

Sunday School Lesson

Beginning Where You Are

The Gospel of Matthew was originally addressed to the Jews. Matthew as a Jew was writing to other Jews in the effort to convince them that Jesus was the Messiah. ("Messiah" is from the Hebrew word for "the anointed one"; "Christ" is from the Greek word that means the same.)

As the Scripture passage for this lesson illustrates, Matthew wanted to show how Jesus' life and ministry, his death and resurrection, fulfilled the prophe-

cies in the Old Testament about the Messiah. A few of Matthew's examples of fulfillment of prophecy may be found in 2:14-15; 2:16-18; 2:23; 21:3-5; and 27:35. Matthew believed that the prophets in the past had provided many details of the Messiah's life. If the prophets had truly spoken for God, then the Messiah would fulfill what they had spoken. Matthew believed that Jesus did fulfill the prophecies of the past. He believed that when other Jews came to recognize this fact, they too would believe Jesus was the Messiah. Rereading the Christmas story

should be the occasion of our own searching about the manner and meaning of his birth. What were the prophets trying to tell the people when they spoke of the coming Messiah? How does this Gospel account, written long ago for Jews, become meaningful to Christians living centuries after it was written? Can and should Christians today regard fulfilled prophecies as decisive evidences of the deity of Christ? Christians today are divided on how to answer these questions. Perhaps the members of your own group differ among themselves regarding the im-

portance of belief in the Virgin Birth. Some regard belief in it as essential for all Christians; others think it is not. The purpose of this session is to help us think together about the coming of Christ and to help us understand better how to live with our differences in belief. **Searching the Scriptures** The Scripture for this lesson is Matthew 1. Selected verses are printed below. 1 The Book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit; 19 and her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. 20 But as he considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit; (Continued on Page 6)

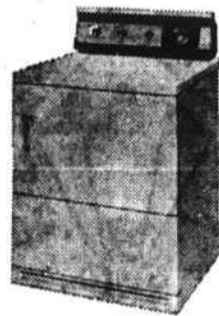


Don't send your wife out into winter again. Give her an electric dryer for Christmas.

Now that the cold weather is here, give some thought to giving your wife a really warm present for Christmas.

An electric clothes dryer. It's a gift that's not as expensive as you might think — considering how useful and convenient it will be for your wife.

Electric dryers cost much less than other kinds of dryers.



That's one reason that 95 out of 100 dryers bought in the Carolinas are electric.

Of course, another reason they're so popular is the low cost of the electricity that runs them. And because they're electric they dry cleanly with no flame.

Like the idea? Talk it over with your favorite electric appliance dealer. Or see us.

