Lesson 8 · The Birth of Jesus and His Early Ministry

Main sentence
God's promise “arrives”

Person
Jesus

Five key events

1 · The Word Became Flesh
- The angel's announcement to Mary
- Jesus born in Bethlehem
- Shepherds, Simeon, wise men from the east, Herod's slaughter
- The Son of God became the son of a carpenter from Nazareth

2 · Baptism and Temptation
- John the Baptist prepared the way for the Lord
- At Jesus' baptism the heavens opened and the Father said, “This is my beloved Son.” In the wilderness for 40 days he overcame Satan with words from Deuteronomy

3 · Galilee: The Kingdom Is at Hand
- Healing the sick, casting out demons, calming the storm, feeding the 5,000, raising the dead
- The Sermon on the Mount describes the character of the kingdom's citizens
- The parables unfold the kingdom's secrets
- Crowds followed, and the Pharisees began plotting to kill him

4 · Peter's Confession and the Transfiguration
- “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” From then on Jesus spoke plainly of his coming suffering, death, and resurrection
- Six days later he was transfigured on a high mountain, and Moses and Elijah spoke with him about what he would accomplish at Jerusalem

5 · On the Road to Jerusalem
- Disputes at the Feast of Booths and the Feast of Dedication: “I am the light of the world,” “I and the Father are one.” The good Samaritan, the prodigal son, the rich man and Lazarus
- The sending of the 72
- Jesus set his face to go to Jerusalem

Key verse
Luke 1:32–33

He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to 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.

Scope
- c. 5 BC – AD 29 · Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- Birth · c. 5 BC
- Ministry Begins · AD 27
- The Great Galilean Ministry · AD 28
- Later Ministry · AD 29

Before & after
- Previous: God's promise is greater than “Persia”
- **This lesson: God's promise “arrives”**
- Next: God's promise is greater than “sin and death”

Discussion
- At Nazareth Jesus read from Isaiah 61 and said, “Today this Scripture has been fulfilled” (Luke 4:21). How does the book of Isaiah we read in Lesson 5 get “opened up” here?
- What kind of people do the Beatitudes describe? How do they compare with the people the world usually admires?
- “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life” (John 6:68). When many disciples turned back, what made Peter stay?