

Lesson 124

Angelic Announcements

God delivers the message of the coming Messiah through his angel Gabriel.

Studying God's Word

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Don't forget! Review the Optional Supplements and determine where you can use them.

Introduction

Before class, gather household items (i.e., roll of toilet paper, hairbrush, marker, book, cell phone, stuffed animal, kitchen utensils, tools). Place 3–5 items into a grocery bag for each group of 4–6 students. Gather one “boxed” product for each group to advertise (i.e., pudding or cake mix, pack of gum, can of beans, sealed roll of paper towels, etc.).

To start today, we're going to do a group activity. Divide students into groups and have them sit together. I will give each team a bag with different items and pass out a new product to each group. Your job is to create a commercial to announce this new product, such as (show example). Use at least three of the items in your bag in the announcement for your product. Everyone in the group should plan the announcement together and include several people to share it. I'll give you some time to plan your announcements then you'll take turns sharing them with the class. Let's get started! Pass out the item bags and “boxed” products then circulate around the groups to offer help. After about five minutes, have each group share their product announcement with the class.

How many of you thought it was easy to make your announcement? Show of hands.

What are some ways people make announcements today? Allow answers. News, social media, mail, speeches, pictures, videos, etc.

Today's lesson is about the most important announcement that God ever gave to mankind!

Can anyone guess what it was? Jesus was about to be born!

That's right! Jesus was about to enter the world as a baby!

Refer to the Seven C's of History Poster. What event is this in the Seven C's of History? Christ.

Christ came to earth to save us from sin! He was the fulfillment of the prophecies in the Old Testament.

Slide #3

Slide #4

Refer to the Lesson 122 Theme Poster. The Gospels in the New Testament tell the good news of Jesus—how he came to earth, lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. We can trust the New Testament because the Holy Spirit inspired the writings of the apostles, who were eyewitnesses, as they wrote about the events in Jesus' life.

Refer to the Lesson 123 Theme Poster. The Gospel writers wrote about the life of Jesus, but each one had a different purpose and focus. Matthew wrote to show Jesus as the promised King and Messiah. Mark showed Jesus as the suffering servant who had compassion on people. Luke showed Jesus as the Son of Man sent to seek and save the lost, while John wanted people to believe that Jesus was the Son of God and receive eternal life. All together, the four Gospels give a more complete picture of Jesus.

The Announcement of the Messenger

Today's lesson is about the first time God spoke to his people since he had given his last message through the prophet Malachi 400 years earlier.

Slide #5

Malachi 3:1

Refer to the Books of the Bible Poster. Let's start by refreshing our memories of the message Malachi wrote in chapter 3 verse 1. Will someone read Malachi 3:1? Assign a reader.

The Lord was speaking in this verse. Who was he going to send? You can find that at the very beginning of the verse. A messenger.

What would the messenger do? Prepare the way before him.

Malachi told the people that there would be a messenger who would come to prepare the way of the Lord. This was an important event—if someone was coming to prepare the way for the Messiah, that meant the Messiah would be coming soon after. So, God chose a special way to announce the coming of this messenger.

Slide #6

Slide #7

Luke 1:5–7

Turn to the Gospel of Luke, chapter 1. Let's read about God's announcement that finally came after so many years. Who will read Luke 1:5–7? Choose a reader.

Who was the king of Judea? Herod (the Great).

At this time, the Romans were ruling over the land of Judah, which they called Judea. Herod was a king appointed by the Romans. Many Jews liked Herod because he rebuilt the temple in Jerusalem where the people gathered to worship God. However, we'll find out later what kind of person Herod really was.

Who was the priest? Zechariah.

And what was Zechariah's wife's name? Elizabeth.

What does Luke 1:6 say about Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth? What were they like? They were righteous, walking blamelessly in God's commandments and statutes.

Zechariah and his wife believed and trusted in the one true God. They loved God and tried to obey his commandments.

What else can we learn about this couple in Luke 1:7? They had no child. They were advanced in years.

Zechariah was a priest who came to serve at the temple, and Elizabeth was his wife. They obeyed God and were righteous. They had no children, and since they were quite old, it would be unlikely that they ever would have children. But that was about to change!

Slide #8

Slide #9

Luke 1:11–13

As a priest, Zechariah was chosen to enter the Holy Place and burn incense. Listen to what happened while he was doing his work. Follow along as I read Luke 1, verses 11–13. Read the verses.

Who appeared to Zechariah? An angel of the Lord.
How did Zechariah feel when he saw the angel? He was troubled and afraid.
What did the angel tell him? Look in Luke 1:13. Do not be afraid.

Zechariah did not need to be afraid. This was good news that the angel was announcing. Zechariah's prayer had been heard.

What did the angel tell him about his wife, Elizabeth? She would bear a son.

And what was Zechariah supposed to name his son? John.

Luke 1:19 gives us the name of this angel. Can anyone find it and tell us what it is? Gabriel.

Slide #10

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Gabriel continued to tell Zechariah things about his son, John, that matched what the prophet Malachi said about the messenger who would come to prepare the people for the Messiah. Zechariah would have recognized these words as part of the promise written by Malachi 400 years earlier.

There is an attribute of God that we have talked about. It means that God will always keep his promises—even if it takes hundreds of years.

Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Which attribute is that? Faithful.

Yes. God is faithful to his children. We can trust him to always keep his promises. Sometimes we have to wait for his timing, like the people waited years for the Messiah. But we can be sure he will do what he says.

This was an exciting announcement! God sent his angel to tell the priest Zechariah that this special messenger would be his son. This son, John, would be filled with the Holy Spirit, and his job would be to prepare the way for the Messiah by helping the people get their hearts ready for the Lord. And if the messenger was coming soon, then the Messiah's coming was not far behind.

Slide #11

Look at the Class Notes now. You'll circle the correct bold word(s) to complete each statement.

Pass out the Class Notes.

Who was Zechariah? Someone read #1 for us. Choose a reader. Priest.

Have students complete #1.

Who will read #2? Choose a reader. Old. Have students complete #2.

What did this couple not have? Who will read #3? Choose a reader. Child.

Have students complete #3.

Who told Zechariah about his son? What's the answer for #4? Choose a reader. Gabriel. Have students complete #4.

The Announcement of the Messiah

Zechariah's son, whom we know as John the Baptist, would help the people get ready for the coming of another son—one even more important than John. This child is described by Isaiah, a prophet who spoke for God more than 700 years before Jesus came.

Slide #12

Isaiah 9:6

Listen to what Isaiah said in Isaiah 9:6. Read the verse.

Who was this child Isaiah was talking about? Jesus.

What did Isaiah say about Jesus? What are the names Jesus would be called? Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Each of these names points to unique attributes of God.

As a Wonderful Counselor, he will rule with wisdom. What does the Attributes of God poster say about that? Wise—does everything perfectly without mistakes.

Mighty God refers to Jesus' power to defeat his enemies—his omnipotence. What does omnipotent mean? All-powerful to do whatever he wants. How about eternal? Always was and always will be.

Everlasting is another word for eternal, so Jesus will care for his people as a Father forever.

And as the Prince of Peace, Jesus will one day bring peace among all the nations of the world.

Isaiah said a child would be born, a special child—Jesus Christ, the Son of God. He would change everything for the entire world forever!

Slide #13

Isaiah 7:14

Our memory verse gives another important name for the son who would be born. Let's read the verse together. Read the memory verse together from the poster or slide.

What is the sign the Lord promised to give? The virgin shall conceive and bear a son.

A virgin, a lady who has never been married, would normally need a husband to have a son, so the birth of this son would be a miracle—something only God could do!

What name is given for the son at the end of the verse? Immanuel.

Immanuel means “God with us.” The el sound at the end of that name is from the Hebrew word for God. It’s clear that this child would be God born as a human.

Slide #14

Slide #15

Let’s continue the Class Notes. What did Isaiah say in his prophecy?

Someone read #5. Choose a reader. Born. Have students complete #5.

Who will read #6 about Jesus? Choose a reader. Counselor. Have students complete #6.

What does everlasting mean? Who will read #7? Choose a reader. Eternal. Have students complete #7.

And #8, which name is correct? Choose a reader. Immanuel. Have students complete #8.

Slide #16

Slide #17

Slide #18

Luke 1:26–31

It makes sense that God would give a very special announcement that the promised child was coming. And he did! We can read about it in the Gospel of Luke. We will read Luke 1:26–31. Choose readers.

Who was the messenger who brought news of Jesus’ coming? The angel Gabriel.

This is the same angel God sent to Zechariah. Who did the angel Gabriel go to see this time? Mary.

What is important about the fact that Mary was a virgin? It has to do with Isaiah’s prophecy. Allow discussion. The Messiah’s mother had to be a virgin according to Isaiah 7:14.

The son sent from God as a sign had to be born of a virgin, and Mary was a virgin. She wasn’t married to Joseph yet. God was fulfilling his prophecy about the Messiah; he was making everything happen just as he said it would.

And where was Mary when the angel came? What city? Nazareth.

Slide #19

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. Nazareth was in the region of Galilee. Gabriel came to Mary and greeted her. He said she was favored and the Lord was with her.

How did Mary feel about Gabriel's greeting? Look in Luke 1:29. She was greatly troubled.

What did the angel tell her in Luke 1:30? Do not be afraid. You have found favor with God.

Then Gabriel announced the really big news! What did Gabriel say would happen to Mary very soon? She would have a son.

And what was she to name this very special son? Jesus.

The name Jesus comes from the Greek form of Joshua, or Yeshua in the Hebrew. In Hebrew, Yah is another name used for God, and Yah-shua means "God saves." Jesus came to save his people from their sins by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. He would sit on the throne of David and be King forever. The prophets of the Old Testament had spoken of this day, and now all they had prophesied was happening.

Slide #20

Slide #21

Let's finish the Class Notes. Who will read #9? Choose a reader. Nazareth. Have students complete #9.

Who heard the angel's announcement? Will someone read #10? Choose a reader. Mary. Have students complete #10.

Who will read #11 about the name Jesus? Choose a reader. "God saves." Have students complete #11.

Who will read #12? Choose a reader. Messiah. Have students complete #12.

Application

Slide #22

Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster. The announcements were made! Finally, the messenger and the Messiah were coming very soon. The old priest, Zechariah, received the message that he would have a son, John. God would use John to show the people how to get their hearts ready for the Messiah. Then Mary was told she would have a son, too, who would be called Jesus. He would be the Messiah God had promised to send.

Who was the messenger that brought these special announcements? The angel Gabriel.

Right. God sent an angel to deliver these messages. Angels are a pretty popular subject today. You hear about them on TV shows, in books, and in movies. Some people worship them. Some people think of angels as good-luck charms or believe their dead relatives are now angels who watch over them. But the Bible doesn't tell us any of that.

What are some things we do know about angels from the Bible? Allow discussion. Angels do the will of God. They are powerful. They often appear as men. They worship God in heaven. They are mighty warriors. Not many people see them. There are some good angels who follow God and some fallen angels called demons who follow Satan.

According to God's Word, we know that angels are part of God's creation. And the Bible includes many examples of angels doing the will of God. Angels are different from people, and people do not turn into angels. Angels help God's children (Hebrews 1:13-14), they are mighty and strong (Psalm 103:20), and they serve God and do what he commands them to do.

There are many things about angels we won't know until we get to heaven. But the Bible makes it clear that angels are not to be worshipped or prayed to. It's a sin to worship anything else or anyone other than the one true God. He alone deserves our worship.

Lesson Review

We encourage you to play a lesson review game.

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