



the nativity story

He was born in a stable,
so you could live in His palace.

A **YEAR-ROUND** RESOURCE GUIDE FROM THE NATIVITY STORY

Use *The Nativity Story DVD and Resources*
to Keep the Central Event of Human History Front and Center
All 12 Months of the Year!

8 Ways to Use *The Nativity Story DVD* in Your Sermons, Youth Group Talks, Sunday School Lessons or Small Group Gatherings

“CHRIST

CHOSE A STABLE SO THAT HE COULD IDENTIFY WITH THE LEAST OF US,
WITH THE POOR AND VULNERABLE.

HE DEMANDED NONE OF THE WORLD’S COMFORTS NOR PROTECTIONS.

JESUS CAME EXPOSED, FROM THE FIRST MOMENT, TO ALL THE DANGERS THE WORLD COULD OFFER,
AND SO HE REMAINED UNTIL THEY LED HIM TO THE CROSS.

HE CHOSE THE LEAST SO THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE THE MOST.

HE ENTERED BY THE STABLE THAT YOU MIGHT DWELL FOREVER IN THE PALACE. ”

--From Dr. David Jeremiah's book, *Why the Nativity?* (Used by permission)

➤ **VIEW:** *The Nativity Story DVD*

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➤ **READ:** *Why the Nativity? 25 Compelling Reasons Why We Celebrate the Birth of Jesus* by Dr. David Jeremiah

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8 Ways to Use *The Nativity Story DVD* in Your Sermons, Youth Group Talks, Sunday School Lessons or Small Group Gatherings

1 Christmas in July: 4 Sermons for July (or any month)

"We should believe in him because he invites us to a life that makes sense. Through his teachings, Jesus showed us the only workable strategy for living a happy and fulfilling life in this world."

*"Ever since the coming of Christ, billions of people have lived according to his pattern and found it to be the way to joy and peace." (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 149)*

AT CHRISTMAS TIME, your people are overwhelmed with the chaos of the season and have little time to reflect on The Nativity, the central event of all human history. So create a "Christmas in July" sermon series, when you have their attention! Select four questions from David Jeremiah's book, *Why the Nativity?* Speak on one question per week for four weeks in July. Highlight your sermons with video clips from *The Nativity Story Resource DVD*. Here are four excellent questions from the book:

- THE BEGINNING - Why Did God Become a Man? (Chapter 2)
- THE BIRTH - Why Was Jesus Born of a Virgin? (Chapter 12)
- THE BENEFIT - Why Must Jesus Come Again? (Chapter 24)
- THE BELIEF - Why Do I Need to Believe in Jesus? (Chapter 25)

2 "What Are the Odds?" Bible Study: Prophecy and Current Events

The Odds: 1 in 1,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000,000 + more zeros!

Dr. Jeremiah discusses the Old Testament prophecies in the first chapter of *Why the Nativity?* He writes, *"Nearly all of the more than three hundred prophecies have already come true (a few remain for our future). Jesus was all that had been foretold, and so much more. One mathematician determined that the odds of one person's fulfilling even sixty specific prophecies are 1 in 1 plus 157 zeros."* (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 4)

YOUR SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS or small group will enjoy studying the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament fulfillment of the prophecies. Dr. Jeremiah suggests you read the following pairs of Scriptures to discover more prophecies that were fulfilled in *The Nativity Story*:

- Isaiah 9: 7 and Luke 1: 32-33
- Isaiah 53: 12 and Matthew 27: 38
- Zechariah 6: 13 and Hebrews 7: 24-25



3 25 Questions-in-a-Box for Your Sunday School Class: *Keep the Importance of The Nativity Story Alive Year-round With "The Question Box"*

"He had sent prophets many times, but now he would do something far more shocking. He would leave the throne of heaven to walk among them—a King in disguise, the Lord of the universe in human scale, the Creator among his creatures. Then the nature of God would be clear to all." (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, pages 10-11)

TYPE UP EACH OF THE 25 QUESTIONS from Dr. Jeremiah's book, *Why the Nativity?* on separate sheets of parchment paper. Then roll each sheet into a scroll and tie with colorful ribbons. One or two Sundays each month—all-year, ask a student to select one of the scrolls from "The Question Box." After the student reads the question, challenge every person to research the answer to that question during the week and report back the following Sunday. Use scenes from the Resource DVD for additional background material.

4 Street Smart Interviews: *Have Video Camera, Will Shoot*

"Consider this: An obscure teacher from a small town in a ruined country changed the world—after his death. On the Friday of his execution, his followers largely abandoned him. Yet within a generation, he was worshiped in many foreign countries. Within three centuries, his faith was the official doctrine of the empire. And today, 2.1 billion men, women and children follow that same teacher who was put to death as a criminal." (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 34)

DIVIDE YOUR YOUTH GROUP INTO TEAMS and send them out, with video cameras, for "person-on-the-street" interviews on the compelling questions of Jesus' birth, life, death and resurrection. Edit the interviews and create "Street Smart Interview" montages to screen before your weekly talk. Does the average person really understand that Jesus' birth, The Nativity, is the central event in all of human history? Possible on-the-street questions could include:

- Why do you think Jesus came as a baby?
- Why was Jesus born to the Virgin Mary?
- Do you believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ?
- Is Jesus the Savior and Lord of your life? How can you be sure?

To thank the people you interview, give them a copy of *Why the Nativity?*

5 Small Group Potluck: *A "Questionable" Change of Pace*

"As Ralph W. Sockman once phrased it, 'The hinge of history is on the door of a Bethlehem stable.'" (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 43)

IF YOUR SMALL GROUP NEEDS A CHANGE OF PACE, set your study materials aside for a week or more and ask one of the group members to host a potluck dinner or picnic. Set up "Question Centers" in the host home that accommodate four to six people each, depending on the total size of your group.



Assign a question/chapter from *Why the Nativity?* to selected group members in advance and ask them to host a Question Center for each of the dinner's three courses. At the end of each course, small group members move to the next question they'd enjoy discussing. To say thanks to the discussion leaders, give each one a copy of *The Nativity Story DVD*.

6 Outreach Weekend: *The Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ—Why Should We Care?*

"Why should we care?" is the central theme of David Jeremiah's compelling book, *Why the Nativity?* He challenges people to explore the answer.

"Is it just another historic event, just another ancient superstition, a leftover fairy tale from childhood? Let's be prepared to find honest and satisfying answers." (From the introduction to *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah)

PLAN A WEEKEND OUTREACH SERVICE OR EVENT on the theme, "The Birth, Life, Death and Resurrection of Jesus the Christ—Why Should We Care?" Ask four church members—from all walks of life—to share why this central event in all of human history matters in the details and drama of their everyday lives.

Give each first-time guest their choice of *The Nativity Story DVD* or the book, *Why the Nativity?*

7 Wise Guys Nite at the Movies: *Bring Gifts for the Needy and Enjoy Our Popcorn and Movie Night*

"The Lord of Creation chose to enter this world quietly amid an unquiet scene. It was by heavenly design that he came into the world not in the relative comfort of the inn but in some farmer's seedy shed. A homeless birth was part and parcel of a homeless life." (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 49)

JESUS IDENTIFIED WITH THE HOMELESS! Do you ever wonder who cares about the homeless, the poor and the forgotten from January to November? Try this with your youth group in the spring, summer or fall, not just during the Christmas season.

The Wise Men from the East brought gifts to Jesus and our gift-giving to the needy is a God-honoring practice to nurture among youth. Using the wise men theme for your youth group, host a "Wise Guys Nite at the Movies." Make the price of admission a gift for a needy child or family and show *The Nativity Story DVD*. For more interest, create a *Jeopardy!*®-style quiz program with questions about the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Give away copies of the DVD to the 10 people who bring the most first-time guests or to the "Wise Guys" who answer the most questions correctly.



8 Personal Study Options: *5 Compelling Questions About the Birth and Life of Christ*

**"THE MIRACLE OF HIS CONCEPTION IS A FITTING BOOKEND
TO THE MIRACLE OF HIS RESURRECTION."**

"The coming of Christ is the central event of our history, the most joyful and meaningful occasion we can imagine. That's why the Virgin Birth is worthy of embracing and celebrating; the Crucifixion and Resurrection are worthy of reflection, worship and gratitude." (From: *Why the Nativity?* by Dr. David Jeremiah, page 69)

ENCOURAGE YOUR PEOPLE TO DIG DEEPER YEAR-ROUND as they investigate and study five compelling questions about the Nativity. Dr. David Jeremiah challenges both believers and seekers to also ask the most penetrating question, "Why should I care about the Nativity?"

5 Compelling Questions About the Birth and Life of Christ

BUY THE BOOK AND STUDY ALL 25 QUESTIONS!

These questions were prepared by Dr. David Jeremiah especially for the release of the movie, The Nativity Story, as part of the Faith Resource Guide from the MOVIEGUIDE® NATIVITY STORY.

➤ **VIEW:** *The Nativity Story DVD*

➤ **AFTER THE MOVIE:** Read Matthew 1:18 to 2:21

Compelling Question #2:

WHY DID GOD BECOME A MAN?

- If you were God, would you have chosen the same method to reach humanity? Why or why not?
- What ways did God use to reveal himself to man before he sent his Son?
- *For further study:* How can people have a relationship with the God of the universe? Read these verses to see God's plan for you: John 3:16; Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; and Romans 10:9, 13.



Compelling Question #3:

WHY MARY?

- Like all Jewish women, Mary surely knew the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Why do you think she was still so surprised when Gabriel came to her?
- When you read the Bible, are you quick to believe and accept its message, like Mary, or do you question and disregard it? Why?
- *For further study:* According to the following Scriptures, what qualifications did Mary have to be the mother of Jesus? Luke 1:27; Luke 1:28, 30; Luke 1:38; and Luke 1:47.

Compelling Question #13:

WHY DID JESUS COME AS A BABY?

- Why are most of us fascinated with a newborn baby?
- Does it seem important to you that Jesus lived life on earth as a human? Why or why not?
- *For further study:* Read Hebrews 2:16-18. How can we take comfort from Jesus' coming as a baby?

Compelling Question #15:

WHY THE ANGELS?

- How do you think you would respond if an angel of God appeared and spoke to you? Why?
- *For further study:* Read Hebrews 2:5-9. What do we learn about Jesus and angels in this passage? What does it mean to you?

Compelling Question #19:

WHY DID THE WISE MEN BRING GIFTS?

- Which of the gifts of the wise men would you most like to receive? Why?
- If you were able to give Jesus a material gift today, what would you bring? Why?
- *For further study:* The only writers of the Bible who included a record of Jesus' birth, Matthew and Luke, also included other similar incidents in their Gospels, although, as with their birth accounts, there are slight differences. Read Matthew 7:11 and Luke 11:13. How are they alike? How are they different?



FOR MORE IN-DEPTH SMALL GROUP or personal study, read all 25 compelling questions in Dr. Jeremiah's book. This material was excerpted from *Why the Nativity?* Copyright, 2006 by David Jeremiah. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois 60188.

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