



Session 4: Savior Announced
Suggested Week of Use: December 25, 2016
Core Passages: Luke 1:26-38

News Story Summary

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 was a defining moment in American history and the world. President Franklin D. Roosevelt called it a “date which will live in infamy.” The surprise attack, which stunned the nation, left 2,403 dead and destroyed or damaged 19 vessels. It also prompted the American entry into World War II.

If America had not entered World War II, it’s possible the war would have dragged on longer than it did, and Japan would have solidified its position of supremacy in East Asia. U.S. presence in the war also caused Germany to commit a sizable troop presence in Western Europe, which would have been diverted to the Soviets. The United States turned the tide of the war. This year marked the 75th anniversary of this attack, with a few surviving soldiers returning for what will most likely be the last time these survivors will be gathered for this anniversary.

(For more on this story, search the Internet using the phrase “Pearl Harbor news.”)

Focus Attention

Ask group members to list the top 10 defining moments in American history. List their responses on the board. Add the attack on Pearl Harbor to the list if it was not mentioned. Read the news story summary. Tell the group that according to the dictionary, a defining moment is a point at which a situation is clearly seen to start to change. Ask: *How does war change a nation?* Explain that war can have a positive or negative effect on a country, causing permanent changes within the culture.

State that the defining moment in world history was the Son of God taking on human form and experiencing birth in Bethlehem. Today’s lesson focuses on the time when the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary and told her she would give birth to the Messiah, the Son of God.

Challenge

Remind group members of the news summary. Explain that America influenced World War II in response to the attack on Pearl Harbor. Ask: *In what ways did the birth of Christ influence the world?* State that before the birth of Christ, the world was drenched in sin with no hope to escape the eternal wrath of God. But Christ paid for our sins so that we could spend eternity with God. Ask the group to reflect on the state the world would be in today if the Savior had not been born. Challenge them to take time with their families to think about our condition without a Savior and to celebrate the coming of the Messiah.