

## Lesson 103: The birth of Jesus

**Scripture:** Matthew 1:18-25 , Luke 2

**Memory Verse:** And they will call him Immanuel which means 'God with us'. Matthew 1:23

Mary had heard from the angel Gabriel that she would have a son who she was to name Jesus and who would become the forever King and savior. At the time that happened, Mary was engaged to be married to Joseph. But since she became pregnant before they were married, Joseph thought it would be best to break the engagement.

While he was still thinking about it an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the son she is going to have is a special gift from God. **And you are to name him Jesus for he will save his people from their sins.**"

All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet Isaiah: "Look! a young girl will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means 'God is with us.'" When Joseph woke up, he realized that God Himself was going to earth by being born as a helpless baby. So he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.

While Mary was still pregnant with Jesus, the Roman emperor, Augustus, told everyone to return to their own ancestral towns to register for a census (a count of the people). And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, his fiancée, who was now obviously pregnant.

And while they were there the time came for her baby to be born. But because of the crowds that had come to Bethlehem, there was no room at the inn for Mary and Joseph. So instead they had to stay in a shelter that was meant for animals. So she gave birth to her first child, a son, and wrapped him snugly in baby clothes and laid him in an animal's food trough.

This was a very humble beginning for the forever-King and savior; probably no one else on earth even knew about the birth. However, in heaven, there was huge celebration, and God sent some angels to deliver news of Jesus' birth to some nearby shepherds.

So an angel of the Lord appeared among the shepherds, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! Go see for yourself; you will find the baby wrapped snugly in baby clothes, lying in a manger."

Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen.