

# Lesson 2 | December 11, 2022

## The Virgin Conceives

**Study Text:** Matthew 1:18–25; Luke 1:26–55

**Central Truth:** The virgin birth of Jesus attests that He is the Son of God.

**Key Verse: Matthew 1:23**

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us (KJV).

**“Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means ‘God is with us’” (NLT).**

### Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to describe the angel’s visits to both Mary and Joseph.
- Students will be able to explain the importance of the Virgin Birth.
- Students will personally commit to obeying God.

## Introducing the Study

**Say:** Last week we studied prophecies that predicted the coming birth of Christ. This week we will look at how God began to fulfill those prophecies through Mary and Joseph. God had a great assignment for these two young people. They willingly accepted God’s assignment. The baby born to Mary was God’s Son, Jesus. We also will learn the importance of Christ’s virgin birth. √ ***(Play the video available at [RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult](https://www.RadiantLifeCurriculum.com/Adult).)***

**Some of us have a hard time learning the lessons the Lord is teaching. We have a hard time understanding what the Lord wants when it is really easy, he wants us to return to him with our whole heart. He doesn’t want religious acts to take the place of showing our love to him my obedience.**

**We don’t need to fear Russia, China, or other nations. They are only humans. We need to fear the Lord God of Heaven’s Armies who is warning us to return to him and follow his paths. When all the punishment came upon Israel and Judah and death and destruction came their way, it was too late to mention the name of the Lord as a source of hope. That is why I don’t want to be here when judgment comes.**

The bright side. (To the church of Sardis who thought they were alive but they were dead.) All who are victorious will be clothed in white. I will never erase their names from the Book of Life, but I will announce before my Father and his angels they are mine.

### Opening Activity—Difficult Obedience

*Ask. What is the most difficult thing God has asked you to do? What fears or apprehensions did you have? What was the outcome of your obedience? Serve in Children's ministry.*

**Say:** God sometimes asks us to step out in faith and obey Him, even when it is difficult. We might be reluctant, thinking that if we do not obey God He will find someone else. (Like Moses and Gideon thought.) But maybe we are the only ones who can fulfill God's plan. Mary and Joseph are an example of those who obeyed God and fulfilled His plan for the coming Messiah. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

The Virgin Birth is one of the most important teachings in the Bible. It reveals that Jesus is truly the Son of God. He did not come as a result of human procreation. Some deny the Virgin Birth because they do not believe in miracles. Others deny this miraculous event because they reject Jesus as the Son of God and Savior. However, the Bible is clear: Jesus was born of a virgin and He is the Son of God.

## Part 1—The Angel Gabriel Visits Mary

### Angel's Announcement

Luke 1:26–37

[Luk 1:26-37 KJV] 26 And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, 27 To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name [was] Mary. 28 And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, [thou that art] highly favoured, the Lord [is] with thee: blessed [art] thou among women. 29 And when she saw [him], she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. 30 And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. 31 And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father

**David: 33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. 34 Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? 35 And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. 36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. 37 For with God nothing shall be impossible.**

**Say:** God had just performed a miracle in Zechariah (NLT; Zacharias, KJV) and Elizabeth's life. He was getting ready to perform even a greater miracle in Mary's life. When God wants to do something great, He looks for willing people. Mary was God's choice to be the mother of His Son. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Six months after Elizabeth conceived, God sent Gabriel with a message for Mary (Luke 1:26–27). Nazareth was an insignificant village (John 1:46), but God had a special assignment for one of its residents.**

**Gabriel was an archangel and also visited Daniel of at least two recorded occasions and John's father Zacharias.**

**One of the significant facts about Mary was that she was a virgin (Luke 1:27). Luke's use of this word, plus Mary's reply in verse 34, indicate he wanted to emphasize Mary's sexual purity. Mary was "engaged" to Joseph (verse 27, NLT). Joseph's lineage was important. The Messiah was to come through the line of David (verse 32; Isaiah 11:1–2). Joseph was not the natural father of Jesus, but Jesus would be considered his son (Luke 3:23).**

**The greeting "favored woman" (1:28, NLT) was an unusual greeting, but God had chosen her for an important assignment. His promise to be with her would give her courage to face her pregnancy, first as an unmarried young woman, and even after she married Joseph. God would also be with her throughout the events of Jesus' life. Mary was startled at the angel's greeting (verse 29). Her response, however, was not like Zechariah's unbelief (verses 18–20).**

**Gabriel's description of the Son Mary would give birth to is filled with Old Testament descriptions of the Messiah (verses 31–33). "Jesus" is the Old Testament name, Joshua, meaning "Yahweh saves." This name described His mission. "Most High" refers to God (Genesis 14:18–20; Numbers 24:16). "Throne of his ancestor David" is linked to several Old Testament Scriptures (see 2 Samuel 7:12–14; Psalm 89:26–29). Jesus' eternal kingdom (Luke 1:33) fulfills God's plan through the line of David (Psalm 132:11–12; Isaiah 9:7).**

Gabriel's message to Mary must have been overwhelming. How could she become pregnant when she was not yet married to Joseph (Luke 1:34)? Jesus' conception was not to come through natural means. **Mary would become pregnant through a supernatural act of God by the creative power of the Holy Spirit (verse 35). Because of this, He will be "holy." As such He is the "Son of God."** This amplifies what Gabriel said about Jesus in verse 32.

Elizabeth's experience was an example that God could do the impossible (verse 36). What God decreed He would bring to pass (verse 37).

**Our Mighty God can do what seems impossible. We only need to trust Him and do what He asks us to do.**

### ***Discuss***

? Why did Luke stress Mary's virginity?

? In what ways might you need to believe God for the impossible?

## **Mary's Humble Response**

Luke 1:38

**[Luk 1:38 KJV] 38 And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.**

**Say:** It is sometimes difficult to step out in faith when you do not know the future. How would you respond if God asked you to do something that is beyond natural reason? Would you ask for more confirmation before you said yes? Mary's response is an example of simple obedience to God. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**God was asking Mary to do something that would impact her life. She fully understood the religious and cultural implications of being pregnant and not married. She would experience shame, ridicule, and possible rejection by her family and community when they discovered she was pregnant. This shame would follow her throughout her life.**

**Accepting God's plan for Mary would also impact her relationship with Joseph. What would he say when he discovered she was pregnant? Would he believe her? Would he reject her? Would she need to raise Jesus as a single mother without family and community support? Mary, however, did not allow this to keep her from obeying God.**

**Mary's response was immediate (Luke 1:38). The word "servant" (NLT; "handmaid," KJV) is often used to describe a slave. She willingly submitted her**

life to God and His plan for her. She accepted God's will to become the mother of His Son.

**Obeying God is not always easy. But when we obey Him, He will accomplish His plan through us.**

### **Resource Packet Item 1: Learning to Obey God**

Distribute the work sheet. Have students answer the questions. Some might want to share their experiences with the class. Encourage them to reflect on their answers this week.

#### ***Discuss***

? What might keep you from obeying God?

? In what areas of your life do you need to obey God?

## **Part 2—Mary Magnifies the Lord For His Mighty Acts**

Luke 1:46–49

**[Luk 1:46-49 KJV] 46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, 47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. 48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. 49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy [is] his name.**

**Say:** When God asks us to do something special for Him we sometimes need support from others. Mary's first act was to travel to visit her cousin Elizabeth. This was quite a trip for a single girl, but she knew God would be with her. She likely had traveling companions. When she arrived, God used Elizabeth to confirm Gabriel's message. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**Elizabeth's words would have been an encouragement to Mary (Luke 1:41–45). Mary had believed God would do everything He had told her.**

**Mary began to praise the Lord. This song of praise is called "The Magnificat," from the Latin word for "magnify" (verse 46, KJV). Mary must have been familiar with the Old Testament because her song of praise is filled with Old Testament references. Mary's praise comes from a heart that is overwhelmed with God's goodness. On her way to visit Elizabeth, Mary probably reflected on Gabriel's visit and what this meant for her and the people of Israel.**

**The words “soul” (verse 46) and “spirit” (verse 47) are a Hebrew parallelism, expressing the same thought in two different ways. Mary was acknowledging her deep dependence on God. The prophets often mentioned God as Savior (Isaiah 43:11; 45:21–22; Hosea 13:4; Habakkuk 3:18). Some teach that Mary never sinned. Here, however, Mary recognizes her need of a Savior.**

**In Luke 1:48, Mary again used the word “handmaiden” (KJV, “lowly servant girl,” NLT; see verse 38), a word that describes a servant or a slave. By using this word, Mary willingly gave herself to the Lord as His dedicated servant, an example for all believers in Christ to follow.**

**Mary recognized that what was occurring in her was a miracle from the mighty God (verse 49; see Psalm 71:19; 126:2–3). God is holy and, as such, is set apart from His creation. However, this does not mean He does not work in and through those whom He has created. God chose Mary to experience God’s mighty hand. And for this she praised Him.**

**Praise is an important part of our lives as well. We need to spend time each day praising God for His goodness to us.**

### ***Discuss***

? In what ways does praise come from within your spirit?

? In what ways can praise be spontaneous, but also the result of deep reflection?

## **For His Mercy**

Luke 1:50–55

**[Luk 1:50-55 KJV] 50 And his mercy [is] on them that fear him from generation to generation. 51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He hath put down the mighty from [their] seats, and exalted them of low degree. 53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. 54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of [his] mercy; 55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.**

**Say:** We often praise God for what He has done for us. But we also praise God for what He is doing in the world. The second part of Mary’s praise centers around the impact Jesus would have for the nation of Israel and the whole world. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

God is holy, but He is also merciful. In the Old Testament the word mercy describes God's faithful love. In sending His Son, Jesus, the Messiah, God was revealing His faithful love to all who "fear him" (Luke 1:50, NLT; see Psalm 103:17).

[Psa 103:17 KJV] 17 But the mercy of the LORD [is] from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

In Luke 1:50–53, Mary contrasted the state of unbelievers with believers as a result of Christ's coming. First, she contrasted God's strength to those on whom His mercy rests, with His response to the proud (verses 50–51). God uses His "mighty arm" (NLT) on behalf of His people to scatter "the proud and haughty ones" (NLT).

Second, Mary compared what God did to "the mighty" (verse 52, KJV ) with how He treats the lowly and humble. God removed the mighty, those in authority abusing their power, from their thrones, their positions of authority. In the Old Testament, God judged those who stood against Him and His people (see Psalm 89:10). What was true in Mary's day is true today. Those in positions of authority and wealth often do not believe they need God, using their positions to abuse others. Unless they repent, however, they will experience His judgment.

And third, Mary stated that God has given good things to satisfy the hungry, while sending away the rich with "empty hands" (verse 53, NLT ). God always shows His mercy to the humble and oppressed if they fear Him, that is, looking to and depending on Him (verse 50). Mary concluded her praise with a reminder that, through Jesus, God has remembered His promise to the nation of Israel (Luke 1:54). God had promised Abraham that through his seed God would bless all nations (Genesis 12:3; 17:7–8; 18:18; 22:18). God's covenant with Abraham provides the basis by which God is demonstrating His faithful love. Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise (Galatians 3:8, 15–16, 28–29). God is a merciful God. As we yield to Him we will experience His mercy.

### **Resource Packet Item 2: My Song of Praise**

Distribute the work sheet. Give students three to five minutes to write their praise. Some students might want to share what they have written. Encourage them to finish it during the week. Then spend time praising God.

### ***Discuss***

? How has God shown His mercy to you?

? How do God's actions in the past encourage you to trust Him for your current needs?

## **Part 3—The Angel Gabriel Visits Joseph**

## **Angel's Prophetic Announcement**

Matthew 1:18–23

**[Mat 1:18-23 KJV] 18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just [man], and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. 20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. 21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. 22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, 23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.**

**Say:** Mary was not the only one who would have a part in Jesus' birth. God wanted Jesus to have a mother and an earthly father. While Joseph was not Jesus' biological father, he would be a godly influence in His life. But Joseph needed a message from God to assure Joseph of God's plan for him. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

**The Gospel of Matthew presents the account of Jesus' lineage through Joseph (Matthew 1:1–17). Matthew also records the angel's visit to Joseph.**

**Mary had been pledged to Joseph to be his wife (Matthew 1:18). Being pledged normally took place when a girl was in her teens. The marriage would occur a year later. This pledge to be married was legally binding. It could only be broken by divorce. Matthew, like Luke, emphasizes Mary's virginity and her supernatural conception. They also point out that Mary and Joseph remained sexually pure during this time.**

**Matthew does not tell us how Joseph found out that Mary was pregnant. Couples pledged to be married did not have much communication during this year. It would, of course, become noticeable that Mary was pregnant.**

**Matthew describes Joseph as "a righteous man" (verse 19, NLT), another indication of his purity. Joseph faced a dilemma. If he married, he would be admitting guilt.**



**In the Old Testament, adultery was punishable by death (Deuteronomy 22:23– 24). By New Testament times, Joseph would have only been required to divorce Mary. This was the course that Joseph chose.**

**Because he was righteous, he did not want to bring public shame on Mary. He only needed two people to witness this private act of divorce. By doing this, Joseph would demonstrate his righteousness (obedience to the Law) and his compassion for Mary. God, however, had a special message for Joseph (Matthew 1:20–23).**

The angel addressed Joseph as “son of David,” reminding Joseph of his lineage and the significant role he would have (Matthew 1:20; see 1:1). The angel also told Joseph that Mary had not been unfaithful to him. She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Fathers named their boys when they were circumcised (Luke 2:21). By naming Mary’s baby, Joseph was making Jesus his child. Through Jesus, God would bring salvation to Israel and to the whole world.

Jesus’ birth would fulfill Isaiah’s prophecy (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14). God was indeed with His people. He had not forsaken them. Jesus—Immanuel—was proof of God’s faithful love.

Immanuel—God with us—is still a promise for today. We can trust Him to be with us in the most difficult times of life.

### ***Discuss***

? What does it mean to be righteous?

? In what ways is God faithful to us?

## **Joseph’s Obedient Response**

Matthew 1:24–25

**[Mat 1:24-25 KJV] 24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: 25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.**

**Say:** It is not easy to overcome fear and obey God. Joseph understood the ramifications of taking Mary as his wife. But he was willing to follow God’s plan for his life. Joseph would willingly do what God asked him to do. (Share your highlights from the following text.)

Joseph immediately obeyed God (Matthew 1:24). The angel's message helped Joseph overcome his fear in taking Mary as his wife. He knew they would face shame and rejection from family and friends, but he also knew they were obeying God. Joseph was also taking on a huge responsibility; he would be the one to guide God's Son in His early life.

Matthew, like Luke, makes it clear that Jesus' conception was not the result of human sexual relations (Matthew 1:25). Some teach that Mary's virginity was perpetual and that she and Joseph never had sexual relations. Mary and Joseph, however, did have other children (Matthew 12:46; 13:55).

Joseph understood that God was working out His plan of salvation and he and Mary had a place in that plan. Thus, Joseph was obedient in every detail; he named the baby born to Mary, Jesus. God had indeed redeemed His people from their sin.

### **Resource Packet Item 3: Importance of the Virgin Birth**

Distribute the work sheet. Have students answer the questions. Discuss their answers. Instruct students to study this work sheet further during the week.

#### ***Discuss***

? Why is it sometimes difficult to obey God?

? Why is the virgin birth of Christ important?

## **What Is God Saying to Us?**

**Say:** Christ's virgin birth is one of the central truths to the gospel. First, Christ's birth fulfills the prophecies of the Old Testament. It proves the truthfulness of God's Word. Second, it declares Christ's deity. He was not conceived as a result of human sexual relations. Christ's conception was a supernatural work of God. Third, Jesus was truly God in the flesh. He was born a human and suffered and died for our sins. Fourth, it declares Christ's sinlessness. He was exempt from the guilt of Adam's sin. And fifth, it declares God's saving grace to all humanity.

## **Living It Out**

### **Ministry in Action**

- Use this season to share the true meaning of Christmas with you meet.
- Commit yourself to willingly obey God's plan for your life, even if it means standing alone for the gospel.
- Look for someone outside your immediate family that you can bless this Christmas season.

## **Daily Bible Readings**

### **Monday:**

A Miraculous Birth.  
Genesis 21:1–7

**[Gen 21:1-7 KJV] 1 And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. 2 For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. 3 And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. 4 And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5 And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. 6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, [so that] all that hear will laugh with me. 7 And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born [him] a son in his old age.**

**Tuesday:**

A Promised Deliverer.  
Judges 13:1–5

**[Jdg 13:1-5 KJV] 1 And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hand of the Philistines forty years. 2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name [was] Manoah; and his wife [was] barren, and bare not. 3 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou [art] barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. 4 Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean [thing]: 5 For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.**

**Wednesday:**

A Son Desired of God.  
1 Samuel 1:9–20

**[1Sa 1:9-20 KJV] 9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. 10 And she [was] in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. 12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. 14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. 15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I [am] a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. 16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. 17 Then Eli**

answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant [thee] thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more [sad]. 19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. 20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, [saying], Because I have asked him of the LORD.

**Thursday:**

The Angel's Visit.

Luke 1:11–20

[Luk 1:11-20 KJV] 11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw [him], he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. 14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. 15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. 16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. 17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. 18 And Zacharias said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years. 19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. 20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.

**Friday:**

Elizabeth's Proclamation.

Luke 1:39–45

[Luk 1:39-45 KJV] 39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; 40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. 41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: 42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed [art] thou among women, and blessed [is] the fruit of thy womb. 43 And whence [is] this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 And blessed [is] she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

**Saturday:**

Another Will Prepare the Way.

Luke 1:57–60, 76–80

**[Luk 1:57-60, 76-80 KJV] 57 Now Elisabeth's full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. 58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her. 59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60 And his mother answered and said, Not [so]; but he shall be called John. ... 76 And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; 77 To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, 78 Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, 79 To give light to them that sit in darkness and [in] the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. 80 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel.**