

# LESSON 2

## THE BIRTHS OF JESUS AND JOHN THE BAPTIST



### OBJECTIVES

1. To understand that the births of John the Baptist and Jesus were special and that their births were part of God's plan.
2. To reinforce that we are all valuable in God's eyes and that He has a purpose for everyone.
3. To emphasize the importance of living a righteous life and how we must always allow God to lead us through the difficult times we will encounter.

### MEMORY VERSE

"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

(Isaiah 7:14)

### PRAYER

1. Thank God for safely guiding us through the past week so that we can come to worship Him in Spirit and in truth.
2. Praise God for sending His son Jesus Christ to give us eternal life. Thank God that He has a plan for us!
3. Ask God to open our hearts and minds as we study the births of Jesus and John the Baptist.



### Overview

#### 1. The birth of Jesus

- The angel Gabriel appears to Mary (Lk 1:26-33)
- An angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream (Mt 1:18-21)
- The birth of Jesus (Lk 2:1-7)
- An angel of the Lord appears to shepherds (Lk 2:8-16)

#### 2. The birth of John the Baptist

- The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias (Lk 1:5-17)
- The birth and naming of John the Baptist (Lk 1:57-66)
- Zacharias prophesies (Lk 1:67-80)

#### 3. Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs—Jesus is the one true God.

#### 4. Life Application—Everyone's life has a unique purpose.

#### 5. Activity—Character Charades



### Background Knowledge for Teachers

Jesus was indeed born of a virgin in the city of Bethlehem exactly as prophesied many years before (Mic 5:2). An angel told Mary that she would conceive and bring forth a Son who would be called Jesus. What made this promise so special is that Mary was not yet married; she was still a virgin. It was a miraculous conception through the power of the Holy Spirit (Lk 1:26-35).

The Bible gives us no clue as to how many wise men came to visit the baby Jesus. While three gifts were presented to the baby, there could have been any number of wise men present. There is no way for us to know the specific number of wise men who visited Jesus. After the wise men left, God instructed Joseph to take his family to Egypt (Mt 2:13-15). Upon their return from Egypt, Joseph and his family returned to Nazareth (Mt 2:23).

Eight days after His birth, Jesus was circumcised and named (Lk 2:21). Leviticus 12:2-3 reads, "Speak to the children of Israel, saying: 'If a woman has conceived, and borne a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days; as in the days of her customary impurity she shall be unclean. And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.'" Afterward, Jesus was presented at the temple (Lk 2:22-24).

As the apostle John reveals, Jesus existed before the creation of the world (Jn 1). He is fully man and yet simultaneously fully God. God became a man to walk among us. He came in human form for a purpose—to die as a willing sacrifice in payment for the sins of mankind. He did this to provide eternal salvation as a free gift to all who will accept it and follow Him. He is our Savior!

### John the Baptist

John the Baptist played a very important role in what and who was to come. Jesus regarded him very highly and told people, "Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Mt 11:11). Prophet Isaiah had already prophesied the arrival of John the Baptist in Isaiah 40:3, saying, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness:

'Prepare the way of the Lord; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.'" Furthermore, in Malachi 3:1, prophet Malachi prophesied, "'Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,' says the Lord of hosts." These verses prove that the birth of John the Baptist was part of God's step-by-step plan.

Some facts about John the Baptist:

- Jesus Christ and John the Baptist were related. Their mothers, Mary and Elizabeth, were cousins (Lk 1:36).
- John was a Levite. His father Zacharias was a temple priest of the line of Abijah, and his mother Elizabeth was also descended from Aaron (Lk 1:5).
- The angel Gabriel separately announced the coming births of Jesus Christ and John the Baptist.
- John's clothes were made of camel's hair and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey (Mt 3:4). He lived in the mountainous area of Judah.
- John preached the baptism of repentance. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea, and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River (Mt 3:5-6).
- Some people wondered if John was the Messiah. He answered, "'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him'" (Jn 3:28). When the ministry of Jesus Christ began, John recognized that his own mission was nearing its end and said: "He must increase, but I must decrease" (Jn 3:30).
- John's ministry and life came to an end when he pointed out Herod's sinful behavior (Lk 3:19-20) and was later beheaded (Mk 6:17-29).
- After he was killed, John's disciples came and buried his body, and then went and told Jesus all that had happened (Mt 14:12). Jesus responded to the news of John's death by saying, "He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light" (Jn 5:35).



## Reaching Out to Your Students

The miracle of life is often difficult to explain to young children. They may have a basic understanding of conception but they may not be fully aware of the entire process. Help your students appreciate the uniqueness of life. When they were first conceived, they were only microscopic specks. Then, over a period of nine months, they slowly grew into babies in their mother's womb. Now they are grown children who can breathe, talk, play, and eat. God's creation is truly amazing. Make your students aware that although their births were special, the births of Jesus and John the Baptist were even more so. Their births were foretold and their lives helped fulfill God's plan for salvation. It may be hard to explain the notion of conception through the Holy Spirit, but do emphasize that Mary's pregnancy was different from anyone else's on earth. This was so that Jesus would be sinless. With God, anything is possible. The miracle of life is not just an accident or a coincidence. God has planned the birth of every human being. Each person is unique; no one is exactly the same. Remind your students to remember their uniqueness in the eyes of God and to give thanks to Him.



## Opener

5 Minutes

Boys and girls, do you sometimes wish that you could be better at something? For example, better at sports or math? Let us remember that God created each one of us with our own unique strengths and weaknesses. Each of you is good at something and that special something makes you very important in God's eyes. [Ask the students if there is something that they are really good at.] God created each one of us with a purpose. We may not know what the purpose is right now, but God will guide us to discover our purpose as we continue to grow. Although none of us is perfect, the way we were created is very special. God knew us even when we were in our mother's womb. God has very special reasons for creating us the way that we are today. We must always remember that we each play an important role in God's plan of salvation, just like Jesus.



## Vocabulary

- righteous:** acting in an upright, moral way; virtuous
- circumcision:** surgical removal of the foreskin of males
- magi:** men of Arabia and Persia who studied the stars, whom people thought had the power to tell the meaning of dreams; wise men from the East
- myrrh:** plant used for spice, medicine or cosmetic purposes



## Bible Discovery & Spiritual Teaching

30-35 Minutes

### FOR TEACHERS

Print out the Bible Discovery worksheets before class. Distribute Worksheet #1 to the students now. The students will be filling it out during the lesson. Keep one copy of each for yourself to reference. The answers to Worksheet #1 have been underlined in this section. Pause and give students time to fill in the blanks before moving on.

Dear students, do you understand what "righteous" means? [Give students a minute to think about the meaning.] That's right! If someone is righteous, that person is upright and always doing things that are pleasing to God. Before Jesus was born, there was a righteous person whose name was Joseph. He lived in Galilee of Nazareth. Let me ask you another question. Do you know which descendent Joseph came from? (That's right, he is the descendent of King David, the same David who killed Goliath.) At that time, Joseph was engaged to Mary. In the Bible, it said that she was a virgin and engaged to Joseph. They were to be married, but they did not live together yet. They lived in separate places. Students, do you know what it means to be engaged? (It means to be bound, as by pledge, promise, contract, or oath.) If a woman is engaged to a man, it means that she has pledged to marry him. Getting engaged is a commitment in the eyes of God. Do you know what a commitment is? [Give students a minute to think about this.] A commitment is something that you promise to do. To commit to something means that you are going to do what you said you would do. So, Joseph and Mary had this commitment of marriage.

One day, an angel visited Mary and explained to her that she would conceive a Son by the power of the Holy Spirit because she had found favor with God. She would carry and give birth to this Child and she would name Him Jesus. At first Mary was afraid and troubled by the angel's words.

**Let's read what the angel said to her in Luke 1:32-33, 35. We will refer to the worksheet and fill in the blanks.**

The angel explained that the child would be "called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the

throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." He will be "called the Son of God."

**Say:** Being a virgin, Mary questioned the angel, "How will this be?" But after the angel's explanation, Mary humbly believed with simple faith what the angel of the Lord said and rejoiced in God her Savior. Now's let see what happened with Joseph.

When Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant, he was very disappointed. They had not had relations, so he probably thought that she had relations with another man. But because he was a righteous person, he decided that he should not let anyone know what was going on and that he would just quietly tell her that he couldn't marry her. When he was thinking about doing it, guess what happened?

**Now, let's read Matthew 1:20-23 together.**

"But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.'

"So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us.'"

Students, God sent an angel to Joseph in a dream to reassure him that his marriage to Mary was God's will. The angel explained that the Child within Mary was conceived by the Holy Spirit, that His name would be Jesus and that He was the Messiah, God with us. When Joseph woke from his dream, he willingly obeyed God and took Mary home to be his wife.

**Now, let's study the birth of Jesus.**

At that time, the emperor Caesar Augustus decreed that a census be taken, and every person in the entire Roman world had to go to his own town to register. Joseph, being of the line of David, was required to go to Bethlehem to register with Mary. When they arrived in Bethlehem, Mary was ready to give birth. However, the inn was too crowded, so she had to give birth to Jesus in a stable. She wrapped the Baby in cloth and placed Him in a manger.

Out in the fields, an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds who were tending their flocks of sheep by night. That must have been very unusual!

**Let's read what the angels said to the shepherds. Refer to the worksheet while reading Luke 2:10-12 and fill in the blanks.**

"Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.'"

What an amazing announcement! The Savior had been born in the town of David! Suddenly a great host of heavenly beings appeared with the angel and began singing praises to God. As the angelic beings departed, the shepherds decided to travel to Bethlehem and see the Child—Jesus Christ.

There they found Mary, Joseph, and the Baby in the stable. After their visit, they began to spread the word about this Child and everything the angel had said about Him. They went on their way, still praising and glorifying God. But Mary kept quiet, treasuring their words and pondering them in her heart. It must have been beyond her ability to grasp that the tender Child she had just borne was the Savior of the world.

When eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

**Now let's find out more details about the magi who visited Jesus.**

After Jesus' birth, Herod was king of Judea. At this time, wise men (magi) from the east saw a star, and they came in search, knowing that the star signified the birth of the King of the Jews. The wise men came to King Herod in Jerusalem and asked where the Christ was to be born. The chief priest and scribes explained, "In Bethlehem in Judea." Herod secretly met with the magi and asked them

to report back after they had found the Child. Herod told the magi that he too wanted to go and worship the Babe. But secretly Herod was plotting to kill the Child.

So the wise men continued to follow the star in search of the newly born King and found Jesus with His mother in Bethlehem. They bowed and worshipped Him, offering treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. When they left, they did not return to Herod. They had been warned in a dream of his plot to destroy the child.

**Let's read Matthew 2:13-23 together to see what happened next.**

"Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.' When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, 'Out of Egypt I called My Son.'

"Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.'

"Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead.' Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, 'He shall be called a Nazarene.'"

**Now that we have studied the birth of Jesus, let's move on to the birth of John the Baptist.**

**Say:** Herod was king of Judea from around 40 BC to 1 BC. It was during this time that a Jewish priest named Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth had a child. One of the reasons that made this birth special was the fact that both Zacharias and Elizabeth were very old. This child was

Elizabeth's first. Students, do you know what else made this birth extraordinary? This birth was foretold to Zacharias by an angel of the Lord named Gabriel.

**Let's read what the angel told him in Luke 1:13-17 and fill in the missing blanks on the worksheet.**

"But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.'"

**Let's continue reading verses 18-23.**

"And Zacharias said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.' And the angel answered and said to him, 'I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.' And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house."

When Elizabeth's time came, she delivered a boy and they called him John, as the angel had directed. Before his birth, John's father Zacharias had been struck dumb by the angel Gabriel because he had doubted the message regarding his birth. Once John was born, Zacharias' tongue was loosed

and he blessed God and was filled with the Holy Spirit. He continued to bless God for redeeming His people and raising up a horn of salvation for His people. Zacharias said that John will be called a prophet of the Highest, preparing the way for the Lord.

On the eighth day, John was circumcised and named, just as Jesus was eight days after His birth. "So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child. [...] 'He shall be called John'" (Lk 1:59-60).

**What do the births of Jesus and John the Baptist teach us?**

1. Their births were special and part of God's plan.

God's plan for Jesus was for Him to be our Savior. He was sinless because He was born of the power of the Holy Spirit.

God's plan for John the Baptist was for him to prepare the way for Jesus.

2. God has a purpose for *everyone*. We are all valuable in His eyes.

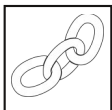
We were made **by** God and **for** God. It is only in God that we find out the purpose and meaning of our lives. In order to fully know God's plan for our lives, we must build a relationship with Him first.

#### FOR TEACHERS

Distribute worksheet #2 to the students now and keep one copy for yourself. The students are to read the passages while underlining the similarities between the births of Jesus and John the Baptist.

#### Answer Key

1. The angel Gabriel appears and reassures both not to be afraid
2. Gabriel announces the name of the child
3. Gabriel announces the mission of the child
4. Jesus and John the Baptist are both born
5. They are both circumcised and named on the eighth day
6. They both grow up strong, filled with the Spirit and wisdom



## Linking to the Ten Basic Beliefs

2-5 Minutes

**Jesus is the one true God.**

The births of Jesus and John the Baptist were special and were part of God's plan.

Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies of the Messiah when He came to save us from sin. The salvation that the Lord Jesus brought to us fully manifests the love of God. It is through Jesus that we have the hope of everlasting life in His glorious kingdom. He is the **one true God**.



## Check for Understanding

5 Minutes

1. **How did Mary react when Gabriel greeted her?** She was troubled at the greeting.
2. **After Mary was told not to be afraid, what good news did she receive?** She would give birth to a Son named Jesus. He would be great, and would be called the Son of the Highest.
3. **Why was Mary chosen to be the mother of Jesus?** She found favor with God.
4. **In what way can you be pleasing to God and your parents? Will others see you as a godly person with these characteristics? Will God see you in a favorable way?** Answers may vary.
5. **Why did Joseph and Mary leave their home in Nazareth and walk all the way to Bethlehem?** Caesar Augustus issued a law for everyone to go to their hometown for a census.
6. **After Jesus was born, why was He placed in a manger?** There was no more room at any of the inns.
7. **Jesus, the Savior of the whole world, wasn't born in a beautiful palace like other kings. Why do you think that was?** Unlike a king who lived a lofty life being served by others, Jesus was to live a humble life and serve others.
8. **What did the shepherds do after they saw Jesus for themselves?** They spread the word about Jesus and glorified God.
9. **True or False**
  - A. **John the Baptist was Jesus' brother.** False; they were cousins.
  - B. **It was unusual for someone of Elizabeth's age to bear a child.** True.
  - C. **John the Baptist and Jesus were related.** True.
  - D. **Zacharias saw Elizabeth in the temple.** False; he saw the angel Gabriel.
  - E. **Zacharias was mute until the birth of his son.** True.



## Life Application

10 Minutes

### 1. What can we learn from the birth of Jesus?

[Make copies for the students; have them fill in the blanks.] The story about the birth of Jesus teaches us many things.

1. We learn that the virgin Mary found favor in God's eyes. When we live a life that is pleasing to God and others, God can use us in wonderful ways.
2. Joseph, Zacharias, and Elizabeth teach us that by living a righteous life, God will help us in times of difficulty and show us the way.
3. The long and tiring journey to Bethlehem and the manger teaches us that God will always keep His promises, and that we have hope and assurance in Jesus.
4. As the angel told the shepherds, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born." Then finally, the visit of the magi shows us that it is a blessing to worship our Lord and Savior. Let's remember to put Jesus first and worship Him.
5. God has a purpose for everyone. We are all valuable in His eyes.

### 2. Understanding My Life Purpose

[Make copies for the students; have them fill in the blanks. The answers have been underlined.]

Some of you may be wondering about your future and what you will do when you grow up. The answer is very simple. We were made by God and for God. [Ask students to repeat after you.] "My life is a gift from God. My life has a plan. My life has a purpose. I will fulfill God's plan for me by always walking in His way, putting Jesus first, and worshipping Him." It is only in God that we find out the purpose and meaning for our lives. In order to fully know God's plan for our lives, we must build a relationship with Him first. Explain Jeremiah 29:11 to the students.

How can we have a relationship with God? Our relationship with God begins the moment we admit we are sinners and realize our need for Him. When we repent of our sins and ask in faith for God to save us, He will be there to meet our needs. God, our heavenly Father, has always desired to be close to us and to have a relationship with us. Having a relationship with God means we should include God in our daily lives. We should pray to Him at school and at home. When we read His word and meditate on Bible verses, we get to know God better. The more we know God and pray to Him, the more He will guide us to know our future and His plan for us.



## Activity

### Character Charades

10-15 Minutes

**Objective:** To make students aware that ordinary people played an important role in God's plan of salvation.

#### Materials

- Index cards
- Old clothes or scrap materials for costumes

#### Instructions

This will be a game of charades. Copy the following character descriptions onto index cards. The students will be working in pairs for this game. If there are more pairs than characters, you can prepare your own character descriptions such as Joseph, John the Baptist, or Jesus Christ.

Pair up the students and give each pair a character card. Let them study it and tell them to keep their character to themselves. Let the pairs take turns role-playing their character in front of the class. The other students will watch their actions and guess who the character is. After they have guessed who the character is (correct or not), have the pair read their character card aloud to the class. Conclude with a prayer.

#### Character Descriptions

My name is Zacharias. I was a temple priest married to a woman named Elizabeth. In our old age, an angel came and told us that we would be having a baby boy. The angel told us that many would rejoice at his birth and that he would prepare people for the coming of the Lord. However, I did not believe that we could have a baby since we were so old. As a result, I became mute and did not speak until after my son was born. Once my voice came back, I praised God and, on the eighth day after my son's birth, I named him John.

My name is Mary. I was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. However, before we were married, an angel visited me and told me that I would be having a Son by the power of the Holy Spirit. I was scared at first, but then later I humbly believed the angel's words with a simple faith. Soon, I became pregnant, much to the surprise of my husband-to-be. He thought I had done something with another man, so he was going to leave me, but an angel of the Lord spoke to him, as well. Now, we both understood that we were going to give birth to a very special Child. Soon enough, we had a beautiful Child who was to become the Savior of the people.

My name is Simon, but my Lord Jesus also named me Peter, which means "rock." I was an ordinary, hardworking fisherman before my Lord Jesus called me to be one of His twelve disciples. He told me that He would make me a fisher of men! I put down my nets and followed Him. I witnessed many of His miracles and even took part in some! One time, Jesus let me walk on water, but because I saw the wind, I became afraid and started to sink. Thankfully, Jesus gave me His hand and lifted me up just in time!

My name is Matthew, or Levi, and I was a tax collector. Everyone agreed that tax collectors were sinners, but my Lord Jesus loved me and called me to become one of His twelve disciples! I was so happy! I was sitting at my tax collector's booth when the Teacher called me, and I got up and left everything to follow Him. I invited my Lord to my house to eat with my friends, who were also tax collectors. My Lord Jesus showed great mercy to me by giving me a new life as His follower!

My name is David and I am the youngest and smallest in my family. Although I don't have big muscles like my older brothers, I try my best to be a good shepherd. I trust in the Lord with all my heart to help me do what I need to do. The Lord even helped me to kill a lion and a bear to save my sheep. Because my Lord loves me, I know that He will protect me. There was once a giant named Goliath who picked on the Israelites. I couldn't understand why the Israelite army was so afraid. We have the Lord Almighty on our side! I told the king that I would go and fight Goliath. With just one smooth stone and a sling, God used a young boy like me to defeat the fearsome giant Goliath!

### The Births of Jesus and John the Baptist

| Jesus' Birth     | Fill In the Blanks  |
|------------------|---|
| Luke 1:32-33, 35 | The angel explained that the child would be "called the _____ of the _____; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." He will be "called the _____ of _____."   |
| Matthew 1:20-21  | "But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the _____ _____. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name _____, for He will save His people from their _____.' So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: 'Behold the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name _____,' which is translated, 'God with us.'" |
| Luke 2:10-12     | "Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a _____, who is _____ the _____. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.'"  |

| The Birth of John the Baptist | Fill In the Blanks   |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Luke 1:13-17                  | "But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the _____ _____, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the _____ and _____ of _____, "to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children," and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people _____ for the Lord.'" |

#### What do the births of Jesus and John the Baptist teach us?

1. Their births were special and part of God's plan.

God's plan for Jesus was for Him to be our \_\_\_\_\_. He was sinless because He was born of the power of the \_\_\_\_\_.

God's plan for John the Baptist was for him to \_\_\_\_\_ the way for Jesus.

2. God has a purpose for *everyone*. We are all valuable in His eyes.

We were made **by** God and **for** God. It is only in God that we find out the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of our lives. In order to fully know God's plan for our lives, we must build a \_\_\_\_\_ with Him first.



### The Similarities Between the Births of Jesus and John the Baptist

**Instructions:** There are many similarities between the births of Jesus and John the Baptist. Please take a look at the following chart and underline the similarities.

| The Announcement of John's Birth   | The Announcement of Jesus' Birth  |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:11-13</b></p> <p>The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias to tell of a miraculous birth. He is told not to be afraid for his prayer has been heard.</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:26-27, 30</b></p> <p>The angel Gabriel appears to Mary to tell of a miraculous birth. She is told not to be afraid because she has won God's favor.</p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:13</b></p> <p>Gabriel announces the name of the child: "You shall call his name John."</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:31</b></p> <p>Gabriel announces the name of the Child: "You shall call His name Jesus."</p>  |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:15-17</b></p> <p>Gabriel announces the mission of the child: "He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God [and] make ready a people prepared for the Lord."</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:32-33</b></p> <p>Gabriel announces the mission of the Child: "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:57</b></p> <p>John is born: "Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son."</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 2:6-7</b></p> <p>Jesus is born: "So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son."</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:59-60</b></p> <p>John is circumcised and named on the eighth day: "So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child. [...] 'He shall be called John.'"</p>  | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 2:21</b></p> <p>Jesus is circumcised and named on the eighth day: "And when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the Child, His name was called Jesus."</p>   |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 1:80</b></p> <p>Conclusion to the story of John's birth: "So the child grew and became strong in spirit."</p>   | <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Luke 2:40</b></p> <p>Conclusion to the story of Jesus' birth: "And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him."</p>  |

## What Can We Learn from the Birth of Jesus?

1. We learn that the virgin Mary found favor in God's eyes. When we live a life that is \_\_\_\_\_ to God and others, God can use us in wonderful ways.
2. Joseph, Zacharias, and Elizabeth, teach us that by living a righteous life, God will \_\_\_\_\_ us in times of \_\_\_\_\_ and show us the way.
3. The long and tiring journey to Bethlehem and the manger teaches us that God will always keep His promises, and that we have \_\_\_\_\_ and assurance in Jesus.
4. As the angel told the shepherds, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born." Then finally, the visit of the magi shows us that it is a blessing to \_\_\_\_\_ our Lord and Savior. Let's remember to put Jesus first and worship Him.
5. God has a purpose for everyone. We are all \_\_\_\_\_ in His eyes.

I am  
**valuable**  
in God's eyes!

"Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. And how much more **valuable** you are than birds!" (Lk 12:24 NIV)

"You are **precious** and honored in my sight." (Isa 43:4a NIV)

**Write down five things that make you feel that God loves you.**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## My Life's Plan



1. My life is a \_\_\_\_\_ from God.
2. My life has a plan. My life has a \_\_\_\_\_.
3. I will fulfill God's plan for me by always walking in His way, putting Jesus \_\_\_\_\_, and worshipping Him:



- a. I will live a life that is **pleasing** to God and to others so that God can use me in wonderful ways.
- b. I will live a **righteous** life and remember that God always keeps His promises. He will help me in times of difficulty and show me the way.

*"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." (Jeremiah 29:11)*

### Which life do you want to choose?



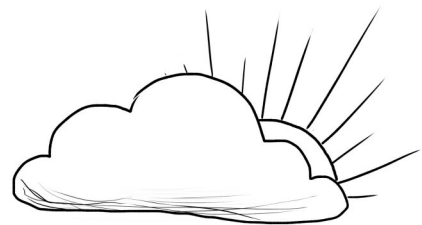
#### Self-directed life

- Sin
- Frustration
- Worries
- Separation from God



#### God-directed life

- Love
- Joy
- Peace
- Fullness of the Holy Spirit



### A Prayer to God

Dear Lord Jesus Christ,

Thank You for coming as a human being to show everyone how to live. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. Thank You for forgiving my sins and for giving me eternal life. I have opened the door of my life and received You as my Savior. Please take control of my life and help me to be the kind of person You want me to be. Amen.



E2 Year 1 Book 1 Lesson 2—The Births of Jesus and John the Baptist

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Weekly Bible Reading: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Reading:** Check each box when you complete that day's reading.

**Prayer:** Check each box after you pray to God that day.

|      | Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| Read |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Pray |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |

## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse. (Isaiah 7:14)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

There are many life applications and truths that we have learned from this lesson.

1. We learned that the virgin Mary found favor in God's eyes. When we live a life that is pleasing to God and to others, God can use us in wonderful ways. **Write at least two things that you did this week that are pleasing to God.**
2. Joseph, Zacharias, and Elizabeth teach us that by living a righteous life, God will help us in times of difficulty and show us the way. **Has God showed you how to overcome any difficulties this week? Describe them. (If you haven't encountered any difficulties this week, describe an instance when God helped you in the past.)**
3. The visit of the magi shows us that it is a blessing to worship our Lord and Savior. Worshipping God can be done before you eat breakfast and go to school, and after you come home from school. You can kneel down and pray, or read the Bible. These are wonderful ways to worship God. **When did you worship God this week? Why is it important to worship God and remember His goodness every day?**