

## 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 bondservant 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 6<sup>th</sup> 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!”

Christ by highest Heav’n adored  
Christ the everlasting Lord!  
Late in time behold Him come  
Offspring of a Virgin’s womb  
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see;  
Hail the incarnate Deity  
Pleased as man with man to dwell  
Jesus, our Emmanuel  
Hark! The herald angels sing:  
“Glory to the newborn King!”

Hail the Heav’n born Prince of Peace!  
Hail the Son of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all He brings  
Ris’n with healing in His wings  
Mild He lays His glory by  
Born that man no more may die  
Born to raise the sons of earth  
Born to give them second birth  
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.

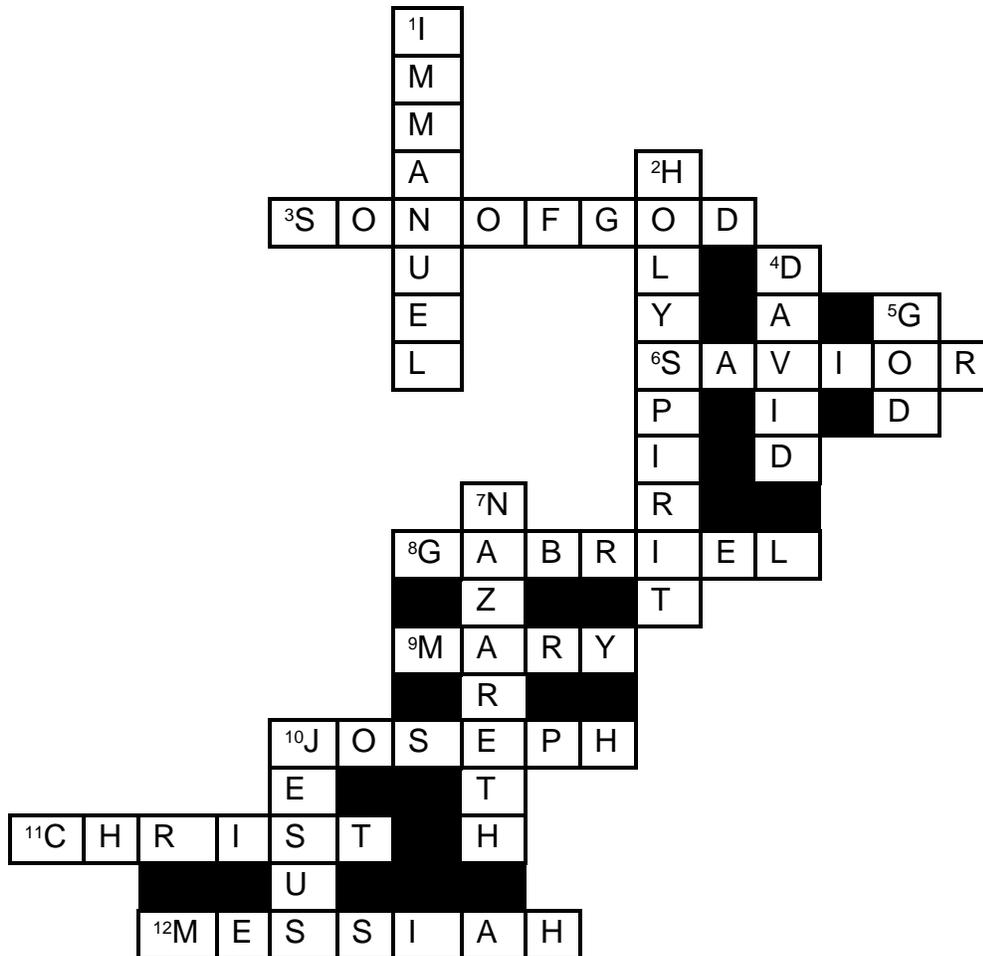
O holy Child of Bethlehem  
Descend to us, we pray  
Cast out our sin and enter in  
Be born to us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell  
O come to us, abide with us  
Our Lord Emmanuel

**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.



**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

**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 fulfillment 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**

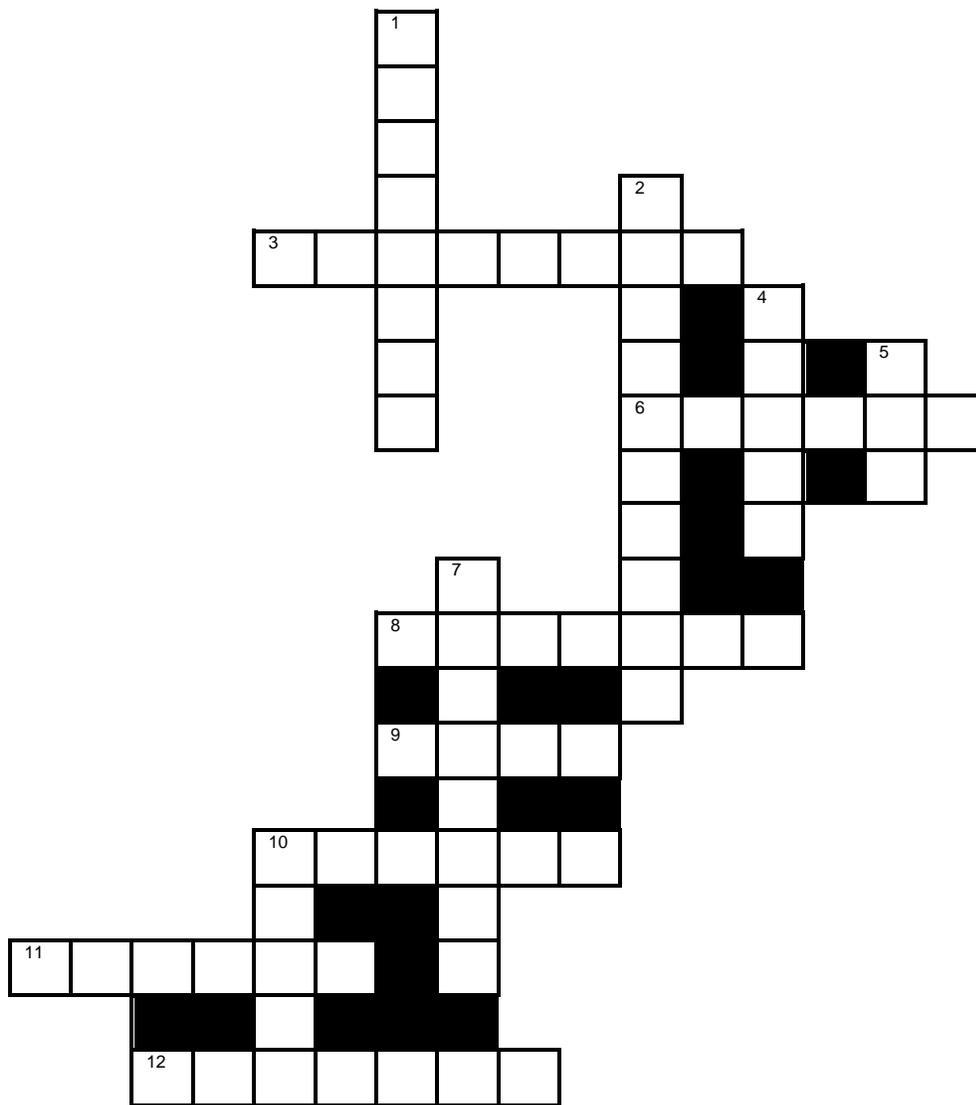
*<sup>30</sup>The angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give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

*<sup>20</sup>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. <sup>21</sup> She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” <sup>22</sup> Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> “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**

*<sup>14</sup>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.*



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