

## LESSON ONE

The prophet announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness...

*Isaiah 9:2, 6-7*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light. On those living in a pitch-dark land, light has dawned. <sup>6</sup> A child is born to us, a son is given to us, and authority will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. <sup>7</sup> There will be vast authority and endless peace for David's throne and for his kingdom, establishing and sustaining it with justice and righteousness now and forever. The zeal of the LORD of heavenly forces will do this.

## LESSON TWO

The king is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation...

*Isaiah 11:1-4a, 6-9*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>1</sup> A shoot will grow up from the stump of Jesse; a branch will sprout from his roots. <sup>2</sup> The LORD's spirit will rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of planning and strength, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD. <sup>3</sup> He will delight in fearing the LORD. He won't judge by appearances, nor decide by hearsay. <sup>4a</sup> He will judge the needy with righteousness, and decide with equity for those who suffer in the land. <sup>6</sup> The wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard will lie down with the young goat; the calf and the young lion will feed together, and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow and the bear will graze. Their young will lie down together, and a lion will eat straw like an ox. <sup>8</sup> A nursing child will play over the snake's hole; toddlers will reach right over the serpent's den. <sup>9</sup> They won't harm or destroy anywhere on my holy mountain. The earth will surely be filled with the knowledge of the LORD, just as the water covers the sea.

### LESSON THREE

The angel Gabriel announces to the virgin Mary that she will give birth to God's promised Son whose kingdom will never end...

*Luke 1:26-35, 38*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>26</sup>When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup>She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. <sup>31</sup>Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. <sup>33</sup>He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom." <sup>34</sup>Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?" <sup>35</sup>The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son." <sup>38</sup>Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

### LESSON FOUR

An angel comes to Joseph in a dream...

*Matthew 1:18-25*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>18</sup>This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. When Mary his mother was engaged to Joseph, before they were married, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup>Joseph her husband was a righteous man. Because he didn't want to humiliate her, he decided to call off their engagement quietly. <sup>20</sup>As he was thinking about this, an angel from the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup>She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup>Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled: <sup>23</sup>*Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will call him, Emmanuel. (Emmanuel means "God with us.")* <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did just as an angel from God commanded and took Mary as his wife. <sup>25</sup>But he didn't have sexual relations with her until she gave birth to a son. Joseph called him Jesus.

## LESSON FIVE

Against a backdrop of emperors and taxes,  
Jesus is born...

*Luke 2:1-7*

*(Common English Bible)*

<sup>1</sup>In those days Caesar Augustus declared that everyone throughout the empire should be enrolled in the tax lists. <sup>2</sup>This first enrollment occurred when Quirinius governed Syria. <sup>3</sup>Everyone went to their own cities to be enrolled. <sup>4</sup>Since Joseph belonged to David's house and family line, he went up from the city of Nazareth in Galilee to David's city, called Bethlehem, in Judea. <sup>5</sup>He went to be enrolled together with Mary, who was promised to him in marriage and who was pregnant. <sup>6</sup>While they were there, the time came for Mary to have her baby. <sup>7</sup>She gave birth to her firstborn child, a son, wrapped him snugly, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the guestroom.

## LESSON SIX

The shepherds go to see the Savior  
of the world, lying in a manger...

*Luke 2:8-16*

*(Common English Bible)*

<sup>8</sup>Nearby shepherds were living in the fields, guarding their sheep at night. <sup>9</sup>The Lord's angel stood before them, the Lord's glory shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup>The angel said, "Don't be afraid! Look! I bring good news to you - wonderful, joyous news for all people. <sup>11</sup>Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup>This is a sign for you: you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger." <sup>13</sup>Suddenly a great assembly of the heavenly forces was with the angel praising God. They said, <sup>14</sup>"Glory to God in heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors." <sup>15</sup>When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go right now to Bethlehem and see what's happened. Let's confirm what the Lord has revealed to us." <sup>16</sup>They went quickly and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger.

## LESSON SEVEN

The wise men follow a star to find the child Jesus, the King of the Jews...

*Matthew 2:1-11*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>1</sup>After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. <sup>2</sup>They asked, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We’ve seen his star in the east, and we’ve come to honor him.” <sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. <sup>4</sup>He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They said, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote: <sup>6</sup>*You, Bethlehem, land of Judah, by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah, because from you will come one who governs, who will shepherd my people Israel.*” <sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search carefully for the child. When you’ve found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him.” <sup>9</sup>When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. <sup>11</sup>They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

## LESSON EIGHT

John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation...

*John 1:1-14*  
(Common English Bible)

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>The Word was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup>Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being <sup>4</sup>through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn’t extinguish the light. <sup>6</sup>A man named John was sent from God. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. <sup>8</sup>He himself wasn’t the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>The light was in the world, and the world came into being through the light, but the world didn’t recognize the light. <sup>11</sup>The light came to his own people, and his own people didn’t welcome him. <sup>12</sup>But those who did welcome him, those who believed in his name, he authorized to become God’s children, <sup>13</sup>born not from blood nor from human desire or passion, but born from God. <sup>14</sup>The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.