

Religion-Chapter 5
Preview/Study Guide/Review Sheet
Infancy Narratives

“Gospels in miniature”- Infancy narratives have the same message as whole Gospels

Message- **Who is Jesus? Jesus is Son of God, Savior and Lord.**

Christmas is second to Easter in importance to Christians.

Infancy narratives found only in Matthew (magi/wisemen/Herod/murder of children)
and in Luke. Luke may have gotten info. from Mary. Luke has most of the infancy stories.

Message of Gospel (see above) shown in miraculous occurrences * and symbols.

Annunciation-Angel * Gabriel appears Birth is a virgin birth*

Visitation-Elizabeth's child John the Baptist recognizes presence of Jesus (God) in
Mary's womb and John Leaps in Elizabeth's womb*

Angel* appears to Joseph to tell him not to fear taking Mary as his wife

Nativity/birth of Jesus- In Bethlehem because prophets had foretold this*
Innkeeper/no room symbolizes passive rejection of Jesus
Angels* appear to shepherds (Jesus is savior)
Shepherds symbolize the poor/sinners/outcasts whom Jesus has
come to save
Manger/stable-symbolizes that Jesus is poor and *humble*.

Magi/Wisemen- (Caspar, Balthasar, Melchior)-Led by a star* to seek newborn King
Wisemen symbolize non-Jews (gentiles)/foreigners that Jesus came to
save.
Gifts of Magi- Symbolize truths about Jesus
1. Gold-Kingship 2. Frankincense-God 3. Myrrh-humanity and death

Herod and Jesus-Joseph (foster father) warned by angel* of danger-takes family to Egypt
Herod tries to kill child. He symbolizes those who actively reject Jesus.
Boys of Bethlehem killed are called the Holy Innocents.

Presentation in Temple-Simeon recognizes Jesus as messiah*-prophesies that Mary will have sorrow

Because of her special role in salvation history, God has given Mary three very special gifts/honors.

1. **Immaculate Conception**-Mary is conceived without original sin.
2. **Virgin Birth**-Mary conceives as a virgin and is always a virgin. No other children.
3. **Assumption**-Mary is taken body and soul into heaven at her death.

What Herod Hated

God has become man. He has become a child. Thus he fulfills the great and mysterious promise to be Emmanuel: God-with-us. Now he is no longer unreachable for anybody. God is Emmanuel. By becoming a child, he offers us the possibility of being on familiar terms with him. I am reminded here of a rabbinical tale recorded by Elie Wiesel. He tells of Jehel, a little boy, who comes running into the room of his grandfather, the famous Rabbi Baruch. Big tears are rolling down his cheeks. And he cries, "My friend has totally given up on me. He is very unfair and very mean to me." "Well, could you explain this a little more?" asks the Master. "Okay," responds the little boy. "We were playing hide and seek. I was hiding so well that he could not find me. But then he simply gave up and went home. Isn't that mean?" The most exciting hiding place has lost its excitement because the other stops playing. The Master caresses the boy's face. He himself now has tears in his eyes. And he says, "Yes, this is not nice. But look, it is the same way with God. He is in hiding, and we do not seek him. Just imagine! God is hiding, and we people do not even look for him." In this little story a Christian is able to find the key to the ancient mystery of Christmas. God is in hiding. He waits for his creation to set out toward him, he waits for a new and willing Yes to come about, for love to arise as a new reality out of his creation. He waits for man.

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*In 2005, he was elected Pope.
Benedict XVI*