

Simply Charlotte Mason presents

• THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE •



CHRIST TO EARLY CHURCH

Matthew—Acts

BIBLE LESSONS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY | GRADES 1–12

by Sonya Shafer

BIBLE HISTORY FOR YOUR WHOLE FAMILY.

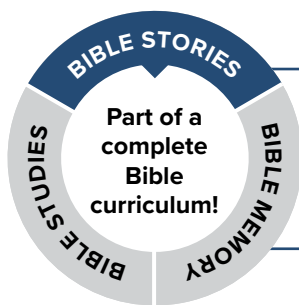
Discover the living narrative of the Bible with this Bible history curriculum that traces the story of God's people from the birth of Christ through Paul's imprisonment in Rome. You and your students will gain an understanding of the overarching history in the Bible through interesting 20-minute lessons that guide you through the Scripture accounts.

Each year of studies provides 72 lessons to be done as a family, with narration and discussion prompts provided at three skill levels so you can customize and raise the bar for each student. Teacher prep is simple with step-by-step instructions to follow, giving you confidence and letting you enjoy the lessons with your students.

The study comes to life with fascinating full-color and vintage photographs that let your students see landmarks, artifacts, replicas and models, and other images related to the Bible accounts studied in the lessons. Your students will also use a Bible atlas to connect the locations of the Bible with modern-day geography. And Book of Centuries entries help you record key events and people to form connections with other historical events.

THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE SERIES

This four-year course is designed to be completed three times across all 12 grade levels. Narration and discussion prompts provide opportunities for middle school and high school students to delve deeper as the four-year cycle is repeated.



Pair The Story of God and His People with In the Word Student Bible Studies and Scripture Memory for a thorough, effective Bible curriculum that will get your family into God's Word for life.

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Charlotte Mason

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The Story of God and His People is part of a complete Charlotte Mason curriculum. See where this course fits in the Simply CM curriculum at simplycm.com/curriculum.

Book of Centuries dates are taken from the ESV Study Bible timelines.

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The Story of God and His People: Christ to Early Church

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CONTENTS

LESSON 1	
The Angel's Message.....	12
LESSON 2	
The Birth of John.....	16
LESSON 3	
The Birth of Jesus.....	19
LESSON 4	
The Flight to Egypt.....	22
LESSON 5	
Jesus' Baptism and Temptation.....	25
LESSON 6	
John Announces Jesus.....	28
LESSON 7	
At the Wedding and the Temple.....	31
LESSON 8	
A Visit from Nicodemus.....	34
LESSON 9	
The Woman at the Well.....	37
LESSON 10	
Jesus Ministers in Galilee.....	39
LESSON 11	
The First Disciples.....	42
LESSON 12	
The Man at the Pool of Bethesda.....	45
LESSON 13	
The Sermon on the Mount.....	48
LESSON 14	
The Least and the Greatest.....	51
LESSON 15	
Some Women Disciples.....	54
LESSON 16	
Parables about Sowing Seed.....	57
LESSON 17	
Who Is This?.....	60
LESSON 18	
On Land and On Sea.....	63

CONTENTS *continued*

LESSON 19	
The Bread of Life.....	65
LESSON 20	
Tradition vs. Truth.....	68
LESSON 21	
The Sign of Jonah.....	71
LESSON 22	
The Transfiguration.....	74
LESSON 23	
Exam.....	77
LESSON 24	
Exam.....	78
LESSON 25	
Relationships in God’s Kingdom.....	79
LESSON 26	
Spreading the Word.....	81
LESSON 27	
At the Feast of Booths.....	84
LESSON 28	
The Light of the World.....	87
LESSON 29	
The Good Shepherd.....	90
LESSON 30	
The Great Banquet.....	93
LESSON 31	
The Lost is Found.....	95
LESSON 32	
Attitudes Before God.....	98
LESSON 33	
The Resurrection and the Life.....	101
LESSON 34	
Glimpses into Jesus’ Days.....	103
LESSON 35	
The Triumphal Entry.....	106
LESSON 36	
For This Purpose I Have Come.....	109

CONTENTS *continued*

LESSON 37	
Tricky Questions	112
LESSON 38	
Things That Are Going to Take Place	115
LESSON 39	
The Last Supper	118
LESSON 40	
The Way, the Truth, and the Life	121
LESSON 41	
The True Vine	124
LESSON 42	
Jesus' Prayer in the Garden	127
LESSON 43	
Jesus' Arrest and Trials	130
LESSON 44	
Jesus' Crucifixion and Burial	133
LESSON 45	
Jesus' Resurrection	136
LESSON 46	
More Appearances and the Ascension	138
LESSON 47	
Exam	141
LESSON 48	
Exam	142
LESSON 49	
Many Believe at Pentecost	143
LESSON 50	
A Lame Man Healed	147
LESSON 51	
Troubles From Inside and Out	150
LESSON 52	
The Stoning of Stephen	152
LESSON 53	
The Witness Expands	156
LESSON 54	
The Conversion of Saul	159

CONTENTS *continued*

LESSON 55	
Peter and Cornelius	162
LESSON 56	
Peter Back in Jerusalem	164
LESSON 57	
Paul and Barnabas Sent	168
LESSON 58	
The First Journey Completed	172
LESSON 59	
The Council at Jerusalem	175
LESSON 60	
Paul and Silas in Philippi	178
LESSON 61	
The Gospel in Greece	181
LESSON 62	
The Second Journey Completed	184
LESSON 63	
Paul in Ephesus	188
LESSON 64	
The Third Journey Completed	191
LESSON 65	
Paul Arrested in Jerusalem	194
LESSON 66	
The Plot Against Paul	197
LESSON 67	
Paul Before the Roman Governors	200
LESSON 68	
Paul Before Herod Agrippa	203
LESSON 69	
Paul Sails for Rome	205
LESSON 70	
Paul in Rome	207
LESSON 72	
Exam	211

MATERIALS NEEDED

FAMILY

- Bible in your preferred translation
- The Story of God and His People: Christ to Early Church Pictures*
- The Student Bible Atlas* by Tim Dowley, Revised Edition (2015)
- Family Book of Centuries

GRADES 5–8

- My Book of Centuries*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Matthew*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Parables*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Mark and Acts*

GRADES 9–12

- My Book of Centuries*
- Study Bible or commentary of your choice
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Matthew*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Parables*
- (optional) **Bible Picture Portfolios: Mark and Acts*



Follow this link or use the QR code to download a free Family Book of Centuries for younger students and to learn more about *My Book of Centuries* for older students: simplycm.com/boc

* If your students are already familiar with these Bible accounts, you might consider adding the Bible Picture Portfolios that correspond to the passages being studied. Only one copy per family is needed. The lessons will let you know when to use each picture if desired.

HOW TO USE

The Story of God and His People is a four-year Bible history curriculum designed for all ages. Its overarching purpose is to encourage your student to develop a personal knowledge of God. Complete two lessons each week to finish this book in a school year.

Family Lessons

The lessons are designed for all of your students to enjoy together.

THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

Materials Needed

FAMILY

- Bible
- Christ to Early Church Pictures

GRADES 5-8

- (optional) Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke

GRADES 9-12

- Commentary or study Bible
- (optional) Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke

Not every narration for grades 4-12 needs to be written. In fact, students who are just beginning to transition to writing their narrations should ease into it by writing only one per week. If your transitioning narrator has already written a narration for any school subject this week, ask for an oral narration here.

16 simplycharlottesmason.com

CHRIST TO EARLY CHURCH

LESSON 2

THE BIRTH OF JOHN

1 PREPARE

Two optional Bible Picture studies correspond to this lesson. Determine how many of them you want to use with your older students during the Recap.

2 REVIEW *3-5 minutes*

Display: Show your students the picture of the model of Herod's temple on page 5 in *Christ to Early Church Pictures*.

Explain: Herod the Great, the king whom Rome had appointed over Judea, was known for his building projects. His most ambitious project was expanding the temple complex in Jerusalem. Here is a model of what it looked like.

Ask: What do you notice? If you have studied about the temple in Jerusalem, what do you recall about it? Tell what happened to Zechariah in that temple.

INTRODUCE *1 minute*

Say: Six months later the same angel showed up in a different town to deliver another message from God.

4 READ & NARRATE *12-15 minutes*

Read: Read aloud Luke 1:26-38. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Explain: Mary and Elizabeth were related. Since the angel told Mary that Elizabeth was going to have a baby boy also, Mary wanted to go see her, even though that meant walking for about 14 hours to get there.

Read: Read aloud Luke 1:39-46. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Select: At the end of the reading, select one narration prompt below for each student.

5 Any Student: Tell what happened to Mary and to Elizabeth.

Grade 5 and up: Explain the angel's second message and how the first message came true.

Grade 9 and up: Describe the ways that God confirmed His Word to Mary and to Zechariah.

7 Display: Show your students the pictures of the writing tablet and stylus on page 6 in *Christ to Early Church Pictures*.

Ask: This is an old writing tablet and stylus, which was used for writing on it, similar to what Zechariah would have used to write John's name. What do you notice about the tablet and the stylus?

Explain: The tablet was usually made of wood and filled with beeswax. The writer could use the pointed end of the stylus to scratch letters into the wax and the flattened end to erase them. This tablet is a fancy one with hinges between the two sides, so it could be opened and closed like a book.

DISCUSS *1-5 minutes*

Discuss: Discuss any questions your students might have about the ideas in today's reading.

Assign: Select one assignment below for each older student.

Grade 5 and up: Read what Zechariah prophesied about his son John in Luke 1:67-80. Which ideas in that prophecy relate to what the angel said and what Malachi prophesied in Malachi 4?

Grade 9 and up: Read the notes on Luke 1:26-80 in a study Bible or commentary and discuss any questions or new ideas about the passage. If you are also completing *In the Word: Student Bible Studies*, discuss and record in the *Discovering Doctrine Journal* the doctrinal truths about angels (Angelology) in Luke 1:19, 20, and 26-38.

9 RECAP *1 minute*

Briefly emphasize ideas from your discussion.

Say: Mary was, no doubt, encouraged and stayed with Elizabeth and with the baby Jesus. Encourage your students to help her face the day.

18 simplycharlottesmason.com

THE STORY OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE

LESSON CONTINUED

(optional) Grade 5 and up: If desired, complete one or more of the picture studies for *The Annunciation* and *The Visitation* on pages 9-13 in *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*. Encourage your students to compare the artists' portrayals to the Bible account.

6 PAUSE POINTS

If you need to divide the reading into shorter segments, use these intermediary stopping points and narration prompts:

- 1:26-33**—Tell about the angel's message to Mary.
- 1:34-38**—What else did the angel tell her?
- 1:39-45**—Tell what Mary did and what happened there.
- 1:46-56**—Tell about Mary's response to what Elizabeth told her.
- 1:57-66**—Tell about the birth of John.

18 simplycharlottesmason.com

- 1 PREPARE
- 2 REVIEW
- 3 TIME STAMPS
- 4 READINGS
- 5 NARRATION
- 6 PAUSE POINTS
- 7 PICTURE & MAPS
- 8 GRADES 5-12
- 9 RECAP

1 PREPARE	<p>If any extra preparation is needed for the lesson, you'll find it here.</p>
2 REVIEW	<p>Encourage your students to recall the previous lesson.</p>
3 TIME STAMPS	<p>Use the time suggestions to pace each lesson to about 20 minutes.</p>
4 READINGS	<p>Read from the Bible translation of your choice. Older students may follow along in their Bibles if desired.</p>
5 NARRATION	<p>Choose one narration prompt for each student. Students in grades 1–3 should narrate orally. Students in grades 4–12 may give either oral or written narrations.</p>
6 PAUSE POINTS	<p>Break up the reading and narration into shorter segments if needed.</p>
7 PICTURES & MAPS	<p>Reinforce tie-ins to world history and geography with maps, pictures of artifacts and accurate reproductions, and Book of Centuries entries.</p>
8 GRADES 5–12	<p>Assign older students a few extra minutes of study and discussion. High school students will be reading the notes from a commentary or study Bible of your choice.</p>
9 RECAP	<p>Wrap up your time together by briefly emphasizing key ideas from the lesson.</p>

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The materials below are not required in order to complete this course, but they are highly recommended to beautifully complement your study of Bible history.

IN THE WORD: STUDENT BIBLE STUDIES



These weekly Bible studies are written for students in grades 3–12 and cover many of the books of poetry and wisdom as well as the epistles. Learn more at simplycm.com/bible-studies

SCRIPTURE MEMORY SYSTEM



Thousands of families use this simple system to memorize Bible verses, passages, and whole chapters while reviewing every verse they have learned in just five minutes a day. Find out more at simplycm.com/scripture-memory

LEISURE READS



Historical fiction can help make a time period come alive. Visit simplycm.com/bonus-books for a list of books that correspond to the Biblical people and events that you will be studying. Make those titles available to any students who want good recommendations for books to read in their leisure time.

Their Bible lessons should help them to realise in early days that the knowledge of God is the principal knowledge, and, therefore, that their Bible lessons are their chief lessons.

CHARLOTTE MASON IN *HOME EDUCATION*, P. 251

Materials Needed

FAMILY

- Bible
- *The Student Bible Atlas*

GRADES 1–4

- Family Book of Centuries

GRADES 5–8

- *My Book of Centuries*

GRADES 9–12

- *My Book of Centuries*
- Commentary or study Bible

The comments, questions, and explanations given in the lessons are simply ideas; feel free to use them as given or to put them into your own words.

LESSON 1

THE ANGEL’S MESSAGE

PREPARE

Be sure you have read the How to Use section of this book so you will feel comfortable as you guide your students through the lessons. If you have any questions or need help, you can get in touch with our friendly, helpful team at simplycm.com/contact.

REVIEW *3–4 minutes*

Explain: When we last saw God’s people, they had been exiled from their land and were under the rule of Persia. The Persian kings graciously allowed some of them to return to their homeland and rebuild the temple of God and the city there at Jerusalem, but they were still under the rule of that foreign nation. That’s where the Old Testament account ends. We are about to begin reading the New Testament, but many things happened to God’s people between the two.

Display: Help your students locate the 400s B.C. in their Book of Centuries. Students in grades 1–4 can look with you in a Family Book of Centuries; students in grades 5–12 can look at their own copies of *My Book of Centuries*. If you have completed the previous course, *The Story of God’s People: King David to Rebuilding*, help your students find the entry they wrote for Nehemiah leads the people to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (c. 445 B.C.). If you have not completed the previous course, simply continue the lesson as outlined below.

Explain: The Old Testament ends about 445 B.C. and the New Testament begins during the first century A.D.

Ask: How many years passed between the two? (Students may estimate by counting 100 years for each page they turn until they reach the first century A.D.) What entries do you see on those pages about other events that occurred during those years?

Say: Let’s find out what happened to God’s People during those years.

INTRODUCE 4–5 minutes

Display: Show your students Map 14, *Persia*, in *The Student Bible Atlas* and help them locate Jerusalem.

Explain: The Persians had an enemy lurking on the far western edge of their territory.

Display: Help your students locate Macedonia and notice where the Persian domain ends.

Explain: The land jutting out into the Mediterranean Sea near Macedonia is the land of Greece. For many years Persia tried to conquer Greece, but couldn't. Then a young prince in that land began to turn the tables, attacking the Persians and conquering the cities that they used to control. His name was Alexander. People call him Alexander the Great because he drove the Persians all the way back to Parthia and Persia and took over all of that land, setting up the Greek Empire.

Display: Show your students Map 15, *The Greek Empire*, in *The Student Bible Atlas* and help them compare it to Map 14.

Explain: The Greeks wanted to spread their way of living throughout all of that territory, for they thought that their ideas were superior. So they encouraged the people in those conquered cities to embrace Greek fashions in clothing, to eat a Greek diet, to design their cities similar to those in Greece, to adopt Greek entertainment, to learn the Greek language, and to follow the Greeks in their worship. The Greeks worshiped many gods, thinking of themselves as a tolerant people who embraced the beliefs of all their citizens. But if a group of people refused to acknowledge or worship the whole lineup of gods, stubbornly holding to only their one God, trouble ensued. And such was the case with the Jewish people.

You will recall that the first commandment (recorded in Exodus 20:2 and 3) God gave His people was that they should have no other gods; they should worship only Him. Some of the Jews resisted the Greek ways, while others decided to follow the Greek ideas. Even the leaders and the priests of God's people were divided over whether to follow God's laws or to follow those around them who seemed to be prospering. Finally one man had had enough of watching God's people compromise with the world. He and his sons after him, known as the Maccabees, took up arms and drove the Greeks out of Jerusalem.

LESSON CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

LESSON CONTINUED

Display: Show your students Map 16, *Palestine under the Maccabees*, in *The Student Bible Atlas* and notice how the domain of the Maccabees expanded over 90 years. Point out the regions of Galilee, Samaria, and Judea, which will play a large role in the New Testament accounts.

Explain: For a time, Israel ruled itself and was as large as during its former glory days. But alas, as the years went on many of the rulers became more concerned about their own pleasure and political power than about following God. Once again God's people were divided. Each side wanted to win but could not succeed. They decided that they needed more strength, so they each looked around for a powerful ally. Rome had been expanding and had conquered Greece, and that is who the opposing Jewish rulers determined to ask for help. Rome had not been able to conquer Jerusalem yet. But when delegations arrived in Rome, both asking for an alliance to help each side defeat their Jewish brothers, it was clear that Judea was weak enough for Rome to take over.

Display: Show your students Map 18, *The Roman Empire in the Time of Christ*, in *The Student Bible Atlas*. Notice together where Rome and where Judea are located in the vast empire.

Say: The Roman general Pompey marched in and took control of Judea, and the mighty Roman empire set up its own king in the land: Herod the Great.

READ & NARRATE 7–9 minutes

Read: Read aloud Luke 1:5–25. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Select: At the end of the reading, select one narration prompt below for each student:

Any Student: Tell what happened to Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Grade 5 and up: Explain who Herod the Great was and what happened to a priest at the temple during Herod's reign.

Grade 9 and up: Give an overview of the events between the Old and New Testaments, as well as the event with which the New Testament begins.

DISCUSS 1–5 minutes

Discuss: Discuss any questions your students might have about the ideas in today's reading.

If you are new to narration, follow this link to learn more: simplycm.com/narration



If it will work better for your family, you may choose to do the Recap before your older students complete their additional assignments.

Assign: Select one assignment below for each older student.

Grade 5 and up: The Lord had not sent any prophets to His people for more than 400 years; Malachi had been the last one. Read Malachi 4:5 and 6 and determine how the angel's message relates to what Malachi said would happen.

Grade 9 and up: Read the notes on Luke 1:5–25 in a study Bible or commentary and discuss any questions or new ideas about the passage. If the study Bible or commentary contains an article on the inter-testament time period, read it and make entries in *My Book of Centuries* to reflect what you learned.

RECAP *1 minute*

Briefly emphasize ideas from your discussions or

Say: Zechariah told the angel, “I am an old man,” and emphasized why what God said couldn’t actually come true. But the angel replied, “I am Gabriel,” and emphasized why God’s Word would surely come true: because God Himself had sent Gabriel to bring this news. And God’s Word did come true: Elizabeth became pregnant. But that was only the beginning of God’s astonishing plans for His people. We will read more next time.

The quotations in these lessons are taken from the English Standard Version of the Bible. Adjust them to match your selected translation as needed.

PAUSE POINTS

If you need to divide the reading into shorter segments, use these intermediary stopping points and narration prompts:

1:5–7—Tell about Zechariah and Elizabeth.

1:8–12—Tell what happened at the temple.

1:13–17—Tell what the angel’s message was.

1:18–22—Tell what happened to Zechariah.

1:23–25—Tell what happened to Elizabeth.

Materials Needed

FAMILY

- Bible
- *Christ to Early Church Pictures*

GRADES 5–8

- (optional) *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*

GRADES 9–12

- Commentary or study Bible
- (optional) *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*

Not every **narration** for grades 4–12 needs to be written. In fact, students who are just beginning to transition to writing their narrations should ease into it by writing only one per week. If your transitioning narrator has already written a narration for any school subject this week, ask for an oral narration here.

LESSON 2

THE BIRTH OF JOHN

PREPARE

Two optional Bible Picture studies correspond to this lesson. Determine how many of them you want to use with your older students during the Recap.

REVIEW 3–5 minutes

Display: Show your students the picture of the model of Herod’s temple on page 5 in *Christ to Early Church Pictures*.

Explain: Herod the Great, the king whom Rome had appointed over Judea, was known for his building projects. His most ambitious project was expanding the temple complex in Jerusalem. Here is a model of what it looked like.

Ask: What do you notice? If you have studied about the temple in Jerusalem, what do you recall about it? Tell what happened to Zechariah in that temple.

INTRODUCE 1 minute

Say: Six months later the same angel showed up in a different town to deliver another message from God.

READ & NARRATE 12–15 minutes

Read: Read aloud Luke 1:26–38. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Explain: Mary and Elizabeth were related. Since the angel told Mary that Elizabeth was going to have a baby boy also, Mary wanted to go see her, even though that meant walking for about 14 hours to get there.

Read: Read aloud Luke 1:39–66. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Select: At the end of the reading, select one narration prompt below for each student:

Any Student: Tell what happened to Mary and to Elizabeth.

Grade 5 and up: Explain the angel's second message and how the first message came true.

Grade 9 and up: Describe the ways that God confirmed His Word to Mary and to Zechariah.

Display: Show your students the pictures of the writing tablet and stylus on page 6 in *Christ to Early Church Pictures*.

Ask: This is an old writing tablet and stylus, which was used for writing on it, similar to what Zechariah would have used to write John's name. What do you notice about the tablet and the stylus?

Explain: The tablet was usually made of wood and filled with beeswax. The writer could use the pointed end of the stylus to scratch letters into the wax and the flattened end to erase them. This tablet is a fancy one with hinges between the two sides, so it could be opened and closed like a book.

DISCUSS *1–5 minutes*

Discuss: Discuss any questions your students might have about the ideas in today's reading.

Assign: Select one assignment below for each older student.

Grade 5 and up: Read what Zechariah prophesied about his son John in Luke 1:67–80. Which ideas in that prophecy relate to what the angel said and what Malachi prophesied in Malachi 4?

Grade 9 and up: Read the notes on Luke 1:26–80 in a study Bible or commentary and discuss any questions or new ideas about the passage. If you are also completing *In the Word: Student Bible Studies*, discuss and record in the *Discovering Doctrine Journal* the doctrinal truths about angels (Angelology) in Luke 1:19, 20, and 26–38.

RECAP *1 minute*

Briefly emphasize ideas from your discussions or

Say: Mary was, no doubt, encouraged during the three months that she stayed with Elizabeth and with the birth of John. She would need that encouragement to help her face the days ahead.

LESSON CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

LESSON CONTINUED

(optional) Grade 5 and up: If desired, complete one or more of the picture studies for The Annunciation and The Visitation on pages 9–13 in *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*. Encourage your students to compare the artists' portrayals to the Bible account.

PAUSE POINTS

If you need to divide the reading into shorter segments, use these intermediary stopping points and narration prompts:

1:26–33—Tell about the angel's message to Mary.

1:34–38—What else did the angel tell her?

1:39–45—Tell what Mary did and what happened there.

1:46–56—Tell about Mary's response to what Elizabeth told her.

1:57–66—Tell about the birth of John.

LESSON 3**THE BIRTH OF JESUS****PREPARE**

Two optional Bible Picture studies correspond to this lesson. Determine how many of them you want to use with your older students during the Recap.

REVIEW *1–2 minutes*

Ask: What do you recall about the angel’s message to Mary and about the birth of John?

INTRODUCE *1 minute*

Explain: When Mary returned home, she had to face Joseph, the man she was betrothed to. A *betrothal* was somewhat like an engagement to be married, but in Jewish culture, a betrothal was much more binding than we think of engagements today. Breaking a betrothal required an actual divorce. Since Mary was pregnant, Joseph could break their betrothal and divorce her. But God was already working that out for good.

READ & NARRATE *15–17 minutes*

Read: Read aloud Matthew 1:18–25.

Say: Let’s read the details about Jesus’ birth.

Read: Read aloud Luke 2:1–21. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Display: Show your students the picture of Herod’s temple on page 5 in *Christ to Early Church Pictures*.

Explain: God’s law required parents to go to the temple and offer a sacrifice after the birth of their first baby boy. Mary and Joseph obeyed God’s law and went to the temple, as expected, but they didn’t expect what happened there.

Read: Read aloud Luke 2:22–40. If desired, use the suggested Pause Points outlined at the end of this lesson to break up the reading.

Materials Needed**FAMILY**

- Bible
- *Christ to Early Church Pictures*

GRADES 1–4

- Family Book of Centuries

GRADES 5–8

- *My Book of Centuries*
- (optional) *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*

GRADES 9–12

- *My Book of Centuries*
- Commentary or study Bible
- (optional) *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*

LESSON CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

LESSON CONTINUED

*If your student is struggling to understand what **narration** is, keep an ear out for the next time she tells a story in her everyday life. The next time she chats about what happened at the park, or at dinner last night, or at church, point out to her that what she just did was narrate.*

If your high school students have studied this time period before, they may already have many of these entries in their Book of Centuries. Encourage them to take a moment to consider any notes they would like to add, and notice any additional entries they have made since the first time they visited this point in history.

Select: At the end of the reading, select one narration prompt below for each student:

Any Student: Tell the story of the birth of Jesus.

Grade 5 and up: Describe Jesus' birth and presentation at the temple.

Grade 9 and up: Explain how God confirmed His word to Mary (a) through Joseph, (b) through the shepherds, (c) through Simeon, and (d) through Anna.

DISCUSS 1–5 minutes

Discuss: Discuss any questions your students might have about the ideas in today's reading.

Assign: Select one assignment below for each older student.

Grade 5 and up: Read the following prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus' birth and determine which, if any, of them He could have arranged for Himself as a baby: Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2.

Grade 9 and up: Read the notes on Matthew 1:18–25 and Luke 2:1–40 in a study Bible or commentary and discuss any questions or new ideas about the passage.

RECAP 1–2 minutes

Record: Make a Book of Centuries entry for Jesus born in Bethlehem (c. 5 B.C.). Older students may make their entries in *My Book of Centuries*. Notice any other entries and discuss what else was happening in the world at that time.

(optional) Grade 5 and up: If desired, complete one or more of the picture studies for The Adoration of the Shepherds and The Presentation in the Temple on pages 14–18 in *Bible Picture Portfolios: Luke*. Encourage your students to compare the artists' portrayals to the Bible account.

PAUSE POINTS

If you need to divide the reading into shorter segments, use these intermediary stopping points and narration prompts:

2:1–7—Tell about where Jesus was born.

2:8–14—Tell about this angel message.

2:15–21—Tell about the shepherds' visit.

2:22–35—Tell about Simeon.

2:36–40—Tell about Anna.