Learning About Jesus

A Bible Study for Children ages 7-11

Christmas - Series #3

Lesson #1 – Jesus: Son of God and Son of Man
Lesson #2 – Visits from an Angel
Lesson #3 – A Journey to Bethlehem
Lesson #4 – Angels Announce that Jesus is Born!
Lesson #5 – Baby Jesus Presented at the Temple
Lesson #6 – The Visit of the Wise Men

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Lesson 1 – Jesus: Son of God/ Son of Man

Teacher Prep: It’s Christmas, or it will be soon, and it’s time to be talking to your class about the greatest thing that has ever happened; the coming of the long-awaited Savior! People had been waiting for the Savior to come for about 4000 years, and suddenly, right on time, He shows up! The Eternal Word clothed in flesh, the Incarnation of God, the birth of a baby. Leave it to God to make it just that simple and straightforward. The birth of a baby. Something that happens every day. Something that everyone is familiar with. Something wildly complex and infinitely simple. And suddenly, He was here. Isn’t God amazing?!

Major Points: God Loved Us and Sent His Son
Prophecy of Old Testament Fulfilled
Jesus – Son of God and Son of Man

Scripture Ref: 1 John 4:10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Lesson: God Loved Us and Sent His Son
• What holiday is coming up? (Wait for answers.)
• That’s right! Christmas is coming. And I know that we are ALL ready for it to be here.
• Christmas is fun and exciting… and fun!
• Why is it fun? (Wait for answers… there will be lots.)
• Yes! All those are fun parts of Christmas. And one of my favorite parts is… THE PRESENTS!
• Oh, yeah! I love the presents. I love getting them and I love giving them.
• There is another part of Christmas too! That is the Jesus part.
  o And actually, the Jesus part is the most important part!
• Jesus is the reason we have Christmas in the first place!
  o Jesus is also the biggest gift of Christmas!
  o He is the biggest gift any of us can ever get, because the coming of Jesus is a gift from God Himself.
• The Bible says, “God… loved us and sent His Son!”
  o Let’s all say that together. (Repeat once or twice.)
• Since God loved us and sent His Son, we can have Christmas!
• And, if Jesus hadn’t come yet, we would still be waiting for Him.
• Why would we be waiting? Let’s talk about that some more….

Prophecy of Old Testament Fulfilled
• Almost from the beginning of the world, God has promised to send a Savior (Messiah or Christ) for Mankind (all of us!)
• But WHY did God NEED to send a Savior?
• In the Beginning, God created the Heavens and the Earth.
• God also created the first Man and Woman. (Adam and Eve.)
• Then God saw all that He had made and said it was very good.
  o There was nothing evil or bad in the whole earth. Can you imagine that? *(Stop and imagine for a moment.)*
• But that didn’t last very long. Before you know it, Adam and Eve had broken the only law that God had given them to obey.
• Sin had come into the world. And with Sin, had come Death.
  o “Sin” is doing something that you know is wrong on purpose.
• Adam and Eve could no longer stay in the Garden and walk with God every day. They were sent away from God’s presence.
• But God, who loves us, didn’t want things to end that way.
• God promised that one day a Savior (the Seed of the Woman) would come to set everything right again between God and us.
• God wanted to be with us again forever.
• From then on, all through the years, God kept telling us that He was going to send the Savior.
  o We learned more and more about Him
  o We learned what He would be like
  o And what He would do while He was here.
  o The Scriptures foretold that He would be God’s Son
• God’s promises about the Savior were written down in the Bible.
  o These are recorded in the Old Testament.
• God wanted us to know that He loves us and that He was going to send His Son (the Savior.)
• When Jesus was born as a baby in Bethlehem, He fulfilled God’s promise to send the Savior!

**Jesus – Son of God and Son of Man**

• Jesus is the Son of God!
  o When Mary was visited by the angel to tell her that she would conceive and have a baby, who would be the Promised Savior, she didn’t understand and she asked the angel how this would be since she was a virgin.
  o The Angel Gabriel answered “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.” *Luke 1:35*
• When Mary learned that God wanted her to be the mother of the Savior, who was to be named Jesus, she agreed to let this happen.
  o She said to the angel, “Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.”
• Mary understood that her baby, Jesus, would be the Son of God.
• When Jesus grew up and started His ministry (at about age 30) He often referred to Himself as “the Son of Man.”
• Why do you think He did that? *(Wait for answers.)*
• In the Old Testament, several of the prophecies about the Savior called Him the “Son of Man.”
  o Jesus is part of the eternal Triune God.
  o He is God the Son.
  o He is the only member of the Trinity who has become a human being and been born to a woman.
  o Therefore, He is also the “Son of Man”
• Do you remember when we heard about the promise in the Garden of Eden to Eve?
  o God said her Seed (or offspring) would destroy Satan.
  o Usually the seed was said to come from the man.
  o In this case, the woman (Mary) was a Virgin.
  o There was no seed from a man.
• The coming of Jesus was the fulfillment of that promise!
• So, Jesus is the Son of God AND the Son of Man.

Let’s pray and thank God for loving us and for sending His Son, Jesus.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you for Christmas!
Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus.
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

**Jesus, Son of God/Son of Man** – *The children will make a doorknob hanger with the words Son of Man and Son of God on either side.*

**Before Class:** Make a copy of the activity sheet for each child in class. Provide crayons or markers to color with, as well as yarn, glue or tape and scissors. You will need about an 8-inch piece of yarn for each child.

**During Class:** Allow the children to color the activity sheet first. Next, have them cut out the outside of the large rectangle *(Do NOT cut the dotted line!)* The dotted line down the middle is the fold line. Fold the large rectangle in half along the dotted line, so that the words show on both sides. Now have them flatten the paper out again and turn it over so they can see the back. Tape or glue one inch of each end of the yarn to the back of one of the folded sides at the top, so that a long loop is left free at the top. Then spread glue around the edges of all the sides of that rectangle. Lastly, fold the other side down, matching the edges, and glue them together. The loop should still be free at the top. When the glue is dry, the children may hang them on their doorknobs at home.
The Incarnation of Christ – Older students will review John 1 and learn more about how Jesus existed before He came as a baby in Bethlehem.

Before Class: Provide Bibles for the children doing this activity.

During Class: Ask the children to turn to John 1. You are going to read several verses of this chapter together. John, the Disciple of Jesus, wrote these words many years after Jesus had died, risen from the dead, and then ascended to His Father in Heaven.

Read John 1:1-4 together. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

- Explain to the children that these words are talking about Jesus. (The Disciple John is calling Jesus the Word.)

Read John 1:14 together: And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

- Explain that here John is explaining that the Word (Jesus) became flesh (came as a baby) and lived with us. (When Baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem.) John and others saw Jesus’ glory; glory as of the One and Only Son of the Father, who was full of grace and truth.

Memory Verse – The children will play a game to learn the memory verse: 1 John 4:10

Before Class: Clear an area of the room, so that the children may run back and forth.

During Class: Explain that you are all going to learn the memory verse together! Divide the children into two groups. Line up one group on one side of the room and the other on the other side. The first group says the first half of the memory verse (“God loved us…”) then the second group says the second half of the verse. (“… and sent His Son!”) When they have both said their parts they run across to the opposite side. Now you play again. Have them alternate which parts of the verse they say. When everyone knows it, you can have one group say the whole verse and the other group say “1 John 4:10”. (Have fun… Don’t break anything!)

Prophecies Fulfilled – The children will look up prophecies of the birth of Christ.

Before Class: Provide Bibles for the children to look up verses.

During Class: Have the children look up the verses in the Old Testament that give some of the prophecies the coming Messiah. Then find the corresponding verses in the New Testament that show how Jesus fulfilled those prophecies. Read them together out loud. Talk about that the Old Testament was written many hundreds of years before Jesus the Messiah (or Christ) was born. Only God can promise things before they happen!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prophecy (or Promise)</th>
<th>Old Testament</th>
<th>New Testament Fulfillment - Prophecy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Born in Bethlehem</td>
<td>Micah 5:2</td>
<td>Matthew 2:1-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the Tribe of Judah</td>
<td>Genesis 49:10</td>
<td>Hebrews 7:14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Of the House of David (son</td>
<td>Jeremiah 33:15,17 and Isaiah 11:1-3</td>
<td>Matthew 1:1; and Luke 1:32</td>
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Jesus
Son of Man
Jesus
Son of God
Lesson 2 – Visits from an Angel

Teacher Prep: The Annunciation to the Virgin Mary by the Angel Gabriel, telling her that she would conceive a child by the Holy Spirit was a singular event. The long-awaited Messiah was to come! Mary was invited to be part of God’s plan to bring the Savior into the world. She would conceive and bear God’s Son; and it is to be noted that she agreed to this beforehand. Almost equally amazing was the visit of the angel to Joseph (Mary’s betrothed husband), who told him not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife, as the Child conceived in her was of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, who did as the angel said and took Mary as his wife, but kept her a virgin until the birth of her son, was crucial for the protection of both Mary and her Child.

Major Points:
- God’s Son was to be Born!
- Mary was Visited by the Angel Gabriel
- The Virgin Mary Would have a Baby
- Joseph was Visited by the Angel

Scripture Ref:
- Luke 1:26-38 - The Angel Gabriel visits Mary
- Matthew 1:18-25 - The Angel visits Joseph
- Matthew 1:21 “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

Lesson:
- God’s Son was to be Born!
  - Christmas is coming soon! And I’m very excited!
  - How about you? Are you excited about Christmas coming? (Wait for answers.)
  - Today we’re going to talk about the first Christmas and about how some other people were excited about it coming.
  - God had promised (long before Jesus came) that He would send the Messiah (or the Savior) to the world.
    - Messiah – Old Testament word meaning Savior
    - Christ – New Testament word meaning Savior
  - This Savior was to be God’s Son and He would come at just the right time.
  - People had been waiting and waiting! It had been a long time!
  - But God always keeps His promises!
  - Now everything was ready! God’s Son was about to be born!

Mary was Visited by the Angel Gabriel
- Mary was a young woman who lived in a town called Nazareth.
  - Nazareth is a town in the northern part of Israel.
- Mary was a virgin
  - Mary may have been as young as 13 years old.
- She was “betrothed” to a man named Joseph
Joseph was probably older than Mary. Being betrothed was a stronger commitment back then than our engagements are now. It was legally binding. To have broken their betrothal, Mary and Joseph would basically have had to get a divorce.

- One day an angel named Gabriel was sent by God to visit Mary.
- He had been sent by God to tell her some wonderful news!
- Gabriel greeted Mary:
  - “Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you.” Luke 1:28
- But Mary was surprised and a little confused by this greeting.
- Then the angel said to her:
  - “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” Luke 1:30-33

**The Virgin Mary would have a Baby**

- Mary wanted to know how this would happen, since she was a virgin. So, she asked the angel about it.
  - “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” Luke 1:34
- And the angel responded:
  - “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God.” Luke 1:35-37
- Mary responded to the angel and agreed to God’s plan for bringing the Savior into the world!
  - “Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word.” Luke 1:38
- Then the angel left her.
- Mary was very excited and went to visit her cousin Elizabeth.
  - Elizabeth was her older married relative, who had never had a baby.
  - The angel had told Mary that Elizabeth was expecting and was already in her 6th month of pregnancy.
- Mary visited with her cousin Elizabeth for about 3 months.
- Elizabeth also knew that Mary was going to have God’s Son.
- They were both excited that God was going to send the Savior!
Joseph was Visited by the Angel

- But there was one important person that didn’t know about God’s plan to bring the Savior into the world through Mary.
- Joseph didn’t know yet!
  - Joseph was Mary’s betrothed husband.
  - He was supposed to take Mary as his wife soon!
- Now what would happen?
- Joseph was a good man; a righteous man.
  - He wanted to do what was right.
- He knew the child that Mary was carrying was not his, but he didn’t know what he should do about Mary and her baby.
  - Legally, he was bound to her through the betrothal.
  - To separate himself from her they had to get a divorce.
  - He had two choices. He could accuse Mary of being unfaithful to him and shame her publicly in court.
  - Or he could put her away privately; meaning that he could divorce her quietly without laying blame on her.
- He decided that he would put her away quietly.
- But after he had decided on this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and told him:
  - “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” Matthew 1:20-21
- When Joseph woke up, he did just as the angel had told him.
  - He took Mary as his wife
  - But kept her a virgin until she gave birth to her Son.
- Now everyone was excited about God’s plan to bring the Savior into the world through Mary!
- Later, when Mary had her baby boy, Joseph called His name Jesus, just like the angel of the Lord had instructed him to do.
  - Jesus means “Jehovah saves” or “God saves.”
- Joseph, who was now Mary’s husband, would be very important in protecting Mary and the Baby Jesus, who was the Savior of the world!

Let’s pray and thank God for sending His Son, Jesus, the Savior into the world.

Prayer: Dear God,
Thank you that you sent your Son, Jesus, into the world!
Thank you that Jesus is the Savior that we needed.
Thank you for Mary and Joseph, who were faithful to Your plan.
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.
Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

Christmas Songs – The children will sing various Christmas songs.

Before Class: Choose 2 or 3 Christmas songs to sing with the children. Have music to accompany you or plan on leading them yourself A Capella. Prepare song sheets for the children with the words of the songs. Remember that the older hymns have a lot of Bible information in them. Talk to the children about some in these two songs.

During Class: Lead the children in 2-3 Christmas songs. Discuss some of the biblical ideas found in the songs.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing
Hark! The herald angels sing:
“Glory to the newborn King!
Peace on earth and mercy mild
God and sinners reconciled”
Joyful, all ye nations rise
Join the triumph of the skies
With angelic hosts proclaim:
“Christ is born in Bethlehem”
Hark! The herald angels sing:
“Glory to the newborn King!”

O Little Town of Bethlehem
O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet, in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light!
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel
Crossword Puzzle – *The children will fill in the words for a Crossword Puzzle.*

**Before Class** – Make copies of the Crossword Puzzle Activity Sheet for each child. Provide pencils. Provide Bibles. Words for the puzzle can be found in the lesson or in these Scripture References: Luke 1:26-38 and Matthew 1:18-25.

**During Class** – Pass out the Activity Sheet and pencils to the children. Allow them to fill in the blanks for the crossword puzzle using information from the Scripture verses for today. A completed puzzle is included below for your reference and for checking the children’s answers.

**ACROSS**
1. **I**
2. **H**
3. **G**
4. **D**
5. **G**
6. **S**
7. **T**
8. **G**
9. **R**
10. **J**
11. **C**
12. **M**

**DOWN**
1. Means “God with us.”
2. Father, Son, and…
3. **N**
4. **O**
5. **U**
6. **L**
7. **E**
8. **Y**
9. **A**
10. **P**
11. **R**
12. **U**

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Double Announcements — Older children will study the announcements of the Angel to Mary and Joseph and see similarities, and understand any seeming differences.

Before Class: Provide copies of the Activity Sheet for the children in class. Read over the verses yourself. Be prepared to tell the difference between the names Jesus and Immanuel. Use the following information to do so. Provide markers or crayons.

During Class: Find in your Bibles and read through the Bible verses together. These stories tell the stories of how the Angel from God came and talked to Mary and then Joseph. There is also a prophecy of the Messiah from Isaiah 7:14, which is mentioned in Matthew 1:22-23. Hand out the Activity Sheet and markers or crayons.

Find the similarities in the two stories. Use a different color marker to underline the parts of the verses that are similar for each one of the following:

- Mary will bear a Son
- Name the baby "Jesus"
- Baby is conceived of the Holy Spirit
- David (King David) is His ancestor

Now Find one Difference in the two stories.
Is the Baby supposed to be named Jesus or Immanuel? What do these two names mean? Why is there a difference? Do these two names conflict?

Answer:
No, the two names do not conflict. The Baby is supposed to be named “Jesus.” The name Jesus means “Jehovah Saves”. This is why Matthew 1:21 says that they are to name Him “Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”

In Matthew 1:23 the writer says that Jesus’ birth is the fulfilment of an Old Testament prophecy of the Messiah who was to come. This prophecy is found in Isaiah 7:14 …Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. The writer then tells us that “Immanuel” is translated as “God with us.”

Jesus is God in flesh. John 1:1,14 tells us: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us… John is telling us that Jesus is God and that He became flesh and lived with us. (God with us – Immanuel).

Jesus is God (Jehovah). He is the second person of the Trinity. He is God in flesh. When Jesus took on flesh and was born in Bethlehem, He became Immanuel (God with us). God was literally here with us!

So, the baby born to Mary is both “Jesus” and “Immanuel.”
**Luke 1:30-35 (NASB) The Angel Gabriel Talks to Mary**

30 The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.” 34 Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I am a virgin?” 35 The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.”

**Matthew 1:20-23 (NASB) The Angel Talks to Joseph in a Dream**

20 But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” 22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: 23 “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”

**Isaiah 7:14 (NASB) An Old Testament Prophecy of the Messiah**

14 Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.
DOWN
1 – Means “God with us.”
2 – Father, Son, and…
4 – Throne of His father…
5 – Jesus’ Father
7 – Mary and Joseph’s hometown
10 – Mary’s Son!

ACROSS
3 – He will be called the…
6 – God had promised to send a…
8 – Angel who delivered God’s message
9 – Mother of Jesus
10 – Mary’s betrothed husband
11 – Matthew 1:18 “the birth of Jesus …”
12 – The Old Testament word for Savior
Lesson 3 – A Journey to Bethlehem

Teacher Prep: Ninety miles is a long way, even in a car! But it seems even longer if you are on foot and expecting a baby. All of the lovely pictures of Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem from Nazareth show Mary riding on a donkey, but there may or may not have been one. Certainly, the Bible doesn’t mention one. Mary and Joseph may have walked the whole way! A distance that would have taken them at least 5 days to travel. But the Promised Messiah could only be born in the City of David; in Bethlehem. So, God moved a ruler’s heart to order a census, so that they would make the journey.

Major Points: Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth
The Savior was to be Born in Bethlehem
Caesar Augustus Ordered a Census
Joseph (and Mary) were descendants of King David
Mary and Joseph Went to Bethlehem

Scripture Ref: Luke 2:1-5 The Journey to Bethlehem
Micah 5:2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”
Matthew 2:1 …Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea...

Lesson: Mary and Joseph Lived in Nazareth
  • Christmas is almost here! I can hardly wait! How about you?
  • I can think of some other people who were ready for Christmas… the first Christmas, when Jesus was born!
  • I think Mary and Joseph were ready for Jesus to be born!
  • But where would baby Jesus be born? (Bethlehem)
  • Do you know where YOU were born? (Wait for answers.)
  • That’s great! I was born in… (give name of place.)
  • We were all born somewhere! And it’s important to know where!
  • Baby Jesus was getting ready to be born! And where He would be born was also important!
  • Mary and Joseph lived in a town called Nazareth.
  • Nazareth is in the northern part of Israel, pretty near the Sea of Galilee. (Look on a map where Nazareth is.)
  • The city of Nazareth is still there today!
  • Joseph was a carpenter. Mary was his betrothed wife.
  • And Mary was going to have a Baby! A special baby!
  • Mary was going to have Jesus, the Son of God.
The Savior was to be Born in Bethlehem

- For many years, people had been waiting for the Savior, the Son of God, to be born!
- God had been promising to send the Messiah (Savior) for many years.
- During those years, God had told the people what the Savior would be like.
  - He did this so that they would be sure to recognize the Savior, when He came.
- The promises God had made were called “prophecies”
  - A prophecy is when God tells us something that will happen in the future
  - Only God knows exactly what will happen in the future!
- One of these prophecies (or promises) was that the Savior would be born in a town called Bethlehem.
  - Read Micah 5:2 “But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”
- Bethlehem is in the southern part of Israel, near Jerusalem.
  - It is still there today! (Look on a map where it is found.)
  - Have you ever heard the Christmas song, “O Little Town of Bethlehem”?
- Bethlehem was also the birthplace of King David.
- King David was a famous king of Israel, who had lived many years before Jesus was born.
- God had promised that the Messiah (Savior) would be one of King David’s descendants.
- And God had promised that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.
- So, if you were looking for the Messiah in the place where He would be born…You should be looking in Bethlehem!

Caesar Augustus Ordered a Census

- Unfortunately, King David wasn’t the king anymore. Now there was a new king (or ruler.) (And he wasn’t even a Jewish ruler!)
- Caesar Augustus was the ruler of Israel now! And he lived in a place called Rome (which was VERY far away!)
- Caesar wanted to know how many people he ruled over!
- So, one day, Caesar ordered a census.
- How many of you like to count? How high can you count? (wait for answers) That’s really great!
- A census is just a counting of people.
- And, no matter how much you like to count, counting a whole country full of people would be hard work!
Caesar said that everyone had to go to the hometown of their ancestors to be counted for the census.

Wow! That meant that people had to move to a different place just to be counted for Caesar’s census!

**Joseph (and Mary) were descendants of King David**

- Now, where did we say that Mary and Joseph lived? (Nazareth)
- And where is the Savior to be born? (Bethlehem) That’s right!
- God had arranged things so that Mary’s betrothed husband, Joseph, was a descendant of King David.
- So, Joseph had to go to King David’s hometown to be counted.
  - Where was that? Yes, Bethlehem!
- And, Mary, as his betrothed wife, went with him.
- Mary was expecting a baby! Who was that? (Baby Jesus!)
  - Also, it’s important for us to know that Mary was also a descendant of King David. (*Luke 3 gives her lineage.*)

**Mary and Joseph Went to Bethlehem**

- So, Mary and Joseph packed up and headed for Bethlehem!
- How do you think they got there? Did they take a plane? Or a train? Or a car? *(NO!)*
- Mary and Joseph had to walk to Bethlehem. They might have had a donkey for Mary to ride on, or to carry their things.
- How far do you think it is from Nazareth to Bethlehem? *(wait for answers)*
  - Depending on the route they took, it was between 90-100 miles!
  - Or... 145-160 kilometers!
  - It probably took between 8-10 days of walking.
- That is a LONG way to walk!
  - especially if you are expecting a baby!
- But Mary and Joseph made it all the way to Bethlehem!
- When they got there, there was no room in the inn for them to stay, because there were so many people there for the census.
- But this is where the Baby Jesus was to be born! In the home of His ancestor, King David!
- Just like God had promised!

Let’s pray and thank God for being faithful in sending His Son, Jesus, as our Savior.

**Prayer:**

Dear God,
Thank you for your faithfulness!
Thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, as our Savior!
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.
Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

**Christmas Songs** – *The children will sing various Christmas songs.*

**Before Class:** Choose 2 or 3 Christmas songs to sing with the children. Have music to accompany you or plan on leading them yourself *A Capella.* Prepare song sheets for the children with the words of the songs. Remember that the older hymns have a lot of Bible information in them. Talk to the children about some in these two songs.

**During Class:** Lead the children in 2-3 Christmas songs. Discuss some of the biblical ideas found in the songs.

---

**Silent Night**

Silent night, Holy night
All is calm, all is bright
‘Round yon virgin
Mother and Child
Holy infant, so tender and mild
Sleep in Heavenly peace,
Sleep in Heavenly peace!

**O Little Town of Bethlehem**

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie,
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep
The silent stars go by.
Yet, in thy dark streets shineth
The everlasting Light!
The hopes and fears of all the years
Are met in thee tonight.

Silent night, Holy night
Shepherds quake, at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing “Alleluia”
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

For Christ is born of Mary,
And gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep
Their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together
Proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King
And Peace to men on earth.

Silent night, Holy night,
Son of God, love’s pure Light!
Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth!
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth!

How silently, how silently
The wondrous gift is given!
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem
Descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in
Be born to us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
The great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us
Our Lord Emmanuel
On the Way to Bethlehem! – The children will draw a picture of Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem.

Before Class: Provide paper for each child. Also provide markers, crayons and/or pencils to use in class. Optionally, provide construction paper and glue, as well. Arrange to listen to Christmas music while you are drawing your pictures.

During Class: Pass out the paper and markers, etc. Allow the children to draw a picture of Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem. (Like all great artists, who have drawn this in the past, you may draw Mary riding on a donkey!) Afterwards, “frame” your picture by gluing it on to a larger piece of construction paper. When dry the children may take them home, or help decorate the room by displaying them.

Help Mary and Joseph! – Maze Puzzle – The children will solve help Mary and Joseph find their way to Bethlehem by solving a maze puzzle.

Before Class: Provide copies of the Activity Sheet for the children in class, also pencils, crayons or other markers. For additional fun, bring a map that shows Bethlehem and Nazareth, if you have one available.

During Class: Distribute the activity sheets and pencils. Ask the children to solve the maze puzzle to help Mary and Joseph get from Nazareth to Bethlehem. If you have access to a map of where Nazareth and Bethlehem are located, let the children look at it for fun. Explain that both of these cities are still there today!

Got to Get to Bethlehem! – Game – The children will play a game that helps them enact Mary and Joseph’s journey to Bethlehem, with some modern-day twists.

Before Class: Make a copy of the two activity sheets for this game; the one with cards and numbers and the other one with the gameboard. Cut apart the cards and the numbers. Shuffle the cards and numbers and put them face down in two separate piles. Provide a token for each team that will play. Place each token on the start square.

Alternatively, set up your classroom as a big game board, using chairs or construction paper on the ground as squares. Students will move around on this board. Remember to follow the gameboard illustration for numbers and question marks on the chairs.

During Class: Explain the rules of the game. Divide the class into small teams to play against each other. Appoint one person to draw, and one person to move their team’s token on the game board (or to walk around in the room) representing their team. Play until one team gets all the way from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Declare a winner!

Rules of the Game:

1) Put a token for each team on the Start square.
2) Choose which team goes first, by some random method.
3) Team #1 draws a number (either 1, 2, or 3) and moves their token that far.
4) If they land on a square that has a number on it, they advance that many squares. (This happens just once on any turn.)
5) If at any time they land on a square that has a question mark on it, the team draws from the Question Card Pile and follows the directions on it.
   a. Question Cards may cause the team to move backwards or forwards or even win the game.
6) When Team #1’s turn is over, then Team #2 goes.
7) Play continues until one team lands on the End square.
Help Mary and Joseph find their way from Nazareth to Bethlehem!

Draw a line on the path that will take them to the place where Baby Jesus will be born!
### Cards and Numbers for the “Got to Get to Bethlehem” Game

Cut apart, shuffle and place cards and numbers face down in two separate piles. (Find Gameboard on next page.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ask Directions. Go back 2 squares.</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Remember God is with you! Go forward 3 squares.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Donkey has a flat tire Go back 1 square.</td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Jesus is to be born in Bethlehem! Go forward 2 squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Service. Maps won’t work. Go back 2 squares.</td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Mary smiles because her baby is the Son of God. Go forward 2 squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Room in the Inn! Go directly to Stable! You win!</td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>Joseph leads the donkey well. Go forward 2 squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donkey sits down. Go back 3 squares.</td>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>Kind people help along the way. Go forward 1 square.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rest stop! Go back 1 square.</td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td>The donkey is sure-footed. Go forward 2 squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lunch break. Go back 1 square.</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Mary and Joseph pray together. Go forward 3 squares.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop early for the night. Go back 1 square.</td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Arrive in Bethlehem! You win!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Lesson 3 – Activity Sheet – Got to Get to Bethlehem (1 of 2)  
Page 20
Nazareth

START

1

2

? 1

3

2

? 1

? 2

? 1

END

Bethlehem
Lesson 4 – Angels Announce that Jesus is Born!

Teacher Prep: Mary and Joseph made the long trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem! But when they arrived, there was nowhere for them to stay because of all the travelers who were also there to be counted in the census. When Baby Jesus was born, Mary wrapped Him in cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. There, alone in the humble stable, Mary and Joseph would soon have visitors. A group of shepherds, who had heard the announcement of the Messiah’s birth from a host of angels sent by God, would be the first to come and find the Baby and worship Him.

Major Points:

- Mary and Joseph Arrive in Bethlehem
- There Is No Room in the Inn
- Baby Jesus is Born!
- Angels Make an Announcement to Shepherds
- The Shepherds Find Baby Jesus in the Manger

Scripture Ref:

- Luke 2:6-20 – The Story of the Nativity
- Luke 2:11 … for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Lesson:

- Mary and Joseph Arrive in Bethlehem
  - Christmas is here! We have waited so long for it and now it is finally here! I am so excited! Are you? (Wait for answers.)
  - We are going to talk about the first Christmas that happened so long ago!
  - We know that Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem so that they could be counted for the census.
  - It was a long way, but they made it!
  - Now it was time for Baby Jesus to be born.

- There Is No Room in the Inn
  - But there were so many people there (because of the census) that by the time they got there, the town was full!
  - There was nowhere for Mary and Joseph to stay
  - There was no room in the inn!
  - Now what would they do?
    - Mary needed somewhere safe to have her baby.
  - Joseph and Mary found a place that was safe and dry where Mary could have her baby.
  - They found a nice warm stable.
  - What is a “stable”? (Wait for answers.)
    - It is a place where farmers or shepherds can feed their animals and keep them safe and dry.
What kind of animals do you think you would find in a stable? *(Wait for answers)*
  - Farm animals (Sheep, horses, donkeys, goats, & cows)

**Baby Jesus is Born!**
- People had been waiting for so long for the Messiah to be born!
- But now they didn’t have to wait any longer!
- Because… Baby Jesus had been born! *(Hurray!!)*
- His mother, Mary, wrapped Him up in soft cloths and laid Him in a manger.
- Okay… wait a minute… what’s a “manger”? *(wait for answers)*
  - A manger is a long open box that the farm animals would usually eat their supper from.
  - The farmer or shepherd would put hay in the manger and let the horses or sheep eat from it.
- But tonight, there was a brand-new baby sleeping in the manger. Who was that baby? *(Jesus!!)*
- Baby Jesus had been born! The waiting is over!

**Angels Make an Announcement to Shepherds**
- Usually, when a baby is born, his or her parents make an announcement – telling everyone that the baby is born!
- Who is Jesus’ father? *(God!)*
- And so, God made an announcement!
- God sent angels to announce the birth of His Son!
- Let’s read about it from the Bible!
- **Luke 2:8-12** *In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.*  
  9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.  
  10 But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;  
  11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.  
  12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”
- Where did the angels say they would find the baby? *(Manger!)*
- Wow! Can you imagine being one of those shepherds?
- You’re just out there in the fields, watching your sheep, and suddenly an angel appears and tells you these amazing things!
- Let’s look at this one part again… Verse 11…
  - *For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*
- Where is the city of David? *(Bethlehem)*
- And what is a Savior? *(Someone who saves you.)*
• And who is “Christ?” (The Christ is the long-awaited Savior, who had been promised by God – also called the Messiah.)
• And who is this special baby? (Jesus!!)
• There is some more about the angels…
• **Luke 2:13-14** And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”
• Now there’s not just one angel! Now there is a multitude (lots) of angels (they call them the heavenly host)
• They are praising God and saying:
  - Glory to God in the highest,
  - And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.

The Shepherds Find Baby Jesus in the Manger

• Now, if you were one of the shepherds, what would you do?
• Let’s read in the Bible to see what they did.
• **Luke 2:15-16** When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, “Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us.” 16 So they came in a hurry and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.
• So… what did they do? (Wait for answers)
• Yes, they went and found the baby!
• And, where was He? (In a MANGER!)
• How great is that? It was just like the angels had told them!
• Let’s see what happened next.
• **Luke 2:17-20** When they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary treasured all these things, pondering them in her heart. The shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

Let’s pray and thank God for sending His Son, Jesus to be born here.

**Prayer:**

Dear God,
Thank you that you sent your Son, Jesus, to be born here.
Thank you that He is the Savior of the world.
Thank you for the angels who told about His birth!
Thank you for the shepherds who hurried to see Him.
Thank you for loving us.
We love you back.
Amen.
Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

**Christmas Songs** – The children will sing various Christmas songs.

**Before Class:** Choose 2 or 3 Christmas songs to sing with the children. Have music to accompany you or plan on leading them yourself *A Capella*. Prepare song sheets for the children with the words of the songs. Remember that the older hymns have a lot of Bible information in them. Talk to the children about some in these two songs.

**During Class:** Lead the children in 2-3 Christmas songs. Discuss some of the biblical ideas found in the songs. Here are some ideas for songs today.

---

### Angels We have Heard on High

Angels we have heard on high,  
Sweetly singing o’er the plains  
And the mountains in reply  
Echoing their joyous strains

(Chorus)  
Glória, in excelsis Deo  
Glória, in excelsis Deo

Shepherds, why this jubilee?  
Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be  
Which inspire your heavenly song?

Glória, in excelsis Deo  
Glória, in excelsis Deo

---

### Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing  
Glory to the newborn king,  
Peace on Earth and mercy mild  
God and sinners reconciled

Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies  
With angelic hosts proclaim  
“Christ is born in Bethlehem!”

Hark, the Herald Angels Sing,  
Glory to the newborn king.

---

### It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

It came upon a midnight clear,  
That glorious song of old,  
From angels bending near the earth,  
To touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to men,  
From heaven’s all-gracious King."  
The world in solemn stillness lay,  
To hear the angels sing.

---

### Draw a BIG Christmas Picture! – The children will draw a picture of the shepherds being visited by the angels on the night Jesus was born.

**Before Class:** Provide large pieces of drawing paper and/or construction paper, as well as markers, pencils, and crayons. Consider gold “glitter glue” as well.

**During Class:** Cover tables to protect them from glitter and glue. Hand out papers. Allow the children to draw a picture of the shepherds and the Angel who came to announce the Birth of Jesus! Use gold glitter glue for the angelic hosts. Don’t forget the sheep!
Create a Sheep! – In this craft, the children will create a sheep with cotton balls, card stock and wooden clothespins.

**NOTE:** This craft may take more than one class period to complete. If you like, you may do one or more of the steps for the class ahead of time… but where’s the fun in that?

**Before Class:** Provide templates made of cardstock of the sheep from the Activity Sheet. Provide more cardstock, as well as pencils, cotton balls, scissors, paint brushes and black tempera paint. You will also need 2 wooden clothespins for each child, and a plastic tablecloth to cover the painting table. (You could leave the clothespins plain, without paint, or spray paint them all ahead of time and let them dry beforehand.)

**During Class:** Set up one table where the children may each paint 2 clothespins with black paint. Allow them to come up in small groups to do this as time allows. Set the clothespins aside and allow them to dry. Let each child use a template to draw out a sheep on card stock. Then have them cut them out and write their name on one side of the sheep. On the other side, let them glue cotton balls to the cardstock sheep to make it fluffy. They may pull apart the cotton balls a little bit to make them easier to work with. When the glue is dry, pin one black clothespin on the front of the sheep and one on the back, where the legs would go. Allow them to take the sheep home when they are dry.

A Stable Environment! – The children will use construction paper and markers to create a Nativity Scene.

**Before Class:** Provide large pieces of construction paper (including brown) as well as markers, pencils, crayons, scissors and glue. Use other craft items at your discretion!

**During Class:** Explain that you are going to use the construction paper, scissors and glue to recreate a Nativity scene. Explain that it will be a picture of the stable and the manger, with Baby Jesus, Mary and Joseph. They can also add shepherds (with their sheep) and animals that might have been at the stable that night when Jesus was born. The children can use a piece of brown paper to be the stable. They can cut it out and glue it on to a bigger piece of paper. Then they can draw in Mary, Joseph and Baby Jesus. Have them add animals that might have been there. Don’t forget the shepherds!

Act it Out! – The children will act out the story of the Angels visiting the Shepherds.

**Before Class:** Think about your classroom and where you could best act out the story. (If necessary, have someone help you move some furniture.) Consider bringing in easy costume pieces and props. A clothesbasket with a towel or soft blanket draped in it makes a great classroom manger. A large doll in a soft towel can be Baby Jesus. Big squares of fabric (with or without holes in the middle) make excellent costumes for your actors. For more, easy Christmas Costume Ideas, see [https://www.sunday-school-center.com/support-files/christmas-skit-costumes-for-children.pdf](https://www.sunday-school-center.com/support-files/christmas-skit-costumes-for-children.pdf).

**During Class:** Using a Bible (preferably a New King James Version) read the Christmas Story from Luke 2:4-20, having the children act it out. Read a few verses and then give stage directions, such as, “Okay Mary, go ahead and put baby Jesus in the manger.” Just live the story with the children. Allow them to figure out how frightened the shepherds must have been at first when they saw the angels. Decide if the angel needs to stand on something to be up higher than everyone else. With the angelic host, everyone says “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”
Directions for Leaders:
Use the template to trace and cut out one sheep from cardstock for each child.  
(Note: Use cardstock to stand up better under the weight of the glue and cotton balls.)  
Write the child’s name on the back of the sheep cutout.  
Draw a face for the sheep (on the front of the cutout) if you want to do so.  
Allow the children to glue cotton balls on the front of their cutout; creating fuzzy sheep.  
(If you have drawn a face, don’t glue cotton balls on this area.)  
Use 2 clothespins, which have been painted black and allowed to dry, for the legs.  
Allow the sheep to dry before taking them home.  

Consider “herding” all of your sheep into one area of your classroom for a display.
Lesson 5 – Baby Jesus Presented at the Temple

Teacher Prep: Despite the presence of the Wise Men in every Nativity ever made, the Biblical reality is that quite a bit of time passed before the Wise Men arrived to worship the Christ Child. One of the things that happened during this time period was the presentation of the Baby Jesus at the Temple. Mary and Joseph went to the Temple in Jerusalem about 6 weeks after Jesus was born to present an offering as was required by the Law of God after the birth of any child. While they were there, Simeon and Anna the Prophetess both recognize Baby Jesus as the Promised Messiah!

Major Points: Baby Jesus is Born
Baby Jesus is Presented in the Temple
Simeon Recognizes Him
Anna the Prophetess Recognizes Him

Scripture Ref: Luke 2:21-38 The Story of Jesus’ Presentation at the Temple
Luke 2:30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation…
Leviticus 12 – Law referring to a required sacrifice after a birth

Add. Reading: https://answersingenesis.org/holidays/christmas/a-matter-of-time/

Lesson: Baby Jesus is Born
• Christmas was here! Did you enjoy it? (Wait for answers.)
• Jesus the Savior (the Messiah or Christ) was born and that is why we celebrate Christmas.
• Jesus is the Son of God!
• He is Mary’s son as well, so He is also called the Son of Man
• He was born in Bethlehem and His mother laid Him in a manger because there was no room in the inn.
• And the Angels announced His birth and the shepherds came to worship Him.
• So many exciting things happened!
• And then… what happened next? (Wait for answers… You are going to hear about the Wise Men coming to visit.)
• That’s right! The Wise Men did come to find Jesus and worship Him.
• But, we believe that there was a span of time that occurred between Jesus’ birth and the Wise Men arriving.
  o Probably several months to a year or so later
  o We know that it was less than 2 years.
• We believe this because the Bible tells us about some things that happened in Jesus’ young life before the Wise Men arrived.
• Let’s take a look at some of these things…
Baby Jesus is Presented in the Temple
- According to the Law that God had given to His People the Jews, after each birth of a child a sacrifice was to be made.
  - (See Leviticus 12 for more information)
- Read Luke 2:22-24
  - So, about 6 weeks after Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph traveled to Jerusalem to the Temple to do two things:
    - #1 - To present Jesus to the LORD
      - Each firstborn son was to be dedicated to the LORD
      - (See Exodus 13:2,12 for more information)
    - #2 - To offer a sacrifice, as was required in the Law after the birth of any child (— usually for the purification of the mother.)
      - Here Mary and Joseph show how worthy they were in that they offer the sacrifice even though it wasn't necessary since Jesus was born of the Holy Spirit
      - In this case, a pair of doves or two young pigeons
      - This sacrifice indicates that Mary and Joseph were poor, otherwise, they would have sacrificed a 1-year-old lamb
  - Mary and Joseph wanted to make sure that they did everything that was required by the Law of God.

Simeon Recognizes Him
- While they were there in the Temple, a godly man named Simeon came and talked to them.
- He recognized Baby Jesus as the Messiah who was to come!
  - Simeon lived in Jerusalem and had been waiting for years for the Messiah to be born
    - He was a very righteous and devout man.
  - Simeon had received a special promise from God that he would not die until he had personally seen the Messiah that God had promised to send to Israel
    - Simeon was prompted by the Holy Spirit to go to the Temple on that day.
  - When he saw Mary and Joseph and Baby Jesus, the Holy Spirit assured him that this was the Promised Messiah he had been waiting to see.
  - Simeon took Baby Jesus in his arms and blessed God saying:
- Luke 2:29-32: “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation, Which You have prepared in the presence of all peoples, A Light of revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”
  - That was kind of an amazing statement, wasn’t it?
    - He said that Baby Jesus was God’s Savior (the Messiah)
He said that Baby Jesus would be a Light to the Gentiles (those were all the people who weren’t Jewish)

- He said that He would be the glory of God’s People-Israel

- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they heard this? (Wait for answers.)
- That’s right! The Bible says they were amazed when they heard him saying all these things about Baby Jesus.
- Then Simeon spoke to Mary and Joseph.

**Luke 2:34-35** …Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed—and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

- Simeon blessed Mary and Joseph and told Mary, Jesus’ Mother, that the “Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed…”
  - This meant that Baby Jesus had in His future many wonderful things; including having people in Israel who would accept Him as the Savior, and those who wouldn’t.
- He even tells Mary that “a sword will pierce even your own soul”
  - This foretells the piercing of Jesus’ side with a sword at His Crucifixion.
  - Mary was there at that time, and saw the whole thing, which must have felt like a sword piercing her own soul.
- “…to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed”
- This probably means that because the Messiah came and died the thoughts in the hearts of many people would be revealed, as to whether they accepted Him as their Savior or not.

**Anna the Prophetess Recognizes Him**

- There was also a very elderly woman who was always in the Temple, serving day and night with fasting and praying.
- Her name was Anna and she was 84 years old.
  - She was a widow who had been married for 7 years until her husband had died and then had spent the rest of her long life in the Temple area praying.
- She was known to be a Prophetess
  - This means that God often revealed the future to her.
- In the same hour that Simeon recognized Baby Jesus as the Messiah, she also came up and began thanking God for Him.
- The Bible says that she continued to talk about Baby Jesus to all of those who were waiting for the Messiah to come.
- Anna and Simeon were two witnesses of what God had done!
- He had sent the long-awaited Messiah, the Son of God – Jesus!

Let’s pray and thank God for sending His Son, Jesus, here to be our Savior.
Prayer:
Dear God,
Thank you that you sent your Son, Jesus, here to be our Savior.
Thank you that when He came, the people who were waiting found Him.
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen!

Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

Make a Banner – The children will work on a group project; a banner to display in class.
Before Class: Obtain a roll of butcher paper or Kraft paper for the children to make their banner with. Provide markers, and crayons. Decide where to put your banner in your room when it is finished and how you will hang it up. Decide how long to make your banner and cut off an appropriate length. Set up a workstation where the children can work on the banner together (Put tables together or work on the floor, etc.) To help save some time, consider some ideas of what to put on your banner. If you have certain words that you want on it, consider writing them out in block letters, which can then be colored in by your students during class. Some ideas for banners are given below. Choose from these or create your own, or combine ideas for your banner.
During Class: Explain to the children that Simeon and Anna the Prophetess recognized Baby Jesus as the Messiah. Then they told other people about Him. Today you are all going to make a banner telling everyone else that Jesus the Messiah is born! Talk about how you will design your banner, what you will put on it, who will write the words or color them in, and what other things will you might write on the banner or how will you decorate it. After you have made some decisions as a group, get started on making your banner. Hang up your banner in your classroom when it is ready!

For my eyes have seen Your salvation...  
Luke 2:30

BABY JESUS IS BORN!

The Messiah Has Come!

Jesus Christ is Born!  Praise God!
Find a Word! – Older children will be challenged to find all the words in a puzzle.
Before Class: Provide a copy of the Find-a-Word Activity Sheet for each child in class.
Also provide pencils with erasers. You will also need a copy of this answer sheet!
During Class: Hand out the Activity Sheets and pencils. Invite the children to find all of
the words in the puzzle. They can be up and down, across, or diagonal. All of the words
to be found are provided in their word list. As they find a word in the puzzle, they may
circle it on the puzzle and mark it off the word list. Check your work by the Answer
Sheet provided here. (As a hint, you could show them where the word “prophetess” is.)

CONSOLATION  MESSIAH  JESUS
SAVIOR  ISRAEL  MARY
TEMPLE  JOSEPH  BLESSING
ANNA  PROPHETESS  CHRIST
JERUSALEM  SIMEON  GOD

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C E B Y X Q S N K Y J
O M E S S I A H R N E
N X J F W S V H K T S
S A F C H R I S T X U
O I X T U A O Y G V S
L V M R O E R N J S T
A S G E J L I E F Q
T Q O B O S Q T R M B
I W D M S N E E U E J
O D G E E H P M S N R
N V L T P B N P A Q N
T B M O H I A L L R G
G H R J W Q K E E X Y
B P W F T H I L M N Z
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Find a Word!

Find the following words in the puzzle. They can be up and down, across, or diagonal. Some letters are used in more than one word. Circle the words in the puzzle when you find them, and then mark them off the word list.

CONSOLATION  MESSIAH  JESUS
SAVIOR       ISRAEL     MARY
TEMPLE       JOSEPH     BLESSING
ANNA         PROPHETESS CHRIST
JERUSALEM    SIMEON     GOD

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Lesson 6 – The Visit of the Wise Men

Teacher Prep: Right on time! The Messiah had been born right on time, the star had appeared right on time and now the Wise Men would visit the Christ Child, right on time! They had traveled from the east and moved towards Jerusalem, which was near Bethlehem, where Jesus was born. When they arrived in Jerusalem, they caused quite a stir with their questions at the city gate. “Where is He who is born King of the Jews?” they asked. Herod wanted to know as well.

Major Points:
- The Wise Men See a Star
- The Wise Men Travel to Jerusalem
- The Wise Men Talk with Herod
- The Wise Men Travel to Bethlehem
- The Wise Men Worship Jesus and Bring Him Gifts
- The Wise Men Go Home a Different Way

Scripture Ref:
Matthew 2:1-12 – The Story of the Visit of the Magi (Wise Men)
Matthew 2:11 ...they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him.

Add. Reading: https://answersingenesis.org/holidays/christmas/a-matter-of-time/

Lesson:
- The Wise Men See a Star
  - Christmas was here! Did you enjoy it? (Wait for answers.)
  - I did too! I got some presents, too!
  - My favorite present was ______. (Give example.)
    - If the children want to tell you about their presents, you may choose whether or not to let them talk about them.
    - Be sensitive to children who might not have gotten many (or any) presents
  - Do you know WHY we give presents at Christmas-time?
    - One reason is that we are happy that God sent Jesus, who is the GREATEST present of all!
    - Another reason is that we love our family and want to help them celebrate the Christmas Season.
    - And another reason is that a long time ago, some wise men brought presents to Baby Jesus.
  - We are going to talk about the Wise Men today.
  - A long time ago, before Jesus was born, people were waiting for the Messiah to come!
  - The Jewish people were expecting Him to be born.
  - They knew the time was getting close, but they didn’t know exactly when it would happen.
  - There were even people in other countries who knew He would be born!
They knew that He would be the King of the Jews!
Then one day... a special star appeared in the sky.
  - One that was so unusual that it got the attention of some learned men who lived in a country east of Israel.
These wise men, who had been waiting for the Messiah to be born, were convinced that this wonderful thing had happened!
They decided to go and find this new King, who had been born!

The Wise Men Travel to Jerusalem
- And so, these wise men came to Israel to find this new King!
- If you traveled to a distant country to find a king, where would you look for him? *(Wait for answers.)*
  - You might look in a castle.
  - You might look in town that was the seat of government.
  - You might look in the biggest city.
- When the Wise Men arrived in Israel, they went to Jerusalem.
  - It was the biggest city in Israel.
  - It’s where the Temple of God was.
  - It’s also where the ruler of Israel, King Herod, lived.
- When they arrived in Jerusalem, they asked one question...
- “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?”
- Then they explained; “For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

The Wise Men Talk with Herod
- This question of theirs wasn’t quickly answered.
  - No one seemed to know where the new King was!
  - No one knew what to tell the Wise Men.
- The Wise Men ended up talking with King Herod, who was the current ruler of Israel.
  - And he wasn’t happy about their question at all!
- **Read Matthew 2:3** “When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”
- Herod asked the chief priests and scribes of Israel where the Messiah was to be born
- And they knew, because it was written in God’s Word.
- **Read Matthew 2:5-6** “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:
  ‘AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH,
  ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH;
  FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER
  WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.’”
- So, the King of the Jews was to be born in Bethlehem!
- **Read Matthew 2:7-8** Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. And he
sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.”

- So, Herod spoke secretly with the Wise Men and asked when the star they had seen had appeared. He wanted the exact time.
- Then he asked them to go to Bethlehem and find the Child, and when they had found Him to report back to Herod, so that he could go and worship Him also.
  - But Herod had no intention of worshipping Jesus

**The Wise Men Travel to Bethlehem**

- The Wise Men then left Herod and traveled to Bethlehem.
- God provided the same star they had seen in the east to lead them to the exact house where the Child Jesus was living.
- They were overjoyed to see the star again!
- It led them right to Jesus!

**The Wise Men Worship Jesus and Bring Him Presents**

- **Read Matthew 2:11** After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
- Wow! God had led them by the star and they found Jesus!
- What was the first thing they did when they found Him?
  - They fell to the ground and worshiped Him!
- Worship was ONLY to be given to God, so the Wise Men knew that Jesus was God. This is REALLY important for us to know!
- Then what did they do? *(Wait for answers)*
- They gave Him presents!
  - Gold, frankincense and myrrh

**The Wise Men Go Home a Different Way**

- **Read Matthew 2:12** And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.
- After their visit was over, and they may have stayed quite a while, the Wise Men went home to their own country
- But God warned them in a dream NOT to return to Herod
- So, the Wise Men went back to their own country by a different way than they had come.
- In this way, God protected Jesus, Mary and Joseph!

Let's pray and thank God that He sent His Son, Jesus!

**Prayer:**

Dear God,

Thank you that you sent your Son, Jesus!

Thank you for the star that led the Wise Men!
Thank you that the Wise Men worshiped Jesus!
Thank you for loving us!
We love you back!
Amen.

Suggested Activities: Pick 1-2 activities that will work best with your group.

**Sing a Christmas Song** – The children will listen to Christmas songs and sing along.

**Before Class:** Arrange for Christmas music to play in your classroom. Provide the words for “We Three Kings” and/or “O, Come Let Us Adore Him” on a song sheet, so that the children can sing along. Decide how many verses you will present of each.

**During Class:** Pass out the words to the songs. Play music and sing! Explain any words to the songs that the children might not understand by themselves.

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**We Three Kings**

We three kings of Orient are,
Bearing gifts, we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
Following yonder star.

(Refrain)
O, star of wonder, star of light
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect Light.

Born a King on Bethlehem’s plain,
Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
Over us all to reign.

Frankincense to offer have I;
Incense owns a Deity nigh;
Prayer and Praising, voices raising,
Worshiping God on high.

Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume
Breaths a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Sealed in the stone-cold tomb.

Glorious now behold him arise;
King and God and sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia,
Sounds through the earth and skies.

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**O, Come Let Us Adore Him**

O come all ye faithful
Joyful and triumphant
O come ye o come ye
To Bethlehem
Come and behold Him
Born the King of Angels!

(Chorus)
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him
Christ, the Lord!

Sing choirs of angels
Sing in exultation
Sing all ye citizens
Of Heaven above
Glory to God
All glory in the highest

(Chorus)
Yes Lord, we greet Thee
Born this happy morning
Jesus to Thee be all
Glory giv’n.
Word of the Father
Now in flesh appearing.

(Chorus)
How Many Wise Men? – *The children will talk about how many Wise Men there were.*

**Before Class:** Provide Bibles for the children to use in small groups.

**During Class:** Break into small groups with at least one Bible in each group. Have the children read through the story of the Visit of the Wise Men (Magi). Ask them to figure out how many Wise Men there were in the group. If they believe it is three, ask them to find the Bible verse that tells how many there were. The answer is that there is no verse telling how many Wise Men there were. The tradition is that there were three, because there were three gifts, but we don’t know for sure how many there were.

Wise Men Still Seek Him – *The children will make a Christmas Card for a loved one.*

**Before Class:** Arrange for construction paper, markers, crayons, pencils, glue, glitter, and any other decorations the children may use to create a Christmas card. If you plan on using glue and glitter, remember to cover the work area with a plastic tablecloth.

**During Class:** Write on the board, “Wise Men Still Seek Him”, and/or the Bible verse for the day. Pass out the construction paper and materials and allow the children to make Christmas Cards for their parents or other family members. They might want to write the words on the board on their card. They may wish to draw a picture of the Three Wise Men on their way to Bethlehem being led by the star, or of them worshipping Baby Jesus in the Stable. Allow them to draw their pictures as they wish. Remember that gold glitter makes a very convincing star!

The Three Gifts – *The children will learn more about the gifts the Wise Men brought and create a picture of them.*

**Before Class:** Provide paper and pencils as well as crayons or markers. Also make a copy of the Activity Sheet for each child. Consider scissors and glue as well.

**During Class:** Read Matthew 2:11 *After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.* Discuss the gifts the Wise Men brought to Jesus. You may use the information below to help.

**Discussion:** Gold was the type of gift that was brought to a King. They were honoring Jesus as the King of the Jews and Lord of lords. Frankincense was an incense that was for the worship of God. They gave Jesus this to honor Him as being Divine (God). Myrrh was given to Him to symbolize His humanity, as myrrh was used at that time to prepare the body for burial when a person died. All of these were costly gifts, and were given to honor the young Christ Child, who was at once King, God, and Man.

**Activity:** Let the children use the objects on the Activity Sheet as the Three Gifts. Allow them to color the objects, drawing in gold in the treasure box, frankincense in the cup, and myrrh in the covered container. Let them cut them out and put them on a different sheet of paper, if so desired.

Alternatively: Allow the children to draw The Three Gifts on a piece of paper and decorate them. On their paper they may want to write the words: “…they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” Matthew 2:11.
“...they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”
Matthew 2:11.