Lesson 1
The King Is Born!


Lesson Objective
The objective in studying Jesus' birth is to see that he was born a king, albeit an upside-down king. Students will discover evidence of his royalty in the many references to his lineage from David, the town of Bethlehem, and the glorious events surrounding his birth. They will also consider the many humble circumstances surrounding Jesus' birth, which show the unusual sort of kingship he had in mind—that of a suffering servant.

Lesson Highlights
* The day of the Lord spoken of in the Old Testament, a time of redemption for God's people, would come through a messiah.
* Messiah, meaning "anointed one," primarily meant an anointed king.
* The Messiah was to come from David's royal line.
* Jesus, as David's heir, made his entry in David's birthplace: Bethlehem. Yet the conditions of Jesus' birth were anything but royal.
* His birth shows the unusual sort of kingship he had in mind—an upside-down, humble kingship.
* For Jesus to leave his Father's side in heaven and take on human nature was itself an act of great humility.

Preparation/Materials
✓ Video clip of Sleeping Beauty, opening scene (clip can be found on YouTube
✓ Visuals from Sleeping Beauty (optional)
✓ Born to Be King handout, one per student

Background
Jesus' birth is one of the greatest events in Christian remembrance. He was born during the rule of Caesar Augustus, the first and perhaps the greatest emperor of Rome. Augustus ushered in the Pax Romana, a golden age of peace and achievement in Rome. Yet the humble King Jesus would bring a peace far greater than any Roman emperor could provide.

The census ordered by Augustus was significant in that it forced Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem, David's birthplace. First Samuel 16–17 speaks of Samuel's journey to Bethlehem to anoint David, son of Jesse. Now, from that same small town about six miles south of Jerusalem, a far greater king was to be born.

Keeping Jesus' lineage in mind is important because the promised messiah, or anointed king, had to be a descendant of David. Students will examine the many times that Luke reminds us of Jesus' royal lineage, but they will also see how Jesus came to be an upside-down sort of king. He was born in the humblest of conditions, in a stable or cave, to parents so poor that they could present only a poor family's offering when Jesus was dedicated at the temple. Jesus truly lowered himself by taking on all the limitations of humanity—not just middle-class humanity but the down-and-out. The greatest of kings lived a life far more humble than the lives we live today.

Lesson Steps
Bridge
1. Explain that as we enter the story of Jesus' life, we will keep at the forefront the idea that Jesus came to bring God's kingdom to Earth. He was the long-awaited Messiah, the King from David's line. We begin the story of Jesus with his birth.
2. Ask students if they can recall any movies in which a new prince or princess is born. Then ask, "Why was the birth of a future king or queen such a big deal?" (The fate of the kingdom and of the people rested in their hands! Keeping the dynasty going was very important.)
3. Explain that the movie Sleeping Beauty opens by showing how a long-awaited royal birth was celebrated.
4. Distribute the *Born to Be King* handout.

5. Direct students to list the characteristics of a traditional royal birth in column 1 as you consider the birth of Princess Aurora.

6. Watch a video clip of the first few minutes of the movie *Sleeping Beauty* depicting how Princess Aurora’s birth was celebrated (clip can be found on YouTube).

7. Ask students to list all the special forms of honor that a royal baby receives in column 1. (See answers on teacher key.)

8. Now ask students to fill in column 2 by considering the ways that Jesus’ birth was far more humble than that of a traditional royal birth. (See answers on teacher key.)

**Scripture Link**

1. Move on to question 3 of the handout. Read aloud the directions to question 3a.

2. Either work as a class, or allow students to work in pairs, to read and record verses in response to question 3a. Then complete questions 3b and 3c.

**Student Activities**

1. Allow students time to privately reflect on and record answers to the four application questions.

2. Afterward, allow time for small group discussion so that students can share their insights. You may want to reconvene as a class so that students can briefly discuss answers.

**Independent Practice**

1. Have students read *The King Is Born!* (page 24) in the student text and answer the reflection questions.
1. A Traditional Royal Birth
   - Born into a castle.
   - Surrounded by servants and advisors.
   - Born into a rich, royal family.
   - A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
   - Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
   - A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
   - Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
   - Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
   - Kings and princes came to visit her.

2. A Humble Birth
   - Born in a stable.
   - Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   - Born into a very poor family.
   - Did not receive widespread notice or celebration.
   - Visited by lowly shepherds.
   - Instead of honor, received death threats from King Herod.
   - Received few gifts or blessings.
   - The event was largely ignored by most of society.

3. Nevertheless, a True King!

   Mary would not have believed that Jesus—born in such a lowly condition—could truly be a king. But Luke records many signs pointing to Jesus’ kingship. Many would not have believed that Jesus—born in such a lowly condition—could truly be a king. But Luke records many signs pointing to Jesus’ kingship.

   a. Read Luke 1:30-45 and Luke 2:6-12 more closely. Listing every piece of evidence Luke gives that Jesus is a royal figure. The long-awaited son of King David. Include the verse where you found it. You should be able to find 4-5 verses with royal language.
     - 1:30—calls Joseph a descendant of King David.
     - 1:32—says “God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign forever; his kingdom will never end.”
     - 2:4—Joseph went to the town of David, because he belonged to the line of David.
     - 2:11—says “Today in the town of David a Savior has been born.”

   b. Looking back to Luke 1:3-2:2, what aspects of Jesus’ birth were glorious and miraculous?

   c. What does Simeon say that this young king, Jesus, will one day do? Explain your answer.

   Jesus will bring salvation (verse 30). He will restore the glory of Israel and will be a light to the Gentiles. Instead of honor, received death threats from King Herod. He was born miraculously of a virgin, by the power of God. Instead of heralds blowing trumpets, his birth was announced by angels in the sky.

   d. What does Simeon say that this young king, Jesus, will one day do? Explain your answer.

   e. What does Simeon say that this young king, Jesus, will one day do? Explain your answer.

   f. What does Simeon say that this young king, Jesus, will one day do? Explain your answer.

4. What usually marks the birth of royalty? In what ways was Jesus’ birth humble, unlike a king’s? Answers will vary.

5. A Humble Birth

   a. Born into a poor family.
   b. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   c. Born into a poor family, surrounded by animals.
   d. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   e. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   f. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   g. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   h. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   i. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   j. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   k. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   l. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   m. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   n. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   o. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   p. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   q. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   r. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   s. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   t. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   u. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   v. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   w. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   x. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   y. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.
   z. Laid in a manger, surrounded by animals.

6. A Humble Birth

   a. Born in a stable.
   b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
   c. Born into a rich, royal family.
   d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
   e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
   f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
   g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
   h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
   i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

7. A Humble Birth

   a. Born in a stable.
   b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
   c. Born into a rich, royal family.
   d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
   e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
   f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
   g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
   h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
   i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

8. A Humble Birth

   a. Born in a stable.
   b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
   c. Born into a rich, royal family.
   d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
   e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
   f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
   g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
   h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
   i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

9. A Humble Birth

   a. Born in a stable.
   b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
   c. Born into a rich, royal family.
   d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
   e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
   f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
   g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
   h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
   i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

10. A Humble Birth

    a. Born in a stable.
    b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
    c. Born into a rich, royal family.
    d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
    e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
    f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
    g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
    h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
    i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

11. A Humble Birth

    a. Born in a stable.
    b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
    c. Born into a rich, royal family.
    d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
    e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
    f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
    g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
    h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
    i. Kings and princes came to visit her.

12. A Humble Birth

    a. Born in a stable.
    b. Surrounded by servants and advisors.
    c. Born into a rich, royal family.
    d. A holiday was proclaimed in all the kingdom in her honor.
    e. Everyone—from common people to kings and princes—came to pay their homage.
    f. A parade in her honor, with banners announcing her birth.
    g. Crowds of people brought gifts and good wishes.
    h. Heralds and trumpets announced the birth.
    i. Kings and princes came to visit her.
Music. Ask students to brainstorm a list of Christmas carols and hymns that emphasize Jesus’ humility and others that refer to his kingship. Or consider printing off the text of “Once in Royal David’s City” or “Thou Who Was Rich Beyond All Splendor” and having them ponder the text of these carols.

- Allow students to complete the activity above by researching Christmas carols and hymns online.
- Have students blog or create a short narrative about how your ancestry has influenced you.
Lesson Objective
The objective in studying Jesus’ baptism and wilderness temptation is to learn that Jesus needed to “fulfill all righteousness”—in other words, perform every act of righteousness that Israel (and all humanity) should have done. He did this by entering into the same experiences as Israel (and as humanity) and emerging perfectly righteous. We will focus on the wilderness temptations, where we see that Jesus had a very similar experience to Israel, yet he succeeded where others failed.

Lesson Highlights
* Before Jesus began his public ministry, he was baptized by John and was tempted in the wilderness.
* Jesus was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He performed every act of righteousness that we humans should have done.
* Jesus lived the life that Israel, and that all of us, should have lived.
* Jesus did not just fulfill certain Old Testament prophecies; he fulfilled the entire story of Israel.
* Jesus’ testing in the wilderness intentionally contained many parallels to Israel’s testing in the wilderness.
* Jesus symbolically relived many aspects of Israel’s story. In every area that Israel had failed, Jesus was righteous.

Preparation/Materials
✓ Jesus: The True Israel handout, one per student
✓ Wilderness Temptation handout, one per student

Background
Here students will be learning that, in order for Jesus to fulfill God’s plan of redemption, he had to relive the story of Israel. Many threads begun in the Old Testament had been left hanging and broken—so many symbols and stories had never come to a satisfying close. God had communicated a glorious vision for the temple, for the king, for Israel itself—but the reality had never matched up. Now, for Jesus to tie up the Old Testament story and complete God’s kingdom dream, Jesus had to pick up each of these threads and weave them together in himself. By studying Jesus’ baptism and wilderness experience, students will consider more deeply the ways that Jesus was “recapitulating” Israel’s history, by going through the same experiences Israel had gone through but fulfilling them perfectly this time.

This idea of fulfillment revolves around the concept of typology or double fulfillment—that there were many themes in Israel’s story that had true meaning back then but would have an even greater meaning in Jesus. For instance, Matthew uses many direct quotations from the Old Testament—more than in any other Gospel—and he speaks of “the word of the prophet” being fulfilled. But this sort of fulfillment of prophecy may not be quite what we expect, since the prophets Matthew quoted were often not making a prediction about a future messiah per se. Instead, they were summarizing and explaining events in Israel’s history: how God had called Israel his son and rescued Israel from Egypt (quoted in Matthew 2:15), how Israel’s mothers had watched their children carried away or killed in the exile (Matthew 2:17), etc. In all these Old Testament passages, Matthew sees something that—though it had an original meaning back then—Jesus fulfilled in an even greater way. The passages he quotes were not immediately about the messiah, but he nevertheless sees these events having a second, greater fulfillment in Christ—a double fulfillment.

A classic example of this is Matthew’s quotation of Isaiah telling the king of Judah that the birth of a child would serve as a sign, proving that God would destroy the kings to their north: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (Matthew 1:22–23). The immediate context of Isaiah 7–8 suggests that this immediately referred to Isaiah’s son, but Matthew sees that this passage had a second, greater fulfillment in Christ. He, too, was born of a young woman—but this time, a true virgin! Isaiah’s words back in the 600s B.C. were fulfilled once through
Lesson 2
Jesus Relives Israel's Story
Matthew 3–4:11

The Gospel of Matthew tells of the events leading up to the start of Jesus' public ministry. Matthew explains that two important events preceded the start of Jesus' preaching: his baptism and his temptation in the wilderness.

John the Baptist began preparing the people of Judea for Jesus' ministry, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." (3:2). He preached that judgment was coming to all who did not repent, even calling out the spiritual leaders (Pharisees and Sadducees) for their lack of true faith and true repentance. He offered a baptism symbolizing confession of sin and repentance (3:6, 11).

We notice this language of "fulfilling" many other times in Matthew. For instance, Matthew says that Jesus left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum "to fulfill what was said by the prophet Isaiah." (4:14). Jesus did visibly know the Old Testament Scriptures and was sent to fulfill them.

Matthew also quotes some prophecies that were predictions entirely about the future—such as Micah 5:2–5 (in Matthew 2:6). Micah is speaking of a future king "Whose origins are from of old," who would come from Bethlehem, and whose "greatness will reach to the ends of the Earth." Certain prophecies like these refer to only a single, future fulfillment, but these cases are in the minority. More often Jesus fulfilled an event, symbol, or theme in Israel's story in a double way. Consider the prophet Zechariah writing about 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:7–13). This meant something back then: God's people valued him. But Matthew and the other Gospel writers see that God has brought this thread back into the story in a second, even greater way. Jesus, just like Israel, was tested in the wilderness—his 40 days in the desert were reminiscent of their 40 years. That generation of Israelites failed in their wilderness test because they rebelled against the Lord. Jesus withstood far greater testing, yet he emerged from it completely righteous. He was fulfilling all that Israel should have done the first time around.

Jesus does not just fulfill, for example, 300 Old Testament predictions about the messiah, but he fulfills the entire Old Testament story. The role of prophets, priests, and kings—he fulfills those. The sacrifices, laws, symbols, and feasts—he fulfills those. But even more, he fulfills the entire story of Israel that stretches from Genesis to Malachi. Israel—this nation called to be God's son, called to be a light to the Gentiles—failed to remain faithful to God. But Jesus, God's perfect Son, remained every temptation. He alone was able to fulfill the mission given to Israel.

In the opening chapters Matthew speaks five times of Jesus fulfilling the Old Testament prophets. But this is not the sort of "fulfilling of prophecy" we might think of. The prophets Matthew quoted were usually not making a prediction about a future messiah. Instead, they were explaining events in Israel's history: how God had called Israel his son, how he had rescued Israel from Egypt, how Israel's mothers had watched their children carry away or killed in the exile, etc.

Now Matthew quotes the Old Testament prophets to show that Jesus is fulfilling these events in a much greater way. Just as Israel was called God's son, so Jesus is uniquely and eternally God's Son (Matthew 3:17). But whereas Israel was a sinful and rebellious son, Jesus is the righteous and ultimate Son. Matthew shows Jesus reliving Israel's story but doing so perfectly, to fulfill all the righteousness they had failed to achieve. Jesus, just like Israel, was called out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15). He, too, lived through a time of Israel's mothers weeping (Matthew 2:17). And he, like Israel, was tested in the wilderness—his 40 days in the desert were reminiscent of their 40 years. That generation of Israelites failed their wilderness test by rebelling against the Lord. Jesus withstood far greater testing, yet he emerged from it completely righteous. He was fulfilling all that Israel should have done the first time around.

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his own child but fulfilled again in a greater way in Christ. Just as Isaiah’s child served as a promise of redemption, so Christ would be an even greater sign of redemption—the final fulfillment of that promise and event back in Israel’s history. God’s sovereignty was at work in history to bring all the threads of the Old Testament together in Jesus.

Matthew also quotes some prophecies that were predictions entirely about the future—such as Micah 5:2–5 (in Matthew 2:6). Micah is speaking of a future king “Whose origins are from of old,” who would come from Bethlehem, and whose “greatness will reach to the ends of the Earth.” Certain prophecies like these refer to only a single, future fulfillment, but these cases are in the minority. More often Jesus fulfilled an event, symbol, or theme in Israel’s story in a double way. Consider the prophet Zechariah writing about 30 pieces of silver (Zechariah 11:7–13). This meant something back then: God’s people thought that their shepherd, Zechariah, was worth only 30 pieces of silver, showing how little they valued him. But Matthew and the other Gospel writers see that God has brought this thread back into the story in a second, even greater way. Jesus, an even greater shepherd than the Old Testament prophets, was also valued at only 30 pieces of silver. This number is not just coincidental; this is God’s sovereign hand at work, taking themes from the Old Testament and bringing them all together in Jesus.

Matthew and the other New Testament authors demonstrated that Jesus fulfilled not just a limited number of specific predictions but the entire story of Israel, with all its themes and symbols. We will see that most of the ways Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament were not the result of happenstance: He specifically chose to pick up the mantle of Israel and of Israel’s king. He purposefully reenacted many of their experiences, because he knew he was the true Israel, the true King. Thus, he intentionally took the words of King David on his lips at the cross; he purposefully rode a donkey into Jerusalem, in full knowledge of the Old Testament and of how these identified him with Israel’s messianic king. Though others could try to claim messianic status through actions such as these, only Jesus the God-Man was capable of making good on these claims—of being the one who could fulfill God’s plan of redemption. Only in Jesus did all the threads of the Old Testament come together: prophet, priest, king, sacrifice, temple. And only he could “reconcile the history of Israel” and “prove faithful where the nation had been faithless.”
Lesson Steps

1. Read aloud these two statements. Ask students to explain the difference between these statements.

   - “Jesus came to fulfill certain prophecies written in the Old Testament.”
   - “Jesus came to fulfill the Old Testament.”

2. Allow for discussion. Then ask, “Which one is the bigger claim? Why?”

3. Help students see that the second claim is the bigger one, because it means that Jesus did not just fulfill, for example, 200 Old Testament predictions about the messiah, but he fulfills everything in the Old Testament story (the roles of prophets, priests, kings, sacrifices, laws, symbols, festivals—all of the holy people, the holy place, and kingdom themes).

Scripture Link

1. Explain that today we’ll explore this idea of Jesus fulfilling the whole Old Testament as we study his baptism and wilderness temptation—the two major events that came before the start of his public ministry.

2. Have a student read Matthew 3:1–12 aloud.

3. Ask the following questions:

   - “What did John’s baptism symbolize, from verses 6 and 11?” (Confession of sins in 3:6, repentance in 3:11.)
   - “Why was it so surprising, then, that Jesus came to be baptized?” (Jesus never sinned, so he wouldn’t need to confess or repent of anything. John said that he, not Jesus, was the one who needed it.)
Wilderness Temptation

Similarities between Israel and Jesus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
<th>Israel</th>
<th>Jesus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:2</td>
<td>For四十 years in the desert.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:1—2, Forty days in the desert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:3</td>
<td>God led them there.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:4, God led them in the wilderness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:2</td>
<td>Testing to see how they would respond.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:1, He was tempted or tested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:3</td>
<td>Became hungry (much more quickly).</td>
<td>Matthew 4:2, He became hungry after fasting 40 days.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:2</td>
<td>Tempted regarding food/bread.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:3—4, Tempted regarding food/bread.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:3</td>
<td>Tempted in the area of testing God.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:5—7, Tempted in the area of testing God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deuteronomy 8:3</td>
<td>Tempted in the area of worship.</td>
<td>Matthew 4:9—10, Tempted in the area of worship.</td>
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Different Outcomes

Jesus responded to his wilderness testing far differently from Israel. Consider the many ways that Israel fell short and failed, while Jesus—undergoing even worse testing—proved to be righteous. Use the prompts to jog your memory, helping you consider the differences between their wilderness experiences.

**Prompt**

- Miraculous Bread
- Israel received manna, miraculous bread from heaven. This was supposed to produce trust and worship in God, yet they nevertheless grumbled against God.
- Jesus did not allow himself even miraculous bread; he endured much longer and tougher testing, yet he actually trusted God fully.

- “What reason did Jesus give for being baptized?” (He said, “It is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness,” verse 15.)
- “What do you make of that? What does it mean to ‘fulfill all righteousness’?” (Put simply, Jesus was going to do all the righteous things that needed to be done.)

4. Explain that Jesus didn’t need to be baptized for himself; he did it to identify himself with his people and to fulfill all the righteous acts that we need to do.

5. Distribute the **Jesus: The True Israel** handout.

6. Read aloud the opening instructions, working through the “Jesus’ Baptism” section together as a class. Read aloud the Old Testament passages to find parallel language and fill in the chart.

7. Explain that students will be doing something similar with the next section: finding parallel wording.

8. Read aloud the instructions for the “Jesus’ Temptation” section. Allow students to work in pairs to underline and highlight the passages.

**Student Activities**

1. Distribute the **Wilderness Temptation** handout. Direct students to enter their answers into the two charts comparing Jesus and Israel. Then respond to the application questions.

2. Allow students to work on the handout in pairs or small groups. You may want to discuss answers together.

**Independent Practice**

1. Have students read **Jesus Relives Israel’s Story** (page 26) in the student text and answer the reflection questions.

   1. Other than what was mentioned, summarize at least three things that God desired Israel to be
or to have—goals he had in mind for them. How did Jesus fulfill those perfectly? (Answers will vary.)

2. Why do you think John criticized the Pharisees and Sadducees in Matthew 3:7? (He seemed to think they were just coming to be baptized as a religious ritual or a good work, not truly from a repentant heart. They just wanted to pad themselves against “the coming wrath.” But John says if they were really repentant, they would produce fruit in keeping with repentance. He warned them that judgment was coming and that every tree that does not produce good fruit—that is, faith—will be cut down and thrown into the fire.)

3. John speaks of Jesus coming with a winnowing fork in Matthew 3:12. Explain what this image of winnowing wheat and chaff is meant to convey. If you need help, look at the parable of the weeds in Matthew 13. (The wheat stands for repentant believers, while the chaff represents those who remain unrepentant. John says that Jesus will winnow, or separate, these two groups of people. He will gather the righteous together but will judge and destroy the unbelievers.)

Looking Ahead
Have students read Mark 1:14—3:34 in preparation for Lesson 3.

Enrichment
- Allow for additional journaling or discussion on the topic of temptation. What particular temptations exist in our culture? Can Jesus really relate to those temptations, given that he didn’t experience modern life? How can we be stronger in resisting temptation? Use Hebrews 4:14—5:10 in this reflection.
- Study the role of John the Baptist further, having students research what we learn about him from the other Gospels.

3. Why does it matter that Jesus not only died for us but also lived a perfect life—a life that fulfilled all righteousness? If Jesus had only erased our sins, our spiritual bank account would be back to zero. But Jesus not only took all our sins; he also gave us all his righteousness. We are now viewed as righteous in God’s sight! God sees Jesus’ righteousness in us (a positive bank account), and God is satisfied with what Jesus has done. Jesus has “performed” for us so that we do not have to perform; he has earned the perfect record that we never could have earned.

4. Jesus answered each temptation with Scripture. He not only knew God’s Word but embraced it and aligned himself with God’s will. What about you? In what areas do you tend to listen to the world’s temptations instead of to God’s Word? How could you better combat these temptations with the truth? Answers will vary.