet, meditating on all that was happening. (vs.19).

Cns. Along with the students, the teacher might consider the element of surprise that the arrival of the shepherds would produce and how others would react as they heard of what had happened.

- The shepherds leave to give the news to others. (vss.18, 20).

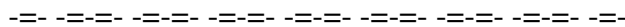
Apl. God reveals to us great and important truths and expects us to share them with others.

- The shepherds were the first believing worshippers that Christ had here on earth.

Cns. Ask the children what worship means. A possible definition is: To speak well of the person and the virtues of the one being worshipped. To show forth His qualities. **Apl.** The Father seeks worshippers. What virtues and qualities ought we to mention about Himself and about Christ the Saviour?

- This unique experience would remain a happy memory for the shepherds during the rest of their lives.

Apl. The unique experience of our conversion to Christ continues to be a happy memory throughout life. It will always be a reason for worship.



SCENE No. 4. Application.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- The shepherds responded to an angelic message:

- Christ had come. The Saviour was in the world.

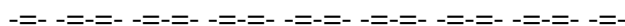
Apl. Today it is not a matter of seeing the Saviour lying in a manger as a babe. One must see Him ascended and glorified, having passed through death, burial and resurrection.

- Christ continues to seek worshippers. Those who respond to the revelation of the **GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY**, the Gospel, have reason to worship.

- Christ Jesus came into the world to seek and to save that which was lost. Lu. 19:10.

- Jesus Christ came from Glory to Bethlehem to **SEEK** the sinner.

- Now glorified in Heaven, He **SAVES** that which is lost.



Note: The emphasis in the religious world today is on “Baby Jesus” and the appeal to feelings so that people will believe in Him. This is not what the gospel teaches. Saving faith is that which is placed in the Christ who died, was buried, rose again and is now glorified at God’s right hand.

It is Christ in glory who saves, not the child in the manger.