

* MORE TO EXPLORE

WEEK OF DEC. 18, 2022

GOD'S BIG STORY

CREATION



EVERYTHING
GOD CREATED
WAS GOOD.

FALL



ADAM & EVE SINNED,
AND SIN PASSED TO
ALL PEOPLE, EVEN
YOU AND ME.

REDEMPTION



THOUGH ALL OF
US ARE SINNERS,
CHRIST DIED
FOR US.

RESTORATION



JESUS WILL
COME AGAIN.

FIND IT IN THE BIBLE: JOHN

This week's verse comes from the book of John. John is the last of four books known as the Gospels. The book is written by the disciple whom Jesus loved, John. The book of John tells about the miracles or signs of Jesus.

* WHY IS JESUS' BIRTH TOLD DIFFERENTLY IN MATTHEW AND LUKE? *

Matthew wrote his Gospel for the Jews. He leans into the point of view of Joseph, who was a descendant of King David, and includes details that would have reminded his audience of Old Testament messianic prophecy.

Luke was written for Theophilus. Theophilus could have been an actual person or a fictional name used to represent and address Christians who needed encouragement in their faith. Luke spends a lot of time on specific details from eyewitness accounts to emphasize God's work in history.

Neither account contradicts the other; but because they were written to different people for different purposes, they highlight different parts of the story of Jesus' birth. They give us the information as God intended.

OT-NT CONNECTION

The Old Testament talks about Jesus' coming long before He was born! Isaiah writes about how God's people will reflect the light He has shone on them and alludes to the visitation of the wise men in Bethlehem.

Read Isaiah 60:1-7.

- Does anything remind you of the wise men in Matthew?
- How can you share the good news of Jesus' birth with people in your life?

READ



Read Revelation 21:22-25. John describes a heavenly city that no longer needs natural light because the Lord and the Lamb are its light. Now, compare this passage to the prophecy of Isaiah in the OT-NT Connection. This passage in Revelation is a long-term fulfillment of Isaiah 60:1-7. What similarities stand out to you?

WHY DOES JOHN'S GOSPEL NOT INCLUDE DETAILS OF JESUS' BIRTH?

Most scholars believe the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke were written before the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. They believe John was written after (sometime between A.D. 80-95). Because Matthew and Luke had already included specific details about the birth of Jesus (under the influence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit), it wasn't necessary for John to do the same. Instead, John gives us a picture of Jesus' work from creation and explains the context of His birth in terms of darkness and light, just like the Old Testament prophets.

JOURNAL



Attend a Christmas service, play or concert as a family. Talk about what represented Scripture, what was embellished or what was left out from the true story. Write about this in your journal.