

7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)**Lesson Plan:** The Birth of Jesus - Pt. 2**Learning Goals:** Students should be able to distinguish between the biblical account of Jesus' birth as recorded in Luke and the various traditions surrounding Christmas.**Question:** What have your parents told you about the events surrounding your birth?

Prayer.

Discuss question on board. (5 minutes)

Read Luke 2:1-20 together as a class.**When was Jesus born?**

- Not A.D. 1 - This is what we may think
- Miscalculation by a monk named Dionysius in 525 that put Jesus' birth at December 25, 1. Gospels say that Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great. Herod died around 3 or 4 BCE. Therefore, scholars place Jesus birth around 4 BCE.

Where was Jesus born?

- City of Bethlehem - *have students locate it on their map*
- Connection to Micah 5:2
- The City of David
- Literally means "the city of bread"
- Reason - a census was taken and everyone had to go back to their hometown

What really happened?**"No Room in the Inn"**

- Gk. "kataluma" - doesn't mean "inn" as we think of it as a hotel, but "guest room"
- Manger - Feeding trough - typically inside the home, separating the animals from the people on the first floor (family would live upstairs above)

Shepherds - who were they?

- Not hard-working, respected, ranchers (blue-collar workers)
- Unclean Peasants (unclean according to the law)
- Had a bad reputation for nomadic lifestyle (stealing)
- They were a marginalized people (exactly the kind that Jesus came to liberate - the poor, sinners, or outcasts)
- Tending sheep usually took place between March and November (What does that mean for when we celebrate Jesus' birth - Christmas?)

Angels - who/what are angels?

- Heavenly Messengers
- They are not humans after death - they are a separate part of creation
- There are also "fallen angels"
- Can live in heaven and move between heaven and earth
- They never die, therefore they do not need to marry or reproduce (Mt. 22:30; Lk. 20:36)
- In the gospels, they are never said to possess wings
- Fear-inspiring (not little cherubs that sit on a cloud)

Message

- “Fear Not” - frequently the first words out of angels’ mouths
- “Good News” - euangellion? - the Gospel; for “all” people
- Savior, who is Christ (loaded term) - Messianic expectation (Isaiah 9:6-7; 2:1-5) - a Savior would come and sit on the throne of David
- “Glory to God” - one of the roles of the angels is to bring glory to God

What was the baby’s name?

- We don’t actually know yet. He was not named at birth, but eight days after his birth.
- We do know what the angel told Mary (and Joseph) to name the baby.

What about the wise men?

- There are no wise men in Luke’s story
- They were not there at the birth of Jesus - this is a misconception

Lesson Summary /Review:

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Angels
- Shepherds
- Bethlehem