

Sunday School Year 1 *Teaching Helps* audio files and study sheets

This CD contains the *Teaching Helps* audio files for the 39 lessons in the Christ-Light Year 1 Sunday School curriculum.

For each lesson there is an audio file for the lower grades (approximately 1-4) and one for the upper grades (5,6). Choose the one for the grade level you teach.

Each audio file begins with a study presentation of the Bible lesson itself as well as pertinent background information. This presentation will help you prepare to teach the lesson. The second part of the audio file includes an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching the lesson and for teaching Sunday school in general.

A PDF file provides two pages of notes for each lesson, which will help you follow along as you listen to the audio file. One page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson, and the other is a checklist of points made by the teachers in the interview section. (A separate PDF file is provided for each of the upper level and lower level audio files.)

The audio files are in MP3 format so you can upload and listen to them on an MP3 player or on a computer.

The files are found in three main folders, one for each set.

01 Yr1 Fall

02 Yr1 Winter

03 Yr1 Spring

Each main folder contains two subfolders, one with the lower-grades files and one with the upper-grades files.

The MP3 file labels indicate the Sunday school year, **1_1_01**; the set, 1_**1**_01 (Fall, Winter, Spring); and the lesson number, 1_1_**01**.

01 Yr1 Fall

Yr1FallLower

1_1_01CreationLower.mp3

1_1_02FirstSinLower.mp3

1_1_03FloodLower.mp3

1_1_14TeacherNotesLower.pdf

Yr1FallUpper

1_1_01CreationUpper.mp3

1_1_02FirstSinUpper.mp3

1_1_03FloodUpper.mp3

1_1_14TeacherNotesUpper.pdf

02 Yr1 Winter

Yr1WinterLower

1_2_01JosephRulerLower.mp3

1_2_02BrothersComeLower.mp3

Yr1WinterUpper

1_2_01JosephRulerUpper.mp3

1_2_02BrothersComeUpper.mp3

Use of Teaching Helps Audio Files

If a congregation has purchased the Teaching Helps CD, the Sunday school superintendent may use or distribute the files in a variety of ways. The Sunday school superintendent may make a copy of this CD for each teacher. The Sunday school superintendent may e-mail files to the Sunday school teachers. The files can also be posted on a congregation Web site, but **only if it is a secure Web site** (password protected). See the copyright information below. Or, if the pastor wishes, the Sunday school teaching staff may listen to the segments as part of the Sunday school teachers' meetings.

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Sunday School Teaching Helps

Listening Notes

Year 1 — Winter
Upper Grades



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*I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness,
but will have the light of life.*

John 8:12
(NIV 1984)



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These lesson titles are taken from Grades 1-2 of the Christ-Light Sunday school religion curriculum.

Introduction

Teaching Helps Audio Files

We have prepared an audio file for each lesson. The file begins with a presentation of the Bible lesson followed by an interview with a teacher who provides tips for teaching Sunday school.

Teaching Helps Printable Notes

Included is a PDF document containing two pages of notes for each lesson. The first page corresponds to the presentation of the lesson. The second sheet lists the topics discussed in the interview.

Tips on sharing these files within your congregation:

The files on this disk are meant to be shared with your entire Sunday school staff. This can be done in a variety of ways.

You may wish to burn a CD for each teacher, including substitute teachers.

Small, inexpensive flash drives also work well. They could be provided by the teachers or the church. The files could be copied from a public computer located in the church.

If only the regular teachers have the files, when they use a substitute, they could attach the appropriate audio file and the PDF notes to an e-mail in time for the substitute to use it in preparation to teach the lesson.

The files can also be stored on your server and be made available through your Web site. However, you are permitted to do this only if the area on your Web site where the files are accessed is password protected.

We hope you will make these files readily available to everyone who will be teaching in your Sunday school. We also ask that you observe the limitations to sharing as described in the Permissions Statement.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 1

Joseph Becomes Ruler of Egypt—Genesis 41

Review

This account takes place immediately after last week's lesson.

Introduction

Joseph's period of training was over. Now he would assume the position for which God had groomed him. This is more than a rags-to-riches story. It is a story of God's deliberate activity to fulfill his promises to Abraham.

In the morning Joseph awoke as a prisoner, and by evening he was second in command of the most powerful nation on earth. God's training period had been a rough ride for Joseph—from the horrible sin his brothers had committed against him to having to be ignored for two years after God had enabled him miraculously to interpret two dreams. But now he was ready to take over the responsibility for which God had trained him. Everything quickly fell into place. All the "whys" that must have been buzzing around in Joseph's head for all these years were quickly resolved. In many ways it became clear how God had been using all the people and events in Joseph's life to give him every physical ability and spiritual insight he needed.

God's Plan of Salvation

Much of the discussion on how this account fits into God's plan of salvation was presented last week. If you were not able to teach that lesson, you may want to go over that material again. In short, God needed a person in a position of authority in Egypt to fulfill the prophecy he had given to Abraham, namely, that Abraham's descendants would grow into a great nation while living in a foreign land. Someone needed to have the ability to see to it that God's people were given a place of their own in which to live and grow. That person was Joseph.

The Account—Genesis 41

41:1-13 **"seven"**—The number 7 comes up several times in this account. Seven is often used as the number of God's covenant with the world, in other words, his plan of salvation. The number 7 may have been used here to remind us that everything God was doing with the years of plenty and famine related to the fulfillment of his covenant promises.

41:14-40 **"God will give Pharaoh the answer"**—The first thing out of Joseph's mouth was a confession of his own inability and of God's ability to give Pharaoh the interpretation of his dreams. **"God will do it soon"**—The famine was not simply a "natural" occurrence. It

was sent by God. He determined to make it happen for the sake of his plan of salvation. **"in whom is the spirit of God"**—Joseph worked through the wisdom that God gave him through his Spirit. Even Pharaoh recognized that Joseph was blessed by God.

41:41-57 **"Manasse . . . Ephraim"**—These two sons of Joseph would take their places among the actual sons of Jacob. They would each receive an inheritance in the Promised Land. **"When all Egypt began to feel the famine"**—It probably took some time for the people to eat the food they had saved for themselves during the good years. They then turned to Joseph.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 1

1_2_01—Joseph Becomes Ruler of Egypt

Upper

A discussion on getting to know your children and giving them Christian support.

Dreams, the occult, and truth.

Ideas regarding homework.

Thoughts on singing.

Teach using the strengths the Lord has given you.

Joseph's Brothers Come to Egypt—Genesis 42

Review

In our last lesson, Joseph had been elevated to second in command in Egypt. The years of plenty were over, and the world was two years into the famine.

Introduction

This is one of the most heartwrenching accounts in the Bible. The notes on this page will help you understand the motives behind Joseph's actions. There is nothing better to help you tell this story than to understand the wisdom that Joseph displayed in how he treated his brothers. Let's focus on each party.

Joseph. You might begin the lesson by asking your children what they would do if they were in Joseph's shoes. Consider what his brothers had done to him and the power he now had. Would he want to get revenge? As you teach the lesson, you will want to know how your children are interpreting Joseph's harsh treatment of his brothers. Do they think he is getting back at them?

We know that Joseph did not bear a grudge against his brothers. He could have gone to Canaan at any time and gotten revenge. He now saw God's grand plan—how God would fulfill his prophecy to Abraham (Genesis 15:13-16) to bring Abraham's descendants down to Egypt and make them into a great nation. But there were some loose ends that needed to be cleared up. Joseph had to work with his brothers to find out if they had changed. But he did not do this for his own sake. He did it for the sake of his brothers, his father, and for the welfare of God's gospel promises.

The brothers. The brothers themselves needed to realize that they had repented. There were several reasons for this. First, they were going to be the leaders of God's people. They could do this only if they were men of faith and treasured God's promise. Second, their murder and deception would soon be revealed. How would their father know if they had changed? The only way was if they were given a set of circumstances that paralleled what had happened between them and Joseph. That is what Joseph was preparing.

The father. It was now about 20 years after Joseph had been sold into slavery. For 20 years Jacob's sons had let him think that his beloved son was dead. The main issue was not whether Joseph would forgive his brothers but whether Jacob would forgive his sons. Joseph wanted to set up a situation that would show their father that his sons were different people than they had been 20 years before.

God's Plan of Salvation

Joseph used his wisdom to foster the spiritual lives of the people of God so that they could play their role as the people from whom the Savior would be born. How he handled the situation with his brothers kept the family together.

The Account—Genesis 42

42:1-25 “[he] **spoke harshly to them**”—Joseph saw that Benjamin was not with his brothers. He needed to have Benjamin present in order for his plan to work. He pretended to be angry with them in order to get information from them. The accusation that they were spies would force them to prove otherwise. **“one of your brothers”**—After locking up his brothers in prison to let them experience how Simeon, their brother, would be suffering until they returned, he let them go and kept Simeon as security. **“Surely we are being punished”**—Joseph heard a wonderful confession from his brothers' lips. Yet Joseph's plan had to continue for it to accomplish his purpose.

42:25-38 **“put each man's silver back in his sack”**—Why did Joseph do this? He may have done it to make his brothers realize that God was finally calling them to account for their sins. This happened. He may have been trying to amplify their sense of obligation to him, which is what in fact happened when the brothers returned a second time. But he may also have been making a confession of his faith. God's people did not depend on Egypt to take care of them. Egypt depended on God's people for their very existence. The Egyptians were being protected because God was protecting the family of Jacob. So Egypt had no right to charge Israel for its food, and Joseph gave the silver back.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 2

1_2_02—Joseph’s Brothers Come to Egypt

Upper

Thoughts on discipline.

Thoughts on teaching a longer lesson and having the children read.

Suggestions for using small “breakout” groups.

Discussion on the related idea of “grouping.”

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 3

Joseph Tests His Brothers—Genesis 43,44

Review

In order to learn about how things were going at home, Joseph accused his brothers of being spies. To protect themselves, they revealed to Joseph what he wanted to know. Joseph allowed his brothers to go home. In order for his plan to succeed, Benjamin had to be with them. He assured their return by holding Simeon hostage.

Introduction

The famine was not letting up. The brothers had to go back to Egypt to buy more food. After Judah made a compelling speech to his father, Jacob allowed the brothers to return to Egypt with Benjamin.

The key to helping your children understand everything that is going on in this account is to remind them of just *how* the brothers mistreated Joseph and sold him into slavery.

The point of chapter 43 is quite simple. Joseph invited his brothers to his home so that he could show favoritism to Benjamin just as Jacob had shown favoritism to him (Joseph) many years before. Would the brothers be jealous of Benjamin? To find out, Joseph had to (1) get Benjamin in a position where he would be guilty of a crime, (2) separate Benjamin from the rest of the family, and (3) offer the brothers an easy way to get rid of Benjamin just as they had gotten rid of him—if they wanted the opportunity, that is.

God's Plan of Salvation

When the brothers sold Joseph into slavery, God's plan of salvation was in jeopardy. This horrible deed threatened to break up the family. It also made most of the chosen descendants of Abraham a pack of murderers and liars, completely unable to reflect God's promise to the world and fulfill their divine role as his chosen people.

Joseph's task was to restore the family and keep God's plan of salvation on track. Everything that happened to him served this role, as did the worldwide famine. Once the family was reunited around God's promise in a spirit of repentance and faith, they could settle in Egypt—the "foreign land" God had spoken to Abraham about—grow into a large nation, and finally return to take possession of the Promised Land where the Savior was to be born.

The Account—Genesis 43,44

43:1-14 **"I myself will guarantee his safety"**—Here, and later on in Egypt, Judah puts his own life on the line. Recall that he is the son who was in the line of the Savior. He was certainly becoming the spiritual leader of God's people. **"If I am bereaved, I am bereaved."**—Nothing short of seeing his family die of starvation would force Jacob to allow Benjamin to go with his other sons to Egypt.

43:15-34 **"Your God, the God of your father, has given you treasure in your sacks"**—Could Joseph's servant have been a believer in the true God? Perhaps so. In any case, Joseph must have let him in on his plan. **"He went into his private room and wept there."**—What powerful emotions must have been surging in Joseph's heart. How he longed to embrace his brothers, but he had to finish the Lord's work before he did that. **"Benjamin's portion was five times as much as anyone else's."**—Joseph gave the brothers reason to be jealous. Would they become jealous and act on it as they

had years before?

Chapter 44 **"the rest of you will be free from blame."**—This detail is very important. The servant began separating Benjamin from the rest of the brothers so they would have a decision to make regarding him. **"God has uncovered your servants' guilt."**—Judah confessed that he and his brothers had been thinking about their guilt, and he implied that they were repentant. **"Only the man who was found to have the cup will become my slave."**—Here Joseph separated Benjamin from the rest of the brothers. Now the brothers had a choice. They had to either deal with the matter in a spirit of repentance and faith or saddle up their donkeys, go home, and be happy to be rid of him. **"let your servant remain here as my lord's slave"**—Judah considered the welfare of Benjamin and their father to be more important than his own life. The family had been restored. God's plan of salvation was safe.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 3

1_2_03—Joseph Tests His Brothers

Upper

Lessons we learn from this account about families.

Before and after columns.

Relating this lesson to 1 Corinthians chapter 13, the chapter on love.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 4

Joseph Forgives His Brothers—Genesis 45

Review

Joseph’s plan had worked. Now he knew his brothers were repentant. But his main concern was not for himself but for his family and for God’s plan of salvation, in which the family played such a key role. Now the family was restored and could begin to grow into a great nation in the land of Egypt.

Introduction

Joseph now revealed himself to his brothers. No doubt he anticipated their terror. But he first had to put them through this ordeal. He had to allow his father to continue living in grief for a while longer so that the family could live in joy after everything was out in the open. He knew why all this had happened, and he let his brothers know that God, not they, had been in control.

This is a happy lesson and should be enjoyable to teach. Be sure you point out the many times Joseph speaks about God having done this or that. Point out to the children how they too can point to everything in their lives, even the bad things, and express their confidence that God is in control.

God’s Plan of Salvation

You may want to review the promises God made to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-16. Joseph invited his family to come down to Egypt and live in the best of the land. The land of Goshen sustained them as God worked out his plan of salvation. They would be kept safe during the five remaining years of the famine, possess some of the richest farm and pasture land in the world, and have a place of their own where they could grow into a large nation and become ready to take and settle in the Promised Land.

The Account—Genesis 45

<p>45:1-13 “they were terrified”—The unimaginable had happened. The brothers would remain fearful even after Joseph comforted them. See Genesis 50:15ff. “He made me father to Pharaoh, lord of his entire household and ruler of all Egypt.”—This shows the extent of Joseph’s power. Perhaps Pharaoh was very young at this time.</p> <p>45:14-24 “the best of all Egypt will be yours”—God showered his blessings on his people, just as he had promised to Abraham. “Don’t quarrel on the way!”—In a sense it is easy to see why Joseph said this. He knew his brothers well and didn’t want anything to delay their return to Egypt. It is not as easy to understand why Moses chose to add this to the account. Perhaps the Israelites he served were no different than their forefathers. They too needed to be told not to quarrel as they made their way to the Promised Land.</p>	<p>45:25-28 “Jacob revived”—What a wonderful end to the story! We are never told if Jacob knew about what his sons had done to Joseph. Their sin is never referred to in anything he says. Yet they were acting honestly now, and that would have dictated their telling their father what had happened. However, if love for their father had dictated that they keep the matter a secret, they would have gone in that direction. In that case, Joseph would have suggested they not tell their father, allowing his father to think that perhaps the Ishmaelite traders had found him wounded and taken him down to Egypt and sold him there. Most teachers take the first option, though, and teach that the brothers told their father everything. That may have been what Joseph had in mind when he told them not to quarrel on the way. They were not to quarrel about how they should tell their father what they had done or who would have that difficult task.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 4

1_2_04—Joseph Forgives His Brothers

Upper

Teaching and modeling forgiveness.

Group reading.

Group writing.

Gabriel Visits Zechariah and Mary—Luke 1:5-55

Review

Tie together last week’s lesson with this lesson. You might say something like this: Jacob died in Egypt, but before he died he foretold something about the future of each of his sons. He said that Judah would carry on the line of the Savior. This was nearly two thousand years before the Savior would be born. The rest of the Old Testament talks about the history of God’s people during those years and records his patience and faithfulness to his promise. We will jump over all those years and see how the Lord fulfilled his promise to Adam and Eve and to Abraham when he sent his Son to be the world’s Savior.

Introduction

Luke 1 is one of the most joy-filled accounts in Scripture. After long years of waiting, praying, and trusting, the world received the news that the Savior was to be born. There are many wonderful details in the two accounts of the birth of John announced and the birth of Jesus announced. Here are a few key points you might want to consider:

- The angel Gabriel appeared twice. God chose him to serve God’s people and to tell Zechariah and Mary about the birth of their children. *That’s what angels do—serve God’s people and help them on their way to eternal life.* (See Hebrews 1:14.)
- *Jesus would fulfill the many prophecies recorded in the Old Testament.* He would rule over the house of Jacob, sit on David’s throne (verses 32,33), be the answer to God’s promises to help Israel, fulfill the promises God had made to Abraham (verses 54,55), uphold the cause of God’s humble people, and destroy the rich and proud who stand against them (verses 51-53).
- *Jesus is the Son of God.* He was born of a virgin. Mary was his mother, but he was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus’ virgin birth and his divine nature are closely connected. Scripture’s teaching of Jesus being the Son of God cannot stand if a person denies the virgin birth. Note for the children that Christians confess these truths in the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds and that they are foundational to our faith.

God’s Plan of Salvation

God’s plan of salvation was now unfolding. The Savior would soon be born. In spite of mankind’s unfaithfulness, God remained faithful to his promise.

The Account—Luke 1:5-55

<p>1:5-25 “priestly division of Abijah”—The priests had been placed into divisions. When it was time for their division to serve at the temple, they would come to Jerusalem. Each day the priests would burn incense on the little altar inside the Holy Place in the temple. The incense symbolized the prayers of God’s people going up to God. Among other things, Zechariah and Elizabeth had been praying for a child. “He is never to take wine or other fermented drink”—John the Baptist was to be a Nazirite all his life. This was a vow, most often temporary, that an Old Testament believer might make to give thanks to the Lord or for some other reason. Other lifelong Nazirites were Samson and Samuel. “a people prepared for the Lord”—This was John’s purpose, to preach repentance and faith so that God’s people would be ready to receive the Savior when he began his public ministry.</p> <p>1:26-38 “since I am a virgin”—Sadly, even in the</p>	<p>Christian world, many deny the virgin birth. Those who deny the virgin birth of our Savior actually are rejecting the Christian faith. If Mary was not a virgin, Jesus was a natural human being, the Son of two human parents, and not the Son of God. “the Holy Spirit will come upon you”—Mary would conceive because the Holy Spirit would enable her to conceive. “nothing is impossible with God”—The angel used the example of Elizabeth to show how God’s power can enable an old couple to have children. In Mary’s case, the Spirit would miraculously enable her to become pregnant.</p> <p>1:39-56 “the mother of my Lord . . . the baby in my womb leaped for joy”—The Lord of all creation was in Mary’s womb. Even John the Baptist in Elizabeth’s womb gave testimony about whom Mary was carrying. “my Savior”—The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was without sin. But here Mary confessed that she needed a Savior like everyone else.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 5

1_2_05—Gabriel Visits Zechariah and Mary

Upper

Helping the children focus on the true meaning of Christmas.

Making the jump between Joseph and the present lesson.

A caution against being too hard on Zechariah.

Help the children learn to trust in God's promises, as well as rest in the abilities God has given them. The emphasis should be on using what he has given us.

Connecting the Apostles' Creed to this lesson and lessons to follow.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 6
John Is Born—Luke 1:57-80

Review

Last week the angel Gabriel told Zechariah that he would not be able to speak until his child was born. Since it plays an important part in today's account, you might want to review that for the sake of the children who were not present. It is now about three months after Mary had visited Elizabeth.

Introduction

There are not many details in this lesson, and all of them are quite easy to understand. The heart of this account is in Zechariah's song. When the Lord opened Zechariah's mouth, he also filled him with the Holy Spirit. As in Mary's case, the Lord enabled Zechariah to see exactly what the two children were going to do. Notice that Zechariah focused mainly on Jesus and, in that context, described the work his son John would do. John would play a supporting role to Jesus and prepare the people to receive him.

God's Plan of Salvation

God's plan of salvation is described in the words Zechariah sang after his mouth was opened. The Holy Spirit led him to describe the Savior's work. You might want to pick out several phrases that you find most interesting and comforting and share them with the children. Even the youngest children can understand statements like "to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins," or "to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death," or "to guide our feet into the path of peace."

The Account—Luke 1:57-80

<p>1:57-66 "For the Lord's hand was with him."—As a lifelong Nazirite, John had been set aside for the Lord from birth. From the very beginning, the Lord worked in John's heart and created a man who would fearlessly preach repentance and faith to the people of Israel.</p> <p>1:67-75 "redeemed"—God had come to buy back his people from the eternal death they deserved for their sins. "horn of salvation"—A horn is a symbol for power, taken from the horns animals have, which they use to defend themselves. "house of his servant David"—God had promised to send a Savior in David's line, to reestablish David's kingdom. "salvation from our enemies"—This phrase is important. Jesus has not delivered us from the power of our physical enemies, at least not as completely as he will someday do in his eternal kingdom. But he has completely freed us from our spiritual enemies, who accuse us of guilt before</p>	<p>God's throne and seek to destroy our faith. All similar phrases used by Zechariah should be interpreted in the same way. "to serve him without fear"—Through Jesus' forgiveness, we are safe from the accusations of Satan and his followers. Because of Jesus' forgiveness, we can serve our Lord.</p> <p>1:76-79 "the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins"—Too many Jewish people thought that salvation consisted of freedom from physical enemies or from economic problems. Jesus came to win the forgiveness of sins. That is the reason there is true salvation, now and into eternity. "rising sun"—A picture of Jesus. "path of peace"—Peace between God and us.</p> <p>1:80 "became strong in spirit"—John would be Jesus' point man, facing extreme opposition from the Jewish leaders. He needed a strong spirit.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 6

1_2_06—John Is Born

Upper

Maintain contact with parents. As a Sunday school teacher, you are playing a supporting role.

“Bible Bowl” activity.

“Secret Reader.” (This will work well for some upper-grade classes, but not for others. It depends on setting and maturity level.)

Help the children understand the ideas of promises and trust.

Use your whispering voice.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 7
Jesus Is Born—Luke 2:1-20

Review

Jesus was born about three months after John the Baptist was born.

Introduction

Mary and Joseph had traveled to Bethlehem to comply with Caesar Augustus' decree that the world should be taxed and that a census should be made. We see that the entire Roman world and the Roman caesar himself became subservient to the Lord. The Lord had foretold that his Son would be born in David's town, Bethlehem. The census was God's tool to get Mary there.

God's Plan of Salvation

The relation of this story to God's plan of salvation is obvious. The Son of God became a human being so that he could save us. Referring to God's promise to Adam and Eve, Jesus is the seed of the woman, whom God sent to undo the curse of sin and to crush the serpent's head (Genesis 3:15).

The Account—Luke 2:1-20

<p>2:1-3 “a census”—This was done to facilitate tax collecting.</p> <p>2:4-7 “pledged to be married”—This is not equivalent to our custom of engagement. Upon being pledged to each other (engagement), Mary and Joseph were actually husband and wife. But Joseph had not yet fulfilled the requirements Mary's father placed on their marriage, for example, the payment of a certain amount of money. The fact that Mary left with Joseph hints at problems Mary might have been facing in her hometown, where she likely was considered to be an adulteress and her child, illegitimate. The fact that she and Joseph continued to live in Bethlehem after Jesus was born underscores that. “there was no room for them in the inn”—This sets the pace for Jesus' entire life. He was born in lowliness and would live and die in lowliness.</p> <p>2:8-12 “shepherds”—It is remarkable that the Lord of heaven and earth chose to reveal the Savior to humble shepherds rather than the rich and influential religious leaders of the day. But that fits the pattern of lowliness.</p>	<p>“the glory of the Lord shone around them”—The “glory of the Lord” is a technical term used at various places in the Old Testament. It refers to how God showed himself among the Israelites. When the shepherds saw the glory of the Lord, they were not just seeing a bright light. They were actually seeing a vision of God himself. That's why they were terrified. However, the appearance of the glory of the Lord in the Old Testament always indicated God's desire to save and help Israel. That was the case here. And that's why the angels told the shepherds not to be afraid. “Christ the Lord”—“Christ” is the Greek translation of “Messiah,” which means God's “anointed one.” Jesus was “anointed” or “set apart” by God to be our Prophet, Priest, and King. Note the contrast between that and the sign that would point the shepherds to the baby. The <i>Lord</i>, lying in a <i>manger</i>!</p> <p>2:13-20 “peace to men on whom his favor rests”—This is not saying that God's favor rests only on some people but that there is peace between God and the world because God's favor now rests on all people.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 7

1_2_07—Jesus Is Born

Upper

Help the children understand unfamiliar words.

Advice on using worship and introduction elements from Christ-Light.

Help the children understand the very humble nature of Jesus' birth.

Thoughts on retelling the lesson at this time of year when there are so many activities competing with class time.

Helping the children understand true riches.

Allow others to see the work your children do.

Wise Men Worship the Savior—Matthew 2:1-12

Review

Jesus was born in Bethlehem. It is now some time later. We don't really know how much later. The only clue we have is from next week's lesson, where we are told that Herod demanded the death of all the boys in Bethlehem and the vicinity who were two years old and younger. This was "in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi." He had questioned the Magi about "the exact time the star appeared." We assume that Herod thought the star appeared when Jesus was born. Given time for preparation and travel, the Magi would have arrived in Jerusalem a year or so from when they saw the star, giving Herod the round number of two years to work with.

Since three wise men are usually a part of manger scenes, it might be helpful in the lesson to let the children know that the wise men visited Jesus in a house where he was living at the time. For the sake of review, you might simply say that by the time of the Magi's visit, some time had passed and the family was now living in a home in Bethlehem.

Introduction

There is a lot of mystery behind this lesson. Where exactly did the Magi come from? Where did the special star come from? Why did it seem to appear, disappear, and then appear again? How did the star "move"? How did the wise men associate the star with the birth of Jesus? How had they learned about God's promises, and how much did they know about them?

It would be good to bring out some of this mystery to show that God often works in amazing ways to reach his elect and bring them to faith. Some of the children will ask questions about the wise men and the star, so it would be good to know what the Bible does say and what it leaves a mystery.

God's Plan of Salvation

The chief lesson in this account is that God's plan of salvation extends to all people. The Savior was sent not just for the Jewish people, but for Gentiles as well. The "king of the Jews" rules over the entire world, bringing people into his kingdom through the message of God's grace and forgiveness.

The Account—Matthew 2:1-12

<p>2:1-6 "Magi"—These were religious leaders, probably from Persia. They probably used astrology and were familiar with religious books. These men had come to faith in the God of Israel and were probably familiar with the Old Testament Scriptures. Beyond that we know nothing about them. "Where is the one . . . ?"—Evidently, the wise men saw a special star that somehow, probably as a result of God's direct revelation, they associated with Jesus. When they saw the star, they decided to go to Jerusalem. That is where Jewish kings normally were born. "and all Jerusalem with him"—If Herod was angry, it was natural for the rest of the people to be troubled. Herod had a reputation for doing terrible things if his power was threatened. "In Bethlehem in Judea"—The chief priests and teachers of the law knew exactly where the new King of the Jews was to be born. They knew their Scriptures and found their answer in Micah 5:2.</p> <p>2:7-12 "the star they had seen in the east"—Since they went to Jerusalem and not immediately to Bethlehem, it seems logical that the star was not moving</p>	<p>at that point, as it would a little later on when it went before them and stopped over the actual house where Jesus was living. They seemed to have lost sight of the star, for they were overjoyed to see it "again." "until it stopped over the place where the child was"—How could the star do this? This must have been a unique star, shifting direction as the wise men moved closer to Jesus' home. "and worshiped him"—What a wonderful example of a true understanding of who Jesus was. Even though humanly speaking there was nothing to prove he was a king, they confessed their faith in him. They were rich men from a foreign country where they had influential positions, but they bowed down before a baby living in the small town of Bethlehem in the home of poor parents. These men put to shame many of the Jews who later saw Jesus' miracles and still did not worship him as their king, or at least wanted to see great things from him before they would worship him as their king. "gifts"—These were valuable gifts that demonstrated the wealth of these men. The fact that there were three gifts leads people to the conclusion that there were three wise men, but that is just conjecture.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 8

1_2_08—Wise Men Worship the Savior

Upper

Using a map or a globe with this lesson.

Reading directly from the Bible.

An idea about using a poster.

Teaching the lesson by having the kids be reporters.

Herod’s Wicked Plan—Matthew 2:12-23

Review

This account takes place shortly after the previous account.

Introduction

This is a story of persecution. Whenever God’s cause is advancing, Satan is right there trying to stop it. Throughout the centuries, the enemies of God’s people continually harassed and persecuted them. Satan was no less active in Jesus’ case. He immediately began to persecute the Savior. But the Lord was with Jesus and again used a dream to protect his people. Sad to say, innocent people got killed in the cross fire.

This lesson contains three somewhat difficult prophecies. You will probably not get into them in detail with the younger children. But information is included in these notes so that you, the teacher, have some background.

God’s Plan of Salvation

If you read the introduction to Matthew’s book, you notice that he cites seven prophecies that were fulfilled by Jesus, showing that he is the Messiah. The prophecies also paint a picture of Jesus and give us a good overall view of God’s plan of salvation.

1. **1:23** “They will call him Immanuel”—Jesus is “God with us.”
2. **2:6** “Bethlehem”—Jesus is David’s Son and King over God’s kingdom.
3. **2:15** “Out of Egypt I called my son”—Jesus was persecuted, yet he was protected by God’s power.
4. **2:18** “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning”—Jesus’ people will be persecuted and even killed, but they will be delivered by the Lord.
5. **2:23** “He will be called a Nazarene”—Jesus would live in humility.
6. **3:3** “A voice of one calling in the desert”—John the Baptist.
7. **4:16** “The people living in darkness have seen a great light”—Jesus came to proclaim to us the good news.

The Account—Matthew 2:12-23

<p>2:15 “Out of Egypt I called my son.”—This statement is from Hosea 11:1. There the prophet is speaking about Israel being delivered from Egypt under Moses. It does not seem to be a prophecy, and in fact it is not a prophecy in the sense we often think of prophecy, namely, as something that predicts the future. Rather, it speaks about an event and says that that event coincides with another event that would happen in the future. The only reason Israel left Egypt the first time is because years later Jesus did. If God had abandoned his plan of salvation and left his Son in Egypt, he would have left the Israelites to die in Egypt as well. But bringing his Son, Jesus, out of Egypt was the fulfillment of everything he had done for his people in Old Testament times. (This is a tricky concept, but it shows the complete unity of God’s plan of salvation and how Jesus is present in everything that happened in the Old Testament.)</p> <p>2:18 “A voice is heard in Ramah . . .”—This speaks about another event. When the people of Israel were taken into captivity, the land (Rachel, the mother of the main tribes of Israel, Ephraim and Manasseh) wept for her children because they were no more, taken into</p>	<p>captivity by a wicked and ruthless ruler bent on persecuting God’s people. Another wicked and ruthless ruler, Herod, destroyed the children of Israel in Bethlehem. But God delivered both. The entire prophecy from Jeremiah 31:15,16 reads like this: <i>“This is what the LORD says: ‘A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more.’ This is what the LORD says: ‘Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,’ declares the LORD. ‘They will return from the land of the enemy.’”</i> God would restore his people to the Promised Land. God would also restore the children of Bethlehem by taking them to himself in heaven. “Rachel” and the mothers of Bethlehem could take comfort, as can all of God’s people who must suffer persecution.</p> <p>2:23 “He will be called a Nazarene.”—There is no specific Old Testament prophecy that contains these words. <i>Nazarene</i> is a term that denotes humility. The Old Testament pictures Jesus doing his work in humility, and Jesus’ living in Nazareth was an aspect of his humility.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 9

1_2_09—Herod's Wicked Plan

Upper

Helping children understand Old Testament prophecies, and looking up the books of the Bible.

Ideas about doing map work.

Thoughts on teaching the children about prayer.

Helping the children understand persecution.

The Boy Jesus in the Temple—Luke 2:41-52

Review

Last week’s account took place about ten years before this week’s account. Jesus went from a young toddler of 1 or 2 years old to a young man of 12. With the exception of Luke, the gospel writers say nothing about Jesus from the time of his return to Nazareth from Egypt until his appearance at the Jordan River shortly before he began his public ministry.

Introduction

Luke records one event in Jesus’ early life, when he went to the Passover at age 12. Twelve was the age at which a young man became a “son of the law.” Young Jewish boys, having arrived at an age when they could understand God’s Old Testament laws, placed themselves under the requirements of the covenant God gave the Israelites at Mount Sinai. This entailed a period of training, much like our practice of confirmation. It was customary for a 12-year-old boy to accompany his parents to Jerusalem and begin observing the laws under which he had placed himself. This is what Jesus was doing.

In this account, there are some puzzling questions surrounding why Jesus was left behind. Whose fault was it? Actually, it was neither Jesus’ nor his parents’ fault. Families attending festivals in Jerusalem often did so in large groups. It was natural that Jesus spend time with relatives, away from his parents. People in the larger group would often travel at different speeds and meet up in the evening where they planned on staying. For some reason, neither Jesus’ parents nor his relatives had charge of Jesus when the group left Jerusalem. No doubt his being left behind was an accident, or perhaps he told someone he wanted to go to the temple one last time and got left behind—but this is speculation. In any case, keep your children from thinking that Jesus’ parents were cold and careless or that Jesus was in some way irresponsible.

The other part of the account that raises some questions is Jesus’ discussion with the religious teachers. What was his posture toward them? Was he acting as a teacher or as a learner? He was now a “son of the law.” He had the right—even though he was quite young for this—to discuss the law and attempt to grow in understanding it. That is what he was doing. This was not a lecture format, as is often the case in our forms of instruction. It was more of a seminar format, where there was a back-and-forth exchange of questions and answers. Jesus was respectful of his elders and teachers. He was asking them questions to help himself grow. He was responding with answers to their questions. But it was not just his answers that amazed people, also his questions. Sometimes the nature of the questions a person asks reveals his depth of understanding even greater than the answers he gives.

God’s Plan of Salvation

This account is more than just an interesting part of Jesus’ life. The last verse, verse 52, helps us understand the importance of this account. Jesus’ work of salvation did not just include his suffering and death for us. It also included his perfect life. This account gives us a glimpse of how he was acting as our perfect sacrifice all during his youth. In the temple that day, he was growing in his knowledge of God’s law. As the Son of God, he knew all things, but he had put off that knowledge. As a human being he had to grow—in wisdom, in physical stature, and in favor with God and man. He grew in favor with God as he fulfilled God’s will and in our place did what we, because of our sin, cannot do.

The Account—Luke 2:41-52

2:49 “**didn’t you know . . . my Father’s house?**”— This statement gives us insights into how much Jesus’ parents were aware of who he was. Both Mary and Joseph had been told that Jesus was the Son of God. There were other events, like the appearance of angels to the shepherds and the visit of the Magi, that made it

clear that Jesus was the Son of God. But perhaps the advance of years and what appeared to be Jesus’ normal growth as a human child had made the previous events become fuzzy in their minds. They failed to realize that Jesus had to be in “my” Father’s house, not in “our” Father’s house as any Jewish person might say.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 10

1_2_10—The Boy Jesus in the Temple

Upper

A more elaborate activity: developing a play from scratch with the children.

Ways to get the children thinking about what Jesus may have asked the teachers in the temple.

Discuss honor and obedience to parents.

Suggestions for using a time line.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 11

The Baptism of Jesus—Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21,22

Review

It is now about 18 years after last week's lesson. Jesus had grown up, no doubt living at home and perhaps helping his stepfather, Joseph, or even taking over Joseph's carpentry business if he had died by this time (which some think is likely considering the lack of any reference to Joseph later in the gospels). At the age of 30, if Jesus followed the normal Jewish practice of starting a teaching ministry at that age, Jesus came to the area by the Jordan River where John was baptizing.

Introduction

This account takes place by the Jordan River, where John was baptizing those who repented of their sins and wanted God's forgiveness. This is the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and in many ways, what happened here set the pace for what Jesus would be doing for the next three years.

God's Plan of Salvation

This account teaches a number of important lessons about God's plan of salvation.

First, it reinforces the lesson we learned in the account of the boy Jesus in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus came to this earth not only to suffer and die for our sins but also to live a holy life that he could credit to us. When Jesus told John, "It is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness," he was saying that (1) John was right. Jesus had no sins to be forgiven. As the perfect Son of God, Jesus did not need to repent and be baptized. (2) As the Savior who came to redeem us from our sins, Jesus needed to fulfill every act of righteousness that God requires of sinful human beings. In short, Jesus was baptized for us.

Second, Jesus was doing everything perfectly for us, just as his Father wanted him to do. The fact that the Father put his stamp of approval on his Son's work tells us that we have a perfect Savior. And if God is pleased with his Son and the work his Son is doing for us, then God is also pleased with us, who through faith have received the benefit of Jesus' work.

Third, as the humble Son of Man, Jesus needed his Father's help if he was to fulfill his work. At his baptism, Jesus received that help. The Holy Spirit came on him and empowered him to do his work of salvation. Jesus did not receive only a portion of the Holy Spirit's gifts but all of them. After Mark's account of Jesus' baptism, we are told that the Spirit sent Jesus out into the desert to be tempted by Satan. This helps us understand the role the Spirit played in Jesus' ministry, giving him guidance and direction every step of the way.

Fourth, we see the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are all at work in bringing about our salvation.

The Account— Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21,22

Matthew 3:13 **"from Galilee"**—John was baptizing in the Jewish heartland, in the area of the Jordan to the east of Jerusalem. Jesus had been living in Nazareth, in the northern province of Galilee. (At this time, the land of Israel was divided into three Roman provinces: Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.)

Luke 3:22 **"in bodily form like a dove"**—Luke tells us that the Holy Spirit is just that, a spirit. But on this occasion he took on the bodily form of a dove. He may have used a dove because of the peaceful nature of the bird. However, we are not told exactly why the Spirit chose this bird. If there is a dove somewhere in your church building, you may want to help your children understand the meaning of that symbol: peace.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 11

1_2_11—The Baptism of Jesus

Upper

A teacher's personal preparation—beyond the Christ-Light material—is very important.

Providing structure for the class: suggestions for setting up a simple structure and for weaving the Christ-Light material into the simple structure.

Working with small groups even if you only have a few students.

Focus on teaching the lesson, and remove any activities or processes that waste time.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 12

Jesus Is Tempted—Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:1-13

Review

This week's lesson takes place immediately after the account of Jesus' baptism.

Introduction

The children in your class may or may not have heard this story. You might want to explain that this was the very beginning of Jesus' ministry. He started right away with a series of battles against Satan. The purpose of this lesson is to examine those battles. Your goal should be to help the children understand the nature of Satan's temptations and how Jesus used his knowledge of God's promises (always quoting God's Word) to withstand them.

God's Plan of Salvation

The importance of this account is sometimes overlooked. We often focus on Jesus' suffering and death for our sins. We treasure the last days of Jesus' life because he suffered God's judgment in our place. His death on a cross freed us from the guilt of our sins.

The account of Jesus being driven into the desert to be tempted by the devil is just as important. Here Jesus is fulfilling everything God demands of us, doing this for us and in our place. We do not always resist Satan's temptations. In fact, we often give in to them. Jesus, in our place, resisted every one of Satan's temptations. Just as Jesus' suffering and death are ours through faith, so Jesus' perfect life is ours through faith also.

As you teach this lesson, you will be teaching the children how they, like Jesus, can resist temptation. But most of all, you will want to teach them about how Jesus resisted temptation for them. This was part of God's will for Jesus' life. He did not take this task on himself. (Note that the Spirit led him out into the desert. It was not his own idea.) Rather, he was fulfilling his Father's will. He would continue to do this for the next three years, every step of the way to the cross.

The Account—Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12,13; Luke 4:1-13

We will use the Matthew 4:1-11 account for the notes. 4:1,2 **“into the desert”**—The Judean desert is a very dry and barren desert. It is located southwest of the place where John was baptizing. **“forty days”**—This number appears in various places in the Bible (the 40 days of the flood, the Jews' 40 years of wandering in the desert). It is difficult to settle on the meaning of this number, but it is interesting to note that Jesus went through intense hunger, suffering, and temptation as he began his ministry, and after he suffered for our sins, he showed his glory to the disciples for 40 days before he ascended into heaven.

4:3,4 **“If you are the Son of God”**—Some interpret this as part of Satan's temptation, where he was trying to get Jesus to doubt his relation to God. But we can also see this as a prelude to the temptation. We might paraphrase “since” you are the Son of God. **“tell these stones to become bread”**—Satan was trying to get Jesus to find the answer to his intense hunger in his own way. **“Man does not live on bread alone”**—Jesus' response was that he would trust in God. His physical life did not depend on his own ability to provide for his

needs but on whether God was speaking his Word: Let my Son's life be sustained.

4:5-7 **“throw yourself down”**—What would have happened if Jesus had done what Satan asked? We can speculate that God's angels would have protected Jesus. But Satan would have gotten Jesus to doubt God's care. In other words, Satan was saying: “Let's see if he will really protect you.” **“to the test”**—Satan had misused Scripture. Jesus was using it properly and exposing Satan's temptation. If Jesus would have given in, once again he would have been showing doubt in his Father's ability to care for him.

4:8-11 **“All this I will give you”**—In a sense, Satan did have the world in his power. He is called “the prince of this world” (John 16:11). Once again, Satan was trying to get Jesus to distrust his Father's method for Jesus to establish his kingdom and get Jesus to follow his (Satan's) plan. Jesus told Satan that he would follow his Father's plan. In following his Father's plan, he would worship his Father and not Satan. All these temptations strike at Jesus' trust of his heavenly Father, much the same as the temptations Satan used with Adam and Eve.

Year 1 Winter Lesson 12

1_2_12—Jesus Is Tempted

Upper

Comments on the Christ-Light activity in which the children write out Jesus' responses to the devil's temptations and the references to the Old Testament.

Get the children into the Bible as much as possible.

Ideas for helping children write prayers.

Comments on using the worksheets.

Year 1, Winter, Lesson 13

Jesus' First Miracle—John 2:1-11

Review

Several things have happened between last week's lesson and this week's lesson. After Jesus returned from the desert, where he was tempted, we find him once again at the Jordan River where John was baptizing. There Jesus began gathering his disciples. Here we see one of the immediate benefits of John the Baptist's work. He had prepared his disciples to understand and receive the Savior, and now some of John's disciples would become Jesus' disciples.

Introduction

Jesus began showing to the world his glory as the Son of God.

It must have been confusing for the disciples to see a person who struggled with temptation, lived among fishermen, and had no place where he could lay his head claim to be the Son of God. The miracles Jesus performed showed that he was indeed the Son of God.

Sometimes we downgrade miracles, thinking that we Christians don't need to see miracles—we should just believe the Word of God. True, we have been brought to faith through the power of the Word, yet Jesus' miracles do play a role in supporting our faith. In our reading we are told, "His disciples put their faith in him." That happened as a result of their seeing Jesus perform a miracle. Through the miracle, the disciples came to realize that Jesus was who he said he was.

Miracles by themselves do not lead people to faith. They support what the Word of God says.

God's Plan of Salvation

The Lord Jesus has displayed his glory by his words and deeds. The heavenly Father showed that Jesus is his Son by giving him the power and authority to perform miracles. That is what we see in this lesson. (See Acts 2:22: "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.") God did this so that people would recognize who Jesus was and put their faith in him.

As you teach this miracle to your children, realize that the Lord is using this miracle to support what they know about Jesus and to help them further their faith in him.

The Account—John 2:1-11

<p>2:1-11 "On the third day"—The disciples had just been chosen by Jesus and had begun to follow him. Jesus used his miracle to show these new disciples that he was indeed the person John said he was, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world. "They have no more wine."—Mary, Jesus' mother, shows that she believed her son was able to perform a</p>	<p>miracle. "My time has not yet come."—Jesus was not being rude to his mother. He was simply saying that her timing did not match his. The fact that Mary told the servants to do whatever Jesus asked is a tribute to her faith and understanding that Jesus, not she, was now ordering his own life and could act when and how he wished.</p>
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Year 1 Winter Lesson 13

1_2_13—Jesus' First Miracle

Upper

Note the true and false option, which gives the children a chance to express themselves. Also, direct the children to find their answers in the Bible.

Comments on the “Call on Jesus” option.

Comments on the “Is Jesus Listening?” option (using Romans 8:28 and John 3:16).

Older children like projects just as younger children do.