

LESSONS & CAROLS



First Lesson - God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 22:15-18, *“The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time and said, “I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, and through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.”*

Second Lesson - The prophet Isaiah announces the birth of a king to a people in darkness.

Leader: The people walking in darkness have seen a great light;

**On those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned.**

Leader: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.

**And he will be called Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of
Peace.**

Leader: Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom.

Leader: Establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

Third Lesson - The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.

Isaiah 11:1-4, 6-9, “A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.

*He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.
The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie
down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the
yearling together; and a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie
down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the cobra's den, and the
young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy
mountain, for the earth will be filled with the
knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”*

Fourth Lesson - The King is coming and will usher in a reign of justice for the poor and peace for all of God's creation.

- Micah 5:2-5a, *“But you, Bethlehem, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor bears a son, and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites.*

He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be our peace...”

Fifth Lesson - The angel Gabriel salutes the Blessed Virgin Mary.

- Luke 1:26-38, *“In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.*

But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

So the holy one to be born will be called^[b] the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.” “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.”

Sixth Lesson - Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.

- Luke 2:1-7, *“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while^[a] Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.*

He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.”

Seventh Lesson - The shepherds go to see the Savior of the world and find him lying in a manger.

Leader: And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night

And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

Leader: And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

For unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

Leader: And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying,

Leader: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another.

Leader: Let us now go even unto Bethlehem and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

Leader: And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

Leader: But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.

And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

Eighth Lesson - The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.

- Matthew 2:1-12, *“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.’ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.*

“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”” Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.”

Ninth Lesson - John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.

John 1:1-14, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.

Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

The image features a dark blue night sky filled with numerous small, white, four-pointed stars. A single, exceptionally bright star is positioned near the top center, from which a powerful, vertical beam of white light descends towards the horizon. At the base of this beam, a silhouette of a city skyline is visible, with several buildings illuminated from within, casting a warm yellow glow. To the right of the city, two tall palm trees stand prominently against the dark sky. The overall scene evokes a sense of wonder and celestial significance.

Merry Christmas