

# THE BIRTH OF THE KING

**Bible Basis:** John 1:1–18; Luke 1:26–2:20

**Key Verse:** Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord.  
—Luke 2:11 NIV

**Bible Point:** God sent a Savior for the world. I can believe Jesus is my Savior.

**Resource:** *The Story for Children*, Chapter 22: “The Birth of the King”

## STEP 1: COME TOGETHER

**Stuff You Need:** lyrics to familiar Christmas carols

As you open your time together, quiz the class to see how well they know familiar Christmas songs. Explain that you’ll say a phrase, and see if they can tell you what comes next in the song. For instance, if you say, “Silent night,” children respond, “holy night.” If children seem to know the easy ones, make the song lines a little harder or longer. Ask:

- What’s your favorite Christmas carol and why?
- How do Christmas songs help us remember the Christmas story?

Say, **In the Bible story today, we’re going to hear the details of the Christmas story. Let’s see how well we know them.**

## STEP 2: HEAR THE STORY

**Stuff You Need:** copies of *The Story for Children*, Bibles, *The Story Elementary Trading Card 22*

Tell the story from *The Story for Children*, Chapter 22. You can also have children find Luke 2 and mark it in their Bibles. Either you or a child in your class can read the Scripture passages listed throughout the story.

### A Savior Comes

In this story, you will deliberately make mistakes. The children will let you know when they think you’ve made a mistake and provide the right information.

Say, **Listen carefully to the story, because I might get confused. I might need you to help me get the facts straight. If you think I’m saying something that’s not quite right, stomp your feet until I stop. Then you can tell me what I said wrong and help me get it right.** Begin the story, pausing as indicated for children to stomp and correct you. If children don’t stop you, then stomp your own feet and correct yourself.

God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee. The angel went to a young woman named Matilda. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Oh that's right; her name was Mary, and she was engaged to a man named Charles. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Thanks for straightening me out. His name was Joseph. Mary and Joseph—I've got it now. The angel Gabriel greeted Mary and said, "The Lord has given you special favor."

Gabriel told Mary she was going to become pregnant by the Holy Spirit of God and give birth to a baby girl. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Not a girl? Then it must have been a boy—a baby boy. Mary was pretty happy about this, and she praised God.

Someone else needed to hear this news. Mary was engaged to Charles. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* I mean Joseph. When he found out Mary was going to have a baby, he wasn't sure he wanted to marry her. Then an angel of the Lord came to him in the bathtub. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* No, not the bathtub—it was a dream. The angel came to him in a dream and said, "Don't be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Mike." *Pause, stomp, and correct.* I knew that didn't sound right. The baby's name would be Jesus. That's right, Jesus. When Joseph woke up from the dream, he did what the angel of the Lord told him to do. He took Mary home as his wife.

In those days, President Lincoln made a law. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* That doesn't sound right, does it? It can't be Lincoln. How about Caesar Augustus? Yes, that sounds better. Caesar Augustus, the Roman emperor, wanted a list of everyone in the whole Roman world. All the people had to go to their hometowns to put their names on the official list.

Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth. But that's not the town Joseph came from. His family came from New York City. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Okay, it wasn't New York; it was Bethlehem. He came from Bethlehem. So Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem, the town of David. *Read Luke 2:6–7.*

Out in the fields nearby, there were carpenters. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Carpenters don't work in a field. It must have been shepherds. They were taking care of their puppies. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* I guess shepherds don't take care of puppies. They take care of sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds. The glory of the Lord shone all around them. They were ready to party! *Pause, stomp, and correct.* I guess it was kind of scary. Those shepherds were terrified. Nothing like this had ever happened before.

*Read Luke 2:10–12.*

And then a whole rock band appeared in the sky. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* Okay, not a rock band—a large group of angels. They praised God, saying, "May glory be given to God in the highest heaven!"

Then the angels left and the shepherds looked at each other. They said, "Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened." So off they went to Bethlehem. When they got there, they couldn't find Mary and Joseph anywhere. *Pause, stomp, and correct.* That's not right. The truth is they found Mary, Joseph, and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger, just like the angel had said. After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone about what had happened. Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told.

Read Luke 2:19.

**The light of God had come into the world. That light was Jesus. Not everyone believed in him. Some people did accept him. They believed in his name. He gave them the right to become children of God. Jesus came from the Father, and he was full of grace and truth.**

After you have told the Bible story, give each child a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 22*. Ask children to look at the picture and tell you something special about the baby in the picture. As a class, read the key verse from the back of the card or from the Bible. Ask:

- **What is your favorite part of the Christmas story?**
- **What difference does it make if you think Jesus is the Savior of the world?**

Say, **Christmas is a favorite time of year for many people. Remembering that Jesus is the Savior makes it even more special.**

Collect the cards for now. You'll send them home with the children later.

### STEP 3: EXPLORE MORE

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

#### OPTION 1: WHO AM I?

**Stuff You Need:** Bibles, index cards, pencils

Say, **Our story today had a lot of different people and places in it. Let's play a guessing game that will help us remember them.** Have children make up their own clues. Assign each child or pair of children one of the characters or places and allow time for them to write three clues using their Bibles. Give one clue at a time, and see how many clues children need before the group correctly names the character or place. Ask:

- **Who were the first people to know God sent a Savior?**
- **What does it mean to you that you can believe Jesus is your Savior?**

Say, **Christmas comes every year, and it seems like everyone is celebrating. But it's important to remember that each person must believe for himself or herself that Jesus is the Savior.** You may want to offer to talk privately with any children who seem ready to express personal faith.

#### OPTION 2: GREETING CARD ORNAMENT

**Stuff You Need:** old Christmas cards, safety scissors, hole punch, narrow ribbon in three-foot lengths

Gather enough old Christmas cards so that each child can have three. Try to have a wide assortment of images of the Christmas story. You may want to cut the backs off ahead of time so children only handle the pictures. Say, **Find three pictures that show different parts of the Christmas story.**

Children can string together three cards, or if they'd like they may cut specific images out of the cards. Hole punch the bottom and the top of each picture. String the images together by running a ribbon through the holes, making sure to keep the ribbon behind the pictures. Go in through the top and out from the bottom of each picture. Tie a knot at the bottom of the ribbon and a hanging loop at the top. Ask:

- **How can you use this project to tell someone the story of a Savior being born?**
- **Invite children to say the Bible verse together: "Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).**

You might want to invite any children who want to know more about believing in the Savior to speak to you privately.

### **OPTION 3: THE NATIVITY**

**Stuff You Need:** The Nativity Activity Sheet, star stickers, cotton balls, crayons, glue, glitter, other decorating supplies

Give an activity sheet to each child. Talk to the class about the Nativity and review who was there and what was seen. Direct the class to add the details to the picture and decorate.

### **OPTION 4: CHRISTMAS TREE ORNAMENTS**

**Stuff You Need:** clear glass ornaments (or plastic if you can find some that have removable tops), bottles or tubes of acrylic paint (CAUTION: have students wear old clothes and smocks as this paint will stain)

1. Carefully remove the top of the ornament. Pull the top off a little. Then pinch the two wires together to pull the top the rest of the way off.
2. Let students pick out their paint colors. Two or three usually work best.
3. Let student squeeze paint in the ornament. You can add all of the colors at once because the paint won't mix.
4. Have children turn the ornaments being careful not to turn them completely upside down so the paint can spill out. Keep turning until paint covers the entire inside of the ornaments.
5. Let the paint dry for an hour or so before putting the top back on the ornaments for your students.

## **STEP 4: GOING HOME**

Pray together thanking God for sending a Savior. Make sure each child takes home a copy of *The Story Elementary Trading Card 22*, Activity Sheet(s)/Crafts, and the Parents' Page.