



Flower Girl Greetings™
magnifying the beauty of God's Word

The Christmas Chronology

The following passages are taken from the three gospels that contain portions of the Christmas story. I tried to weave them together in the order that the events took place. I hope you enjoy reading the Christmas story with your family and friends. (Scripture is taken from the New American Standard Bible, and the subtitles are mine.)

Matthew 1-2 passages are in red; Luke 1-2 passages are in blue; John 1 passages are in green.

The Birth of John the Baptizer is Foretold

⁵In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. ⁸Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, ⁹according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. ¹¹And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. ¹²Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear gripped him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. ¹⁴You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. ¹⁵For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to

make ready a people prepared for the Lord." ¹⁸Zacharias said to the angel, "How will I know this for certain for I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years." ¹⁹The angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel who stands in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time." ²¹The people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²²But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute. ²³When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home. ²⁴After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, ²⁵"This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked with favor upon me, to take away my disgrace among men."

The Angel Visits Mary

²⁶Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹But she was very perplexed at this statement and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. ³⁰The angel said to

her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." ³⁴Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

The Angel Visits Joseph

¹⁸Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. ²⁰But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will bear a Son and you shall call His name Jesus for He will save His

people from their sins.”²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:²³ “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means GOD WITH US.²⁴ And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took Mary as his wife,²⁵ but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

Mary Visits Elizabeth and sings

³⁹ Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country to a city of Judah,⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.⁴² She cried out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women and blessed is the fruit of your womb!”⁴³ “And how has it happened to me that the mother of my Lord would come to me?”⁴⁴ “For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.⁴⁵ “And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”⁴⁶ And Mary said, “My soul exalts the Lord,⁴⁷ and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.⁴⁸ For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; for behold, from this time on, all generations will count me blessed.⁴⁹ For the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name.⁵⁰ AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM.⁵¹ He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones and has exalted those who were humble.⁵³ HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; and sent away the rich empty-handed.⁵⁴ He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy,⁵⁵ as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever.”⁵⁶ And Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her home.

John the Baptizer is Born and Zacharias Prophecies

⁶ There came a man sent from God whose name was John.⁷ He came as a witness to testify about the Light, so that all might believe through him.⁸ He was not the Light, but he came to testify about the Light.

⁵⁷ Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son.

⁵⁸ Her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her, and they were rejoicing with her.⁵⁹ And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias after his father.

⁶⁰ But his mother answered and said, “No indeed; but he shall be called John.”

⁶¹ And they said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name.”⁶² And they made signs to his father as to what he wanted him called.

⁶³ And he asked for a tablet and wrote as follows, “His name is John.” And they were all astonished.

⁶⁴ And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God.⁶⁵ Fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.

⁶⁶ All who heard them kept them in mind, saying, “What then will this child turn out to be?” For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.⁶⁷ And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied saying,

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people,⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant,⁷⁰ As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES and FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE US;

⁷² To show mercy toward our fathers and to remember His holy covenant,⁷³ The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,⁷⁴ To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear,⁷⁵ In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High for you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS⁷⁷ To give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,⁷⁹ TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW OF DEATH, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

⁸⁰ And the child continued to grow and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Jesus is Born

¹ Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth.² This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria.³ And everyone was on his way to register for the census, each to his own city.⁴ Joseph also went up from Galilee from the city of Nazareth to Judea to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David,⁵ in order to register along with Mary who was engaged to him and was with child.⁶ While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth.⁷ And she gave birth to her firstborn son and she wrapped Him in cloths and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things came into being through Him and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

⁵ The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

⁹ There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.

¹¹ He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.

¹² But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name

¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵ John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank

than I, for He existed before me.”¹⁶ For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

¹⁷For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

Angels Announce Jesus' Birth to the Shepherds

⁸In the same region, there were shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid for, behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior who is Christ the Lord. ¹²“This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” ¹⁵When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” ¹⁶So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph and the baby as He lay in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. ¹⁸And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Jesus is Presented at the Temple, Witnessed by Simeon and Anna

²¹And when eight days had passed before His circumcision, His name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb. ²²And when the days for their purification

according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “EVERY firstborn MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD”), ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, “A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS.” ²⁵And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ. ²⁷And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, ²⁸then he took Him into his arms and blessed God and said, ²⁹“Now Lord, You are releasing Your bondservant to depart in peace according to Your word; ³⁰For my eyes have seen Your salvation, ³¹which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, ³²A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES and the glory of Your people Israel.” ³³And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. ³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a sign to be opposed, ³⁵and a sword will pierce even your own soul to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.” ³⁶And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage ³⁷and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. ³⁸At that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

The Magi Follow the Star to Jesus

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, ²“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in

the east and have come to worship Him.” ³When Herod heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what has been written by the prophet: ⁶‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.’” ⁷Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child and, when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.” ⁹After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.

Mary, Joseph and Jesus Flee to Egypt

¹³Now when the magi had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him.” ¹⁴So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt. ¹⁵He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON.”