

**BOOKS OF THE BIBLE
CHILDREN'S CURRICULUM**

Early Elementary
New Testament





JESUS IS BORN!

Lesson 1 - Early Elementary

Bible Basis: Luke 1:26–35; 2:1–7, found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament*, pages 8–9
Key Verse: Luke 2:11 (NirV): “... a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.”
Key Idea: God sent his Son, Jesus, as our Savior.

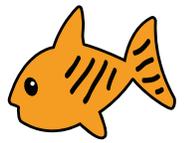
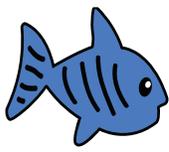
Master Supplies List

- birth announcements, baby album
- Mary, Joseph, and Shepherds illustrations
- tape
- Bible
- *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament*
- Family Page (1 per child)

Optional Supplies

You will need the following supplies based on which option(s) you choose in Step 3 | Explore More.

- Option 1: Messages from Heaven sheet (1 per child), pencils
- Option 2: construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, paper doilies, ribbons, markers, pens or pencils
- Option 3: small wrapped box (to look like a Christmas present), stickers
- Option 4: audiovisual equipment to play music or project a video
- Option 5: A Savior Is Born script (5 copies)



STEP 1 | Come Together (10 min)

Supplies: birth announcements, baby album

- SAY: Babies are a special gift from God. It's so exciting to get ready for a new baby. Parents set up the baby's room, buy clothes and diapers, and visit the doctor to make sure the baby is healthy. When the baby is finally born, everyone wants to hear the good news! Parents might send out a birth announcement like these.
- SHOW the birth announcements. Read aloud the information that's on them and tell the children any interesting background information about the baby's birth.
- SHOW the baby album, perhaps your own or one of your children's. Talk about the excitement and challenges of having a new baby.
- SAY: Babies really are a gift from God. In fact, the greatest gift God ever gave us came as a little baby. His name is Jesus.

KEY VERSE

- INTRODUCE this week's Key Verse. Repeat the verse slowly a few times until the children are able to say the verse from memory along with these hand motions. (Note: You also may choose to review last week's Key Verse together.)

Luke 2:11

a Savior has been born to you. (rock an imaginary baby in arms)

He is the Messiah, the Lord. (lift both arms toward heaven)

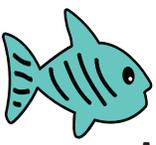
STEP 2 | Hear the Story (20 min)

Supplies: Mary, Joseph, and Shepherds illustrations, tape, Bible

Teacher Prep: Print and separate the Mary, Joseph, and Shepherds illustrations.

AN ANGEL VISITS MARY

- SAY: When the time came for Jesus to be born, God's messengers, the angels, announced his coming. The first thing they often told people was, "Do not be afraid."
- INSTRUCT the children to say, "Do not be afraid" when you motion to them. Practice a few times.
- SAY: First, God sent an angel to tell a young woman named Mary what was going to happen to her.
- POST the illustration of Mary on an easel or nearby surface for children to see.
- READ Luke 1:26–33 aloud. At verse 30, motion to the children to say, "Do not be afraid."
- ASK: Who was the messenger? (*the angel Gabriel*)
- ASK: What was the message? (*Mary will give birth to a Son, she will name him Jesus, he will be a great king*)
- READ aloud Luke 1:34–38, explaining that this birth was a miracle. Define miracle as something extraordinary that only God can do.



AN ANGEL VISITS JOSEPH

- SAY: An angel also appeared to Mary's soon-to-be husband, Joseph. They were not married yet.
- POST the illustration of Joseph on an easel or nearby surface for children to see.
- READ Matthew 1:18–19 aloud.
- EXPLAIN: Joseph knew the baby wasn't his, and that's why he wanted to break up with Mary, but God sent an angel to Joseph to explain what had happened.
- READ Matthew 1:20–25 aloud. At verse 20, motion to the children to say, "Do not be afraid."
- ASK: Where did Mary's baby come from? (*the Holy Spirit*)
- ASK: What will the baby do someday? (*save his people from their sins*)

ANGELS VISIT SHEPHERDS

- SAY: Just as the angels had announced, Jesus the Savior was born in Bethlehem.
- READ Luke 2:1–7 aloud.
- ASK: Why did Joseph and Mary leave Nazareth? (*they had to register for the census in Joseph's hometown of Bethlehem*) Define census as being counted so the government knows how many people live in each town.
- ASK: Where was Jesus born and why? (*in a stable because there was no room for them to stay in*) Define manger as a feeding box for animals.
- SAY: After Jesus was born, angels appeared to shepherds in the fields.
- POST the illustration of the shepherds on an easel or nearby surface for children to see.
- READ Luke 2:8–18 aloud. At verse 10, motion to the children to say, "Do not be afraid."

STEP 3 | Explore More

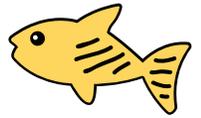
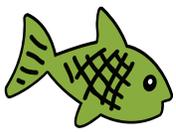
Choose from these activity options to help children explore the lesson further.

Option 1: Messages from Heaven (15 min)

Supplies: Messages from Heaven sheet (1 per child), pencils

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Messages from Heaven sheet.

- GIVE each child a Messages from Heaven sheet.
- ASSIST the children in reading the directions and the quotes.
- INVITE the children to share their responses to the final section.



Option 2: Birth Announcement (20 min)

Supplies: construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, paper doilies, ribbons, markers, pens or pencils

- **SAY:** Parents wait months for their new baby to arrive. When that happy day finally comes, they want everyone to know the good news. Parents often put a lot of effort into creating a birth announcement with their baby's picture, date and time of birth, and the baby's length and weight.
- **CONTINUE:** Today you'll create a birth announcement for God's Son, Jesus! We don't know Jesus' length or weight at birth, but your announcement can include other facts about him. You know the city of his birth, his earthly parents, and the good news that he is the Savior!
- **INSTRUCT** the children to use the craft supplies to create their own birth announcements for Jesus. Hang the finished products where others can enjoy them!

Option 3: Christmas Present (15 min)

Supplies: small wrapped box (to look like a Christmas present), stickers

- **SEAT** the children in a circle.
- **SAY:** One way we celebrate Jesus' birth is by giving gifts. We give presents to show love, the way God showed love by giving us the greatest gift of all - Jesus.
- **GIVE** one child the wrapped box to pass to a child on the right in a game called Christmas Present.
- **CHANT** "Christmas Present" as the children continue to pass the gift around the circle:

(to the rhythm of "One Potato, Two Potatoes")

Christmas present, Christmas present,

Who has the Christmas present?

If you have the Christmas present

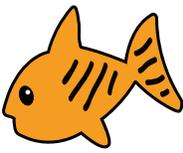
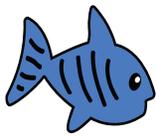
You are IT!

- **STOP** on the word IT and have the child holding the present pass the present to the next person and stand outside the circle. Give that child a sticker. Continue chanting with the others as you begin again.
- **REPEAT** until each child receives a sticker. Comment that God sent Jesus as a gift for each and every one of us.

Option 4: Praise and Worship (15 min)

Supplies: audiovisual equipment to play music or project a video

Lead a Christmas sing-along to celebrate the birth of Jesus! Let the children pick some of their favorite songs, such as "O, Little Town of Bethlehem" or "Away in a Manger." Bring in a few Christmas CDs, search for lyric videos online, or have someone provide music on an instrument.



Option 5: Act It Out (15 min)

Supplies: A Savior Is Born script (5 copies)

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy A Savior Is Born script. Recruit an adult assistant.

- ASSIGN the roles of Mary, Joseph, and Shepherd to children who are strong readers. The rest of the children will be the Angel Chorus.
- PLAN for you and an assistant to read the parts of the Narrator and Angel.
- REVIEW with the Angel Chorus the line, “Do not be afraid.”

STEP 4 | Going Home (5 min)

Supplies: Family Page (1 per child)

Teacher Prep: Print and photocopy the Family Page.

- GIVE each child a copy of this week’s Family Page.
- SAY: Give this page to your family when they pick you up. It will remind you to tell your family how God sent his Son, Jesus, as our Savior.
- INVITE children to practice telling you what they remember about the birth of Jesus.
- REVIEW today’s story and Key Idea as you wait for the children to get picked up.
- HELP children practice saying today’s Key Verse from memory.
- LEAD children to pray, thanking God for sending his Son, Jesus, to save us from sin.
- REMIND children to prepare for next week’s lesson by reading *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament*, Days 6-10, or by doing New Testament Week 2 in *My Bible Story Coloring Book* with their parents.
- SEND home any activity sheets or craft projects and the Family Page.

FAMILY PAGE

Lesson 1: Jesus is Born!

Bible Basis: Luke 1:26–35; 2:1–7, found in *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament*, pages 8–9

Key Verse: Luke 2:11 (NirV): “... a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Key Idea: God sent his Son, Jesus, as our Savior.

How to Use This Page

This week, your family can read the Bible Basis passage from pages 8–9 of *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament* to help your child remember the lesson. Use the Table Talk questions to start a discussion around the dinner table, while driving in the car, or just about anywhere. The Living Faith activity is designed to remind your child of the Bible lesson through a drama or other engaging activity. The Extra Mile idea provides interactive ways for your child to connect with the story.

Table Talk

1. What was so special about the birth of Jesus?
2. Why do we give gifts on Christmas?
3. What’s the best gift you’ve ever gotten? What’s the best gift you could give?
4. How could we focus more on Jesus next Christmas?

Living Faith

Option 1

Pull out your Christmas decorations and dust off the manger scene. Help your child act out the Christmas story using the figures. For fun, you can record the action and show it to relatives and friends next Christmas.

Option 2

Play a game of family Christmas Guess Who. Write several different elements of the Christmas story (e.g., Joseph, star, shepherd, innkeeper, angel that visits Mary) on separate slips of paper. Take turns choosing a slip of paper and describing that element for others to guess. For example, someone who chooses manger might say, “This is normally used to hold food for animals, but it was used as a bed for baby Jesus.”

Extra Mile

- Help your child create a large banner of this week's Bible verse to hang at Christmas. Outline the letters on a long strip of paper for your child to color or print large outlined letters from your computer. Decorating this banner will help your child memorize this week's Bible verse.
- Plan a family movie night and enjoy one of the many great movies that have a biblical account of the Christmas story.
- Pull out some baby pictures of your child. Tell your child all about the time just before, during, and after his or her birth or adoption. Tell your child how you felt about that time and how you celebrated and shared the good news with others.

Prepare For Next Week

Help your child prepare for next week's lesson by reading together and encouraging your child to respond with coloring or journaling:

- For early readers, *My Bible Story Coloring Book, New Testament Week 2*
- For older readers, *The Books of the Bible for Kids, New Testament, Days 6-10*

If you are reading *The Books of the Bible, New Testament* with your small group, you are discussing your questions and insights with them from week to week. Include your family in the conversation about this week's reading, using the following discussion-starters:

- What did you read that you never knew about before?
- Was there anything you wondered about?
- What did you learn about loving God?
- What did you learn about loving others?



MARY



JOSEPH

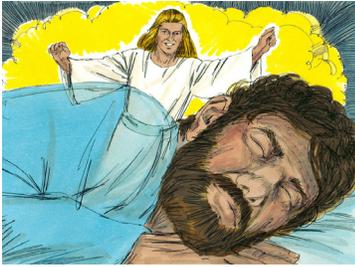
SHEPHERDS



MESSAGES FROM HEAVEN

Name _____ Date _____

Part 1: Draw a line to match the angel's message to the person.



DO NOT BE AFRAID. I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS. TODAY IN THE TOWN OF DAVID A SAVIOR HAS BEEN BORN TO YOU. HE IS THE MESSIAH, THE LORD.



DO NOT BE AFRAID. GOD IS PLEASED WITH YOU. YOU WILL GIVE BIRTH TO A SON. YOU MUST CALL HIM JESUS.



DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TAKE MARY HOME AS YOUR WIFE. SHE IS GOING TO HAVE A SON. HE WILL SAVE HIS PEOPLE FROM THEIR SINS.

Part 2: What would you say if you saw the newborn King? Fill in the bubble..

SKIT: A SAVIOR IS BORN

Characters

Narrator	Angel	Mary
Joseph	Shepherd	Angel Chorus

Narrator: Just over 2,000 years ago, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth to a girl named Mary. She was engaged to marry a man named Joseph.

Angel: The Lord has blessed you in a special way. He is with you.

Narrator: Mary wondered what kind of greeting this could be.

Angel Chorus: Do not be afraid.

Angel: God is pleased with you. You will give birth to a son and call him Jesus. He will be called the Son of the Most High God.

Mary: How can this happen? I am not yet married.

Angel: The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Most High God will cover you. The holy one that is born will be called the Son of God.

Mary: I serve the Lord. May it happen to me just as you said it would.

Narrator: The angel left Mary. Mary and Joseph were engaged to be married. Before they started to live together, it became clear that Mary was going to have a baby.

Joseph: I have always been faithful to the law, so I cannot marry Mary now that she's pregnant. But I don't want to put her to shame in public. I'll just quietly break up with her.

Narrator: As Joseph was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream.

Angel Chorus: Do not be afraid.

Angel: Take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to have a son. He will save his people from their sins.

Narrator: Joseph woke up. He did what the angel of the Lord commanded him to do. He took Mary home as his wife.

Joseph: Mary, we must return to Bethlehem, my hometown, to be counted.

Narrator: While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for the child to be born. Mary gave birth to a baby boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger, a feeding box for animals. That's because there was no guest room where they could stay. They were staying in a stable with the animals. Shepherds were living out in the fields nearby, taking care of their sheep. It was night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified.

Angel Chorus: Do not be afraid.

Angel: I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people.

All Children: Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord.

Angel: Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.

Shepherd: Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's find the baby the angel told us about.

Narrator: The shepherds hurried off and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. After the shepherds saw him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel told them about this child. All who heard the news were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.