

THE WORD BECAME FLESH



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#05 - Jesus Is Presented at the Temple Luke 2:21-38

PICTURES (Note: Inserted in brackets at the appropriate place in the lesson is the number of the picture to show the students.)

- 5-1 Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the temple
- 5-2 Simeon in the temple

REVIEW (Before teaching lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
Why was Jesus born in Bethlehem? What did the angels tell the shepherds? Why did the Magi seek Jesus? What did the Magi bring to Jesus?
- **Big Question Review:** What is the good news for all people?
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review:** Luke 2:10-11
Jesus our Savior is Christ the Lord.
¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

Jesus was born a Jew. Who are the Jews? The Jews are the people of God. Jews follow the laws of God established in the first five books of the Old Testament. They are descended from Abraham with whom God established a covenant or promise long before Jesus was born.

When God chose Abraham what did he say to him, (Genesis 12:1-3) *"Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. ² I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."*

How have all people been blessed through Abraham? The Messiah (Savior) God promised was to come through the Jews. That is how all people on earth would be blessed through Abraham.

Since Jesus' parents were Jews they followed the Jewish customs established by the law given to Moses. After Jesus' birth, they were required by the Old Testament law to do certain things.

Luke 2:21-24

²¹ *On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise him, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he had been conceived.*

²² *When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."*

What were the things Mary and Joseph did for the baby according to the law?(picture 5-1)

- They named him Jesus. This is what they both had been instructed to do. What does the name Jesus mean? Jesus is the Greek form of the name Joshua which means "the Lord saves".
- They had him circumcised. **Circumcision** is something the Jews had been commanded to do to show that they had been set them apart to be God's people. Circumcision is when the fold of skin (foreskin) at the end of a penis is cut off. God instituted this custom with Abraham as an affirmation of faith in God and his promise. It is to be done when a baby boy is 8 days old.
- They completed the time of purification. **Purification** is the ceremonial cleansing of a person who is considered unclean. (Leviticus 12) For 30 days after having a boy baby a woman couldn't go to the temple or touch anything that was sacred (belonging to God).

- They consecrated him to the Lord with a sacrifice. **Consecration** is the setting apart or the dedication of something to the worship and service of God. The first born son belonged to and was consecrated to God and had to be redeemed (bought back) with a sacrifice. For a poor person the required sacrifice was two pigeons. (Numbers 18:15-16)

Luke 2:25-31 (picture 5-2)

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

What was Simeon waiting for? He was waiting for the consolation of Israel. **Consolation** is the giving of solace or comfort, the lessening of grief or sorrow. This refers to the comfort that the Messiah would bring to the Jewish people to relieve them of their pain and suffering.

Why was Simeon at the temple when Jesus was brought there? Simeon was led to be at the temple by the Holy Spirit.

Why could Simeon die in peace? Simeon saw the Savior God had promised and that he had been waiting for.

What did Simeon say Jesus would be? Simeon said Jesus would be a light of revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to God's people Israel.

What does it mean that Jesus would be a light of revelation to the Gentiles? Jesus would reveal to all people on earth who God is, what he requires of people and what God has done for all people so they can have a relationship with him.

What does it mean that Jesus would be a light for glory to God's people? Through Jesus' ministry on earth, God's glory, his awesome power and majesty, would be shown to the Jews.

Luke 2:33-35

³³ The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

How did Joseph and Mary respond to what was said about Jesus? They marveled. Even though Gabriel had basically told them the same thing, it was hard for them to fully comprehend.

How would Jesus cause the falling and rising of many people? Christ lifts up those who believe in him, but is a stumbling block to those who don't. Those who believe gain eternal life, but those who don't believe are assigned to hell.

What does it mean that Mary's soul would be pierced too? The death of Jesus would be excruciatingly painful for both Jesus and Mary.

Luke 2:36-38

³⁶ There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Who was Anna? Anna was a prophetess (female prophet) who served faithfully in the temple.

What did Anna say about Jesus? Anna said that Jesus would bring redemption to Israel.

What does that mean? Redemption means to buy back something for a price. Jesus bought us back by paying the price for our sin by dying on the cross.

Why do you think Luke included the testimonies of Simeon and Anna in the gospel he wrote? The testimonies of Simeon and Anna confirm the other testimonies that have already been covered in the birth of Jesus.

Besides the testimonies of Simeon and Anna, what other eyewitness testimonies to Jesus' birth have we already seen in this study?

- The testimony of Gabriel to Zechariah – his son would be the prophet of the Most High
- The testimony of Gabriel to Mary – the son born to her would be the Son of God
- The testimony of the angel to Joseph – Mary's son was to be named Jesus as he would save his people from their sin.
- The testimony of the angels to the shepherds – The Savior has been born, he is Christ the King
- The leading of the Magi by the Holy Spirit– They were seeking the King of the Jews

The testimony of eyewitnesses about who Jesus is affirms who he is and supports our faith in him.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** When was Jesus circumcised? Who gave him the name Jesus? When was Jesus presented at the temple? Why did Joseph and Mary present him at the temple? Who was Simeon? Why was Simeon at the temple? What did Simeon say about Jesus? Who was Anna? What did Anna say about Jesus?
- **Thought Questions:** Why do you think Luke included the presentation of Jesus at the temple in his Gospel? Why aren't people persuaded by eyewitness testimonies?
- **Prayer:** Thank God for his love and faithfulness in sending a Savior. Thank him for the testimonials included in the Gospels that affirm our faith in who Jesus is and what he has done for us. Pray that your eyes would be opened to fully see the glory of Jesus, experience his comfort, and understand his revelation of who God is and what he wants for us.
- **The Big Question: Who did Jesus come to save?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Luke 2:30-32**
Jesus is the savior of and a light of revelation to all people who believe in him.

³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all people, ³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.

Questions: Who did Jesus come to save? Who are Gentiles? How is Jesus a revelation to the Gentiles? What is glory? How is Jesus glory to Israel?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: After Jesus was born, Joseph and Mary had him circumcised and then consecrated him to the Lord at the temple in Jerusalem according to Jewish custom.

1. A man named Simeon, moved by the Spirit, went to the temple and prophesied about Jesus being a light for revelation of what is true about God to those who weren't Jews and showing God's awesome splendor to Israel.
2. A widow named Anna came up and gave thanks to God and spoke about the redemption of Israel in terms of Jesus.
3. Joseph and Mary marveled about what was said about Jesus.

Why do I need to know this? So I marvel as Mary and Joseph did about who Jesus is and become more sensitive to the Holy Spirit speaking to me.

★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the booklet and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse in the inside.

★ **Activity Page:** Matching

Instructions: Match the number of the definition to the correct term.

Purification -Ceremonial cleansing of a person who is ritually unclean.

Circumcision -Cutting off the fold of skin (foreskin) at the end of the penis.

Salvation-Deliverance from the power and penalty of sin.

Revelation-God making known to human beings both his own nature and other important truths.

Glory-Awesome splendor

Redemption-Price paid to win the release of another person from bondage or danger.

Consecration-Setting apart or dedicating to the worship and service of God.

Consolation-The giving of comfort, the lessening of grief or sorrow.

★ **Further Understanding:** Investigation/Reasoning Skills

Instructions:

1. Read the whole passage below to the students as they read along in their Bibles or on the discussion notes.
2. Read the passage verse by verse and have the students explain each verse.
3. Have the students extract one important truth from the passage. This can be done as an entire class or you can break into pairs or small groups.
4. Have the students answer the additional two questions: How can you apply this truth in your life? What will be the result of applying that truth?

Isaiah 42:5-9 – A light to the Gentiles

This is what God the LORD says—he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: ⁶ “I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, ⁷to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

⁸ “I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. ⁹ See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”

Questions: Who is the God who is speaking? What does God have to say about the one he has called in righteousness? What does that mean?

JOURNAL

The daily journal inside the booklet has six readings that relate to a theme. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Journal Focus: Why did Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple?

Reading 1: Leviticus 12:1-8 Mary had to give a purification offering.

How was a woman who had a baby to fulfill the law? How did Mary do that?

Reading 2: Genesis 17:1-14 Jesus had to be circumcised.

What was the covenant God made with Abraham? Why did Jesus have to be circumcised?

Reading 3: Exodus 13:11-16 The firstborn belongs to God.

Why did the firstborn son belong to God?

Reading 4: Numbers 3:5-13 The Levites were dedicated to serve God.

What was the tribe of Levi selected to do? Why?

Reading 5: Numbers 8:15-22 The Levites took the place of the firstborn.

What did God take the Levites to do? Who did they do this in place of?

Reading 6: Matthew 5:17-20 Jesus came to fulfill the law.

What did Jesus come to do? What does that mean?