



"And now I am no more in the world,
but these are in the world..." (John 17:11).

Use this recent news story to help your students see the relevance
of this week's lesson from the Standard Lesson Commentary®
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AWAITING A ROYAL BIRTH

The American press seems as fascinated with births to the British royal family as the British are, even though Americans have no royalty as such. Prince Harry and Princess Meghan recently announced the expected birth of their first child in Spring 2019. The tabloid press and the Internet are heating up just as they did when Prince William and Princess Kate were awaiting each of their three children.

ANTICIPATING A DIVINE BIRTH

In contrast to the above, when Jesus was born, most people seem to have been unaware of and unconcerned with the birth of Jesus. However, one man was different from the rest. Simeon waited with great anticipation for the coming of the Messiah. In fact, God promised him he would live until the divine pregnancy was completed. When Simeon finally saw the anticipated Child, his life's great hope was fulfilled, and he could die in peace.

1. What makes people so interested in royal births, even in America?
2. Why do you think God singled out Simeon for the promise the Holy Spirit made to him? How was Simeon's prophecy to Mary and Joseph fulfilled? Do God's blessings always come with "strings attached"? Explain.
3. What hope do you have which, if fulfilled, would satisfy your deepest longings? Explain. Do you see any parallels between ancient unconcern for Jesus' coming and the way Christmas is celebrated today? Explain.

—Charles R. Boatman

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