



THE MIRACLE OF CHRISTMAS

LUKE 2:1-20

GOAL

- ▶ To teach children the story of how Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

WORDS TO KNOW

- ▶ **Descendant:** A person who is part of a family that has come from a particular individual.

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **Luke 2:7:** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Luke 2:11: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

OVERVIEW

- ▶ **Read Luke 2:1-20:** Caesar Augustus, the ruler of the Roman empire, called for a census in which everyone under Roman rule would be counted. To do this, everyone had to return to their hometown. This meant that Joseph and his fiancée, Mary, had to travel all the way to Bethlehem from Nazareth. This long journey was made even more difficult as Mary was expecting her first child. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the city was filled with others who had traveled in order to be counted in the census. Mary was ready to give birth, so when they discovered that the inn was full, they had to settle for staying in the stable. Mary gave birth to her son, wrapped him in cloth, and placed him in the manger. Far out in the fields surrounding the town, a group of shepherds were out with their sheep when an angel of the Lord appeared. The angel said to the shepherds, "I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." The angel of the Lord was then joined with a host of other angels who began singing praises to God. After the angels left, the shepherds hurried to town so they could find the baby Messiah. They found him just as the angel of the Lord said they would: wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger. Once they had seen the miracle for themselves, they rushed out into the town and told everyone they saw about what had happened and about the miracle baby who had been born.



SUGGESTIONS

- **Miraculous News:** The angels shared the good news with the shepherds that the Messiah, the Savior of the world had been born!
- **Miraculous Birth:** There are many things that make the birth of Jesus astonishing: He was born to a virgin, He was born in the humblest of places, and He was visited by lowly shepherds. Jesus was unlike any king who had come before or who would come after Him.
- **Miraculous Mission:** After meeting Jesus for themselves, the shepherds went out to tell everyone what they had seen and heard.

PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

Ages 5-7 Stars Ornaments | Supplies: *yellow construction paper; markers; glitter; glue; hole punch; and ribbon, yarn, or string.*

Using the yellow construction paper, cut out enough star shapes for every student. On one side, write the following: For to us a child is born, to us a son is given. At the top of one of the star's points, punch a hole. Allow students to decorate their stars using the craft supplies. Once students are done, run a piece of ribbon, yarn, or string through the hole, and tie the ends in a knot so the star can be hung on Christmas tree or elsewhere.

Ages 5-7 Christmas Bingo | Supplies: *Bingo cards, Christmas candies*

Create a Bingo card with Christmas-themed pictures instead of letters and numbers. Students use the candies to mark off the images you call out. The first one to get a row of marked images wins.

Ages 8-10 Celebrate Jesus Christmas Cookies | Supplies: *Plain sugar cookies, ready-made frosting, plastic knives, sprinkles, and Christmas cellophane bags (the size of your biggest cookie).*

Let the kids celebrate the miracle of Jesus' birth by decorating Christmas cookies! Wrap the finished cookie in cellophane bags and complete by tying a decorative ribbon to seal it closed. Make the atmosphere especially festive by playing Christmas carols as background music.



MEMORY
VERSE
MEANING



Luke 2:7: Jesus was not born where we might expect a king to be born, but it made Him no less powerful or worthy of praise.

Luke 2:11: People had been waiting a very long time for the Messiah to arrive. The angel of the Lord brought this long-awaited news to a group of shepherds.

POST-LESSON
ACTIVITY



Ages 5-7 He, Is, Born!

This game is similar to the traditional “Duck, Duck, Goose” game. Sit the children in a circle. Select one child to walk around the circle, tapping each head and saying, “He is, He is...” until they choose a child to run after them, then say, “Born!” The selected runner chases the other until they get back to the open space.

Ages 5-10 Shepherds and Sugar | *Supplies: candy canes*

Divide the class into teams and have the students line up. Give each student a candy cane. In front of each line, place a pile of candy canes on a table. Students at the front of the line will put the straight end of their candy canes in their mouths. On go, they will use the hook end of the candy cane to hook candy canes in the pile without using their hands. After 30 seconds, count how many candy canes the students hooked. Each candy cane hooked counts as one point. Continue until each student has a chance to try hooking candy canes.

The team with the most points at the end wins.

Candy canes are holiday treats and decorations that are meant to remind us of the shepherd’s crooks, or canes, carried by the shepherds who came to worship Jesus on the night He was born.

Ages 5-10 Follow the Star

Get the students to stand in a line. The student at the front of the line is the “star.” The star leads the rest of the class round while making different motions that the rest of the line must mimic. Any student who does not successfully mimic the star is out. Continue until each student has a chance to be the star or until the class must move on to the next activity.



TAKE
HOME



- **Miraculous News:** At Christmas, we celebrate the good news that Jesus was born. Jesus, and the salvation we find through Him, is the greatest gift we will ever receive.
- **Miraculous Birth:** Many prophecies about the birth of the Messiah were recorded in Scripture. We can go through our Bibles to find them and see that His birth fulfilled them all. God made a promise, and even though it sounded impossible, He made it happen.
- **Miraculous Mission:** Much like the shepherds who went out to tell everyone they met about what they had witnessed the night that Jesus was born, we too have the privilege of telling others about Jesus.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: What was the name of the emperor who ruled the Roman empire?

A1: Caesar Augustus ruled the Roman empire.

Q1b: How would you go about counting the number of students who go to your school?

Teacher's Note: If we count the number of students while out on recess, we might count the same people more than once because no one stays in one place during recess. The same is possible if we tried to count during lunch. The best way to count everyone in the school would be to gather everyone into one room all at the same time. That way we know that each student is counted only once. It was for these same reasons that the Romans made specific people go to specific places at specific times so that they could be counted. It would have been impossible to get anything close to an accurate count otherwise.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: Joseph was a descendant of whom?

A2: Joseph was a descendant of King David.

Q2b: From your parents, how far can you trace your family?

TN: From our parents we have aunts, uncles, cousins, grandmothers, grandfathers, and maybe even great grandmothers and great grandfathers. The oldest relative we can think of had great grandmothers and great grandfathers! Our families go back farther in time than anyone living can remember. We know who our ancestors are from records and family stories, just like Joseph was able to trace his family.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: Why was Bethlehem so crowded when Mary and Joseph arrived there?

A3: Bethlehem was crowded with people who had traveled there to be counted.

Q3b: Does the president of the United States live in small garden shed?

TN: No, the president of the United States lives in the White House, a huge palatial estate located in the country's capital, Washington D.C. To most of us, having the president live in a small garden shed would seem wrong and out of place. So, to hear that the Savior of the world would be born in a small, insignificant town would have seemed odd. Instead of being born in a palace in the capital city of Jerusalem, Jesus was born in a barn in Bethlehem. While Jesus' life did not reflect that of most royalty, He is no less of a king, and His situation did not diminish His power.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: The angel of the Lord appeared to what group of people after Jesus was born?

A4: The angel of the Lord appeared to a group of shepherds after Jesus was born.

Q4b: How would you react to meeting an angel?

TN: Angels are commonly described as shining like lightning, which isn't something we see every day. It's no wonder that in nearly every story of angels meeting humans the angels have to calm the people and tell them not to be afraid. Judging from the accounts of encounters with angels, the experience likely would be a combination of amazing and terrifying!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: What appeared in the sky above the shepherds in the field?

A5: The armies of Heaven appeared in the sky above the shepherds, and they sang praises to God.

Q5b: What do you think would be the best way to celebrate your birthday?

TN: Let the students answer and get creative. Then tell them that the day that Jesus was born, a light from Heaven shone over the stable where He and His earthly parents were staying. Angels showed up and praised God and announced the birth of our Savior. People from all over came to Bethlehem to see the baby Jesus and worship Him. The day Jesus was born, both Heaven and earth celebrated.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: Where did the shepherds go after the angels left?

A6: The shepherds hurried to the village to see the miracle.

Q6b: What is the most amazing thing that has ever happened to you? Have you told anyone the story?

TN: Let the students answer. A group of shepherds were just out in a field doing their job when a host of angels appears and starts singing praises to God and then tells them that the Messiah had been born. It was an incredible story that they couldn't keep to themselves! They told everyone they met about what they had experienced.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: What did Mary keep in her heart?

A7: Mary kept all the things she saw and heard in her heart.

Q7b: What was the best day of your life?

TN: Let students think about it and answer if they want to share. Mothers often say that the day their children were born was the happiest day of their lives. For Mary, it was even more special. On top of the joy her new son brought her, a host of angels sang about his birth, praised God for sending the precious baby, and welcomed strangers who had come to see her son and bring him gifts. It was quite a day, one that she would never forget and would remember as one full of joy and happiness.



QUESTION & ANSWER

MEMORY VERSES

- ▶ **Luke 2:7:** And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

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BIG IDEA

- ▶ God loves us so much he sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.
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CLOSING PRAYER

- ▶ Father God, thank You so much for sending us Your Son, Jesus. Help us to remember the miracle You gave us when you sent Jesus to save us from our sins. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Long ago, Israel was controlled by the Roman empire, which was ruled by an emperor named Caesar Augustus. The emperor wanted to see how large his power extended, so he decided to have every person under Roman rule counted. In response to this order, people were made to return to the towns they were born in to be officially counted.

SLIDE 2



This meant that Joseph, a descendant of the great King David, and his fiancée, Mary, had to make the long journey from Nazareth back to his hometown of Bethlehem in Judea to be counted. The long journey was made even more difficult, as Mary was expecting a child; but this was no ordinary child. Mary carried with her a miracle!

SLIDE 3



The weary couple arrived to find the city overflowing with people who had all traveled there to be counted. This presented a big problem for them because Mary was ready to give birth. With the inn full of travelers, Mary and Joseph took shelter in the only place still available: a stable. The greatest of kings was born in the lowest of places. Mary wrapped the young child in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger.

SLIDE 4



That night, there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared, and the glory of God shone so brightly that they shook with fear. The angel urged them to be calm and said, "I bring good news. The Messiah, the Savior of the world has been born today in Bethlehem. You will find him wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger."



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 5



Suddenly, the angel of the Lord was joined by a vast host of others. The armies of Heaven appeared, filling the sky above the shepherds in the field, and they began praising God and proclaiming this great miracle. They sang, "Glory to God in the highest Heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

SLIDE 6



After the angels had left, the shepherds hurried to the village to see the miracle for themselves! Just as the angels said, they found Mary and Joseph looking over a baby wrapped in cloth lying in a manger used to feed animals. After seeing the child, they told everyone what they had seen. Everyone who heard their story was astonished!

SLIDE 7



It was an incredible day filled with many miraculous events, and Mary kept all the things she saw and heard in heart and thought about them often. As the shepherds returned to their flocks, they continued to glorify and praise God for the incredible miracle they had witnessed. Everything had happened just as God promised—just as He had planned from the very beginning of everything!