

This midweek study will explore the biblical teaching on angels. Use the following main points, Scriptures, teaching/discussion ideas, and questions to help students gain a better understanding of the essential doctrine for this session.

Essential Doctrine: Virgin Birth

The Bible affirms that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38). The virgin birth affirms the historicity of the incarnation, where the eternal Son of God took on human flesh. The virgin birth is significant in that it serves as a reminder of Old Testament prophecies (Isa. 7) while also affirming both the deity and humanity of Christ.

1 The virgin birth indicates Jesus' divinity and humanity (Luke 1:30-35).

- ▶ What are some of your favorite movie opening sequences? What makes them so great?

Read Luke 1:30-35.

- ▶ If this scene were the opening sequence to Jesus' life movie, do you think it would be received well or not? Explain.
- ▶ Does Gabriel's announcement to Mary cause you, as a reader, to feel more of a sense of fear, or of excited anticipation? Or something else? Explain.
- ▶ How do verses 30-33 emphasize the humanity of Jesus?
- ▶ After Mary's question in verse 34, how does verse 35 emphasize Jesus' divinity?
- ▶ How does the virgin birth already capture the beautiful tension of the incarnation: namely, that Jesus is fully man but also fully God?
- ▶ How does this "opening sequence" create excitement for the "movie" to come?

2 The virgin birth indicates Jesus as the promised seed of woman (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4-5).

- ▶ Think back to the fall. How did God curse the serpent?

Read Genesis 3:15.

- ▶ There's a lot in this one verse. What were some of the other curses put upon the serpent in this passage?
- ▶ According to this verse, what would the seed (offspring) of the woman do to the serpent? What would the serpent do to the offspring of the woman?
- ▶ When did the serpent's head finally get crushed? Who crushed it? In what sense did the serpent bruise this man's heel?
- ▶ Any thoughts on how the virgin birth fulfilled Genesis 3:15?

Read Galatians 4:4-5.

- ▶ How would this text be different if Paul had said that Jesus was born "of a man and a woman" instead of "born of a woman"? Why do you think Paul only said that Jesus was "born of a woman"?
- ▶ How does this promised "seed of woman" who was also the one "born of a woman" redeem His brothers and sisters?
- ▶ So how does the virgin birth affirm that Jesus is the promised seed of woman, the one who carries out the glorious promises of Galatians 4:4-5?
- ▶ You may be familiar with the Apostles' Creed. One line of the creed affirms Jesus' virgin birth. Based on what we just learned, why do you think the early church considered the virgin birth important enough to include it in the creed?

3 The virgin birth indicates Jesus as the promised Messiah who was greater than anyone had previously understood (Isa. 7:1-16; Matt. 1:23).

Read Isaiah 7:1-16.

- ▶ What problem did King Ahaz face?
- ▶ In the immediate context, what hope did Isaiah 7:14 provide? It gave a timetable by which the two enemy kings would be gone.

Read Matthew 1:23.

- ▶ According to Matthew 1:23, how does Jesus fulfill Isaiah 7:14?
- ▶ How does Jesus turn out to be an even bigger and better Messiah than expected?
- ▶ How is the virgin birth a great model for how God gives us things we never expected but that show His glory so wondrously? Any other examples from history or your life of God surprising you with mysterious and glorious things?

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ The virgin birth reflects many of the Bible's wonders: it is glorious, mysterious, and beautiful. How does Jesus' birth encourage you?