

A painting of the Nativity scene. Joseph, with a beard and wearing a white head covering, leans over the infant Jesus. Mary, with long dark hair, cradles the baby in her arms. The baby is wrapped in a blue cloth. The scene is lit with warm, golden light, creating a peaceful and intimate atmosphere.

Accounts of Jesus Birth

Part 2

Matthew's Nativity Story



- Written for Jewish readers
- Establishes Jesus as the Messiah and King of the Jews
- Use of Hebrew Scripture prophecy
- Joseph is principle character in story
- Jesus born in Bethlehem
- Visit of Magi
- Retrace of Israel's story – flight to Egypt and return

John's Portrayal of Jesus Coming



- Gospel of John written for established Church in Ephesus – highly theological
- John 1:1-18 has John's proclamation of Jesus coming

How does John define who Jesus is and his coming to earth?

Luke's Gospel



- Luke was gentile doctor and companion of Paul
- Gospel written for Greco-Roman audience
- Main emphasis of Gospel is Jesus as universal Savior

Luke's Nativity Story



- Main character in Luke's story is Mary
- Develops relationship between Jesus and John the Baptist
- Establishes Jesus Jewish heritage – genealogy not until Ch 3

Why would Luke make Mary the main character in his story?

Luke Chapter 1



- v 5-25 Telling of conception of John the Baptist to Zechariah and Elizabeth
- v 26-38 Angel Gabriel appears to Mary to tell of Jesus birth
- v 46-56 Mary visits Elizabeth
- v 57-80 Birth of John the Baptist

Luke Chapter 1



- *What is significant about including John the Baptist and his parents in Luke's story?*
- *Both Matthew and Luke portray Mary as a virgin. Why is this important to their stories?*

The Magnificat - Luke 1:46-55

And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

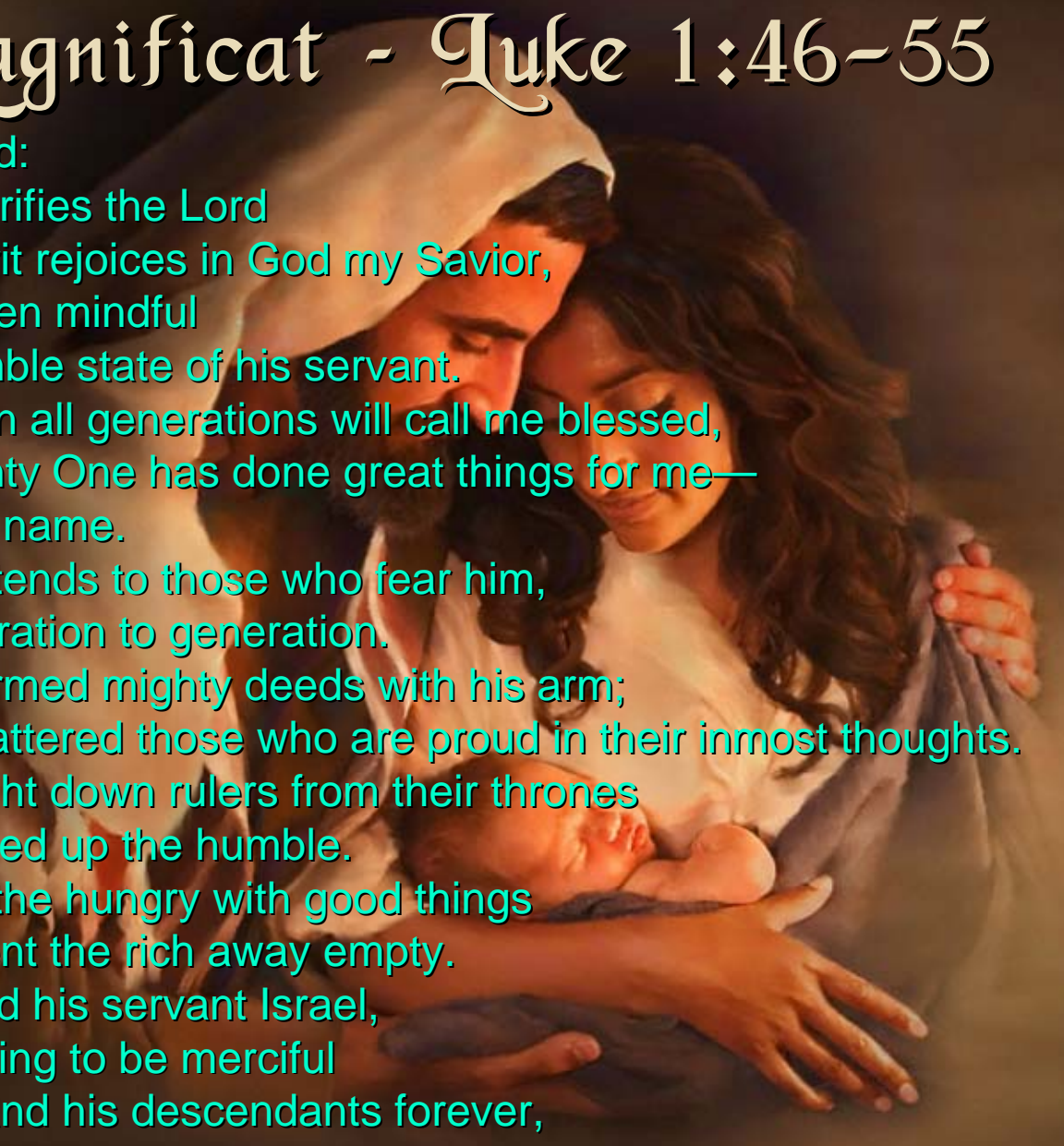
His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.

He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.

He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.

He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."



The Benedictus - Luke 1:67-79

His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

"Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come and has redeemed his people.

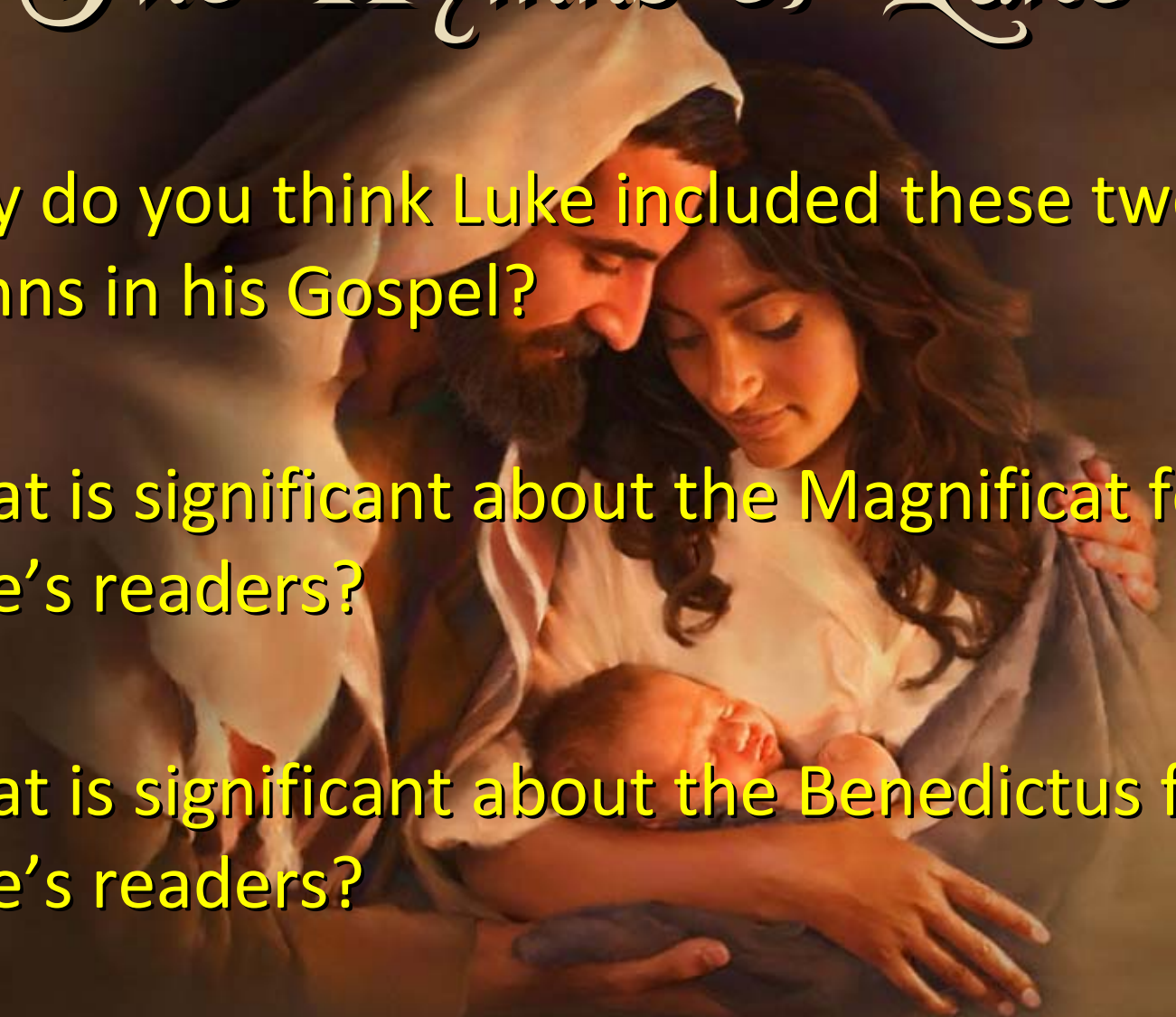
He has raised up a horn^[a] of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David
(as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),
salvation from our enemies

and from the hand of all who hate us—
to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
the oath he swore to our father Abraham:
to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear
in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace."

The Hymns of Luke

- Why do you think Luke included these two hymns in his Gospel?
- What is significant about the Magnificat for Luke's readers?
- What is significant about the Benedictus for Luke's readers?



Luke Chapter 2

The Birth of Jesus



A painting of the Nativity scene. Joseph, a man with a beard wearing a white head covering and a brown robe, is shown in profile, looking down at the infant Jesus. Mary, a woman with long dark hair wearing a white and blue robe, is seated and holding the baby. The baby is lying in a manger, wrapped in a blue cloth. The scene is set in a dark, simple interior with a warm, golden light illuminating the figures.

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 Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his 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 room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:1-7

Luke 2:1-7



- How do these verses relate to our traditional story?
- What is significant in Luke using the census?
- Why is a manger important to Luke?



**CELEBRATING JESUS
BIRTH**

LUKE 2:8-21

The Shepherds



- In Matthew we saw God using dreams to give his message. In Luke God uses angels. Why do you think Luke uses angels?
- What is significant about Luke's use of the Shepherd's being the first to hear of Jesus birth?

The Birth of Jesus



- This study has let us look at the Birth Narratives of Jesus as told in the four Gospels and compared it to our traditional telling in Nativity plays and scenes. What is the most important part of the story for you?
- Do the differences in the stories detract from the story of Jesus birth? If so why, if not why not?

Merry Christmas

A photograph of a man, woman, and baby wrapped in white cloths, representing the nativity scene. The man is on the left, the woman is on the right, and the baby is in the center, all looking down at the infant. The background is dark and moody.

*As you celebrate Jesus
birth remember he
came just for you and
is the most precious
gift God has ever given
you.*