



# THE BIRTH OF JESUS

MATTHEW 1-2 & LUKE 1-2

## GOAL

▶ To help children understand the events of Jesus's birth and rejoice that He has come.

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## CHARACTERS

▶ **Mary:** Though she was a virgin and was not married, Mary gave birth to baby Jesus.

**Joseph:** He was engaged to Mary, and together they traveled to Bethlehem right before Jesus was born.

**Jesus:** He came to earth as a newborn baby.

**Shepherds:** They first heard the wonderful news of Jesus' birth and celebrated His coming.

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## MEMORY VERSE

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

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## OVERVIEW

▶ **Read over the birth accounts of Jesus in Luke 2 and Matthew 1-2:** God sent Jesus, His Son, to earth as a helpless baby. He was born to Mary and Joseph in a city called Bethlehem.



## SUGGESTIONS

Jesus' birth is the culmination of thousands of years of waiting for the promised Messiah. This story is one we should be happy to discuss and celebrate at any time of year, not just at Christmas time. **The Christmas story is the story of the greatest gift ever given: Jesus. In the package of one tiny baby, we were given so much.**

**1. Gift of salvation:** Jesus was born so that He could die in our place. His death washed us clean of our sin.

**2. Gift of relationship:** Sin had separated us from God. With the birth of Jesus, we were shown that God would do and give anything to repair our broken relationship.

**3. Gift of mercy:** Sending Jesus was God's ultimate act of mercy. We didn't deserve the salvation His Son's sacrifice would bring us, but God showed us mercy and sent His Son anyway.

## PRE-LESSON ACTIVITY

**Candy Cane Pick-Up | Supplies:** candy canes and two baskets or buckets.

Divide the class into two teams. Place two piles of candy canes on a table. Ask the teams to form a line behind their pile of candy canes. The first child in line for each team should pick up a candy cane and place it in his or her mouth; after that, no hands are to be used. Using the crook of the candy cane in their mouths, students should try to pick up a candy cane from the pile and place it in their team's basket. Each child has 10 seconds at the table; when time is up, the next child takes his or her turn. When the time is up, the team with the most candy canes in their basket wins.

## MEMORY VERSE MEANING

**Luke 2:11:** When announcing the birth of Jesus, the angel said "unto you" a Savior is born. While the angel was speaking directly to the shepherds, that line is meant to be read as if it were being directed at the reader. Unto each and every one of us, a Savior was born.



## POST-LESSON ACTIVITY

▶ **Away in a Manger | Supplies:** toilet paper rolls, scissors, glue, yellow yarn, paper cutouts of the baby Jesus, crayons, and markers.

Give each child a toilet paper roll, and have them cut it in half lengthwise. Have students glue the two halves together so that the open ends face away from each other. Give the students lengths of yellow yarn and have them cut the yarn into smaller pieces that they can glue into their manger to serve as hay. Using the crayons and markers, have the students color the baby Jesus cutouts, and then glue the cutout on top of the yarn hay.

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## TAKE HOME

▶ What kind of gifts can we give to others that would show them God's love?

1. Spend time with your family and friends.
2. Give assistance to the needy.
3. Share your faith with others.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 1



**Q1a:** Who was engaged to be married?

**A1:** Joseph and Mary

**Q1b:** God has a special plan for all of us. What do you hope His plan is for your life?

**TN:** Give the students an opportunity to answer. Most students will likely answer by saying what they want to be when they grow up, but some may tell you how they hope to work to spread the Gospel or help others.

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### SLIDE 2



**Q2a:** What did the angel tell Mary?

**A2:** He told Mary of God's plan for her to have a son named Jesus.

**Q2b:** If you were Mary, how would you have reacted to this news?

**TN:** No one could have expected this! Hearing that this was God's plan for her life must have really shocked Mary, but she accepted it with grace. Ask the students if they would be willing to give up their plans for their life if God told them to do something completely different?





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 3



**Q3a:** Who did the angel say would be the father of the baby?

**A3:** The Holy Spirit, not Joseph

**Q3b:** What do you think would have happened if Mary said no thanks to God's plan?

**TN:** It is important to remember that just because God has a plan for our lives, doesn't mean that we have to follow it. Mary could have focused on the problems this plan would present in her life and decided that it was too much for her to handle. God gave us free will so we can make the decision whether or not to follow God and His plan; He doesn't force His will on us. If Mary didn't agree to participate in God's plan, He would have found someone else who would willingly participate. When we don't follow God, we're the only ones who miss out; God's plan will be carried out whether we participate in it or not.

### SLIDE 4



**Q4a:** What did Joseph worry he would have to do?

**A4:** He worried that he would have to end their engagement.

**Q4b:** Would it bother you if someone thought you were picking your nose when you were really just scratching it?

**TN:** We know the truth of such situations, so does it really matter what someone else thinks? It can be hard to not care what other people think, but it really shouldn't be a big deal. Joseph struggled with this after learning Mary was pregnant. He loved her and believed that she hadn't done anything wrong, but other people would think awful things about them for the situation they were in. If God has asked us to do something that other people don't like or think is weird, they are entitled to their opinion, but we don't have to agree with them.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 5



**Q5a:** What did the angel tell Joseph about the baby?

**A5:** The angel told Joseph that the baby was a miracle from God.

**Q5b:** Have you ever had a dream so real that you thought it actually happened?

**TN:** Even if Joseph didn't think that this dream really happened, it did change his attitude toward continuing his relationship with Mary.

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### SLIDE 6



**Q6a:** Why did Joseph and Mary have to travel to Bethlehem?

**A6:** Because the emperor ordered a census

**Q6b:** Do you have a piggy bank?

**TN:** It's hard to know how much money has been put into a piggy bank, so we have to open them up and dump all of the change out so we can count it all. In a way, this is what a census is. The Roman emperor wanted to know how many people were living in the Roman territories, so he ordered everyone to be counted. This was done so they could determine how much people should be paying in taxes.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 7



**Q7a:** Why was the journey so difficult for Mary?

**A7:** She was experiencing labor pains.

**Q7b:** Have you ever taken a long journey?

**TN:** Whether by car or airplane, by the time we reach our destinations, we are uncomfortable and maybe in a bit of pain. Imagine how painful the long trip to Bethlehem was for Mary!

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### SLIDE 8



**Q8a:** Where did Joseph and Mary have to stay once they arrived in Bethlehem?

**A8:** The only place available for them to stay was a barn.

**Q8b:** Have you ever been to a petting zoo?

**TN:** Many people enjoy being close to animals and petting them, but imagine having to sleep in a petting zoo. Dirty straw, smelly animals, and a noisy atmosphere is the type of environment in which Jesus was born.





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 9



**Q9a:** What did they use as a bed for the baby?

**A9:** The manger

**Q9b:** If something terrible and unavoidable were going to happen to you, would you want to know about it?

**TN:** While it might be nice to know when and where something were to happen, some people might live in fear of that moment. This future event might become the whole focus of that person's life. This may be why God did not tell Mary and Joseph His plan for baby Jesus. Not telling them about the suffering He would face later in His life made it so they could focus on the blessing He was to their lives.

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### SLIDE 10



**Q10a:** What did the shepherds do after the angels announced Jesus' birth?

**A10:** They went to Bethlehem and worshiped Jesus.

**Q10b:** Do you know if your parents sent out birth announcements after you were born?

**TN:** Some people like to send out cards with photos of their newborns to let friends and family know that they have welcomed a new member of the family. In a way, God did this by sending a host of angels to announce Jesus' birth. That's a pretty cool announcement!





## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 11



**Q11a:** What led the wise men to Israel?

**A11:** A bright star

**Q11b:** Can you find the North Star in the night sky?

**TN:** The North Star is pretty much the closest thing we have to a fixed point in the sky. Before GPS, many people used the North Star to navigate across oceans and across uncharted lands. The wise men used the bright star that appeared the night that Jesus was born as a way to find Jesus.

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### SLIDE 12



**Q12a:** Who did the wise men ask for information about Jesus?

**A12:** They went to King Herod.

**Q12b:** Before the Internet and Google, how did people find information?

**TN:** People had to know who would have the information or they had to know what institution would have the information they sought. The wise men didn't know exactly where they would be able to find this new king who had been born, so they went to someone they thought was likely to know the location of the new king. King Herod didn't know where this new king was, or that he even existed. He turned to his scholars and demanded that they find out who this new king was. The scholars knew to search Scripture to find the information the king demanded. Scripture is where we should turn to find truth. When we have questions about life and God, Scripture has the answers.



## QUESTION & ANSWER

### SLIDE 13



**Q13a:** What gifts did the wise men give the baby Jesus?

**A13:** They gave Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

**Q13b:** What was one of the best Christmas presents you've ever received?

**TN:** The tradition of giving gifts on Christmas is to remember the presents the wise men gave to Jesus. The presents that they gave Jesus were very expensive and were traditionally given to kings.

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### SLIDE 14



**Q14a:** What did the wise men do in response to God's warning?

**A14:** They went home in a different direction.

**Q14b:** How did you meet your best friend?

**TN:** Ask the students if one thing had happened differently that day, would they still have met their friends? Just as there were many events that led up to the moment that they met their friends, many events led up to the birth of Jesus. Many of these events were predicted thousands of years before Jesus was born. Jesus' birth fulfilled all of these prophecies.



**MEMORY  
VERSE**

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

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**BIG IDEA**

▷ The birth of a tiny baby was the biggest thing to ever happen to the whole world.

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**CLOSING  
PRAYER**

▷ God, thank You for sending Your Son. Thank You that He was born to be our Savior. Help us to show Your love to the people in our lives. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 1



In the land of Israel, there was a young woman named Mary and a man named Joseph. Joseph was a carpenter by trade, and he loved Mary. The two were engaged to be married. They were not rich or powerful, but they were righteous and obedient people. God had a very special plan for them.

### SLIDE 2



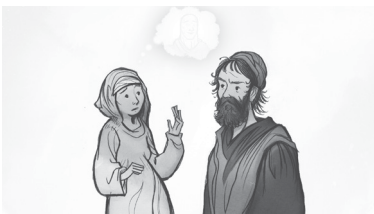
One day, an angel came to Mary to tell her about God's plan. "The Lord is with you, Mary," he said. "You have favor with God, and you will have a baby boy. His name will be Jesus. He will be great, and He will be called the Son of the Most High. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end to His Kingdom."

### SLIDE 3



Mary, of course, was happy at the news. But she was also a bit worried because she was not even married. The angel assured her that the baby would be conceived by the Holy Spirit and not by her soon-to-be husband, Joseph. When the angel left, Mary could hardly believe what had just happened. The Messiah would be born to her? She would be the one? This was the most amazing news. She broke into song about her joy and God's awesome greatness.

### SLIDE 4



But there was a problem. Mary was going to have a baby even though she and Joseph were not yet married. What would people think? Joseph became very worried. After all, he was a man who always tried to do the right thing. He was afraid that he might have to end his engagement to Mary.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 5



One night, God gave Joseph a dream. In the dream, an angel spoke to him and said, "Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The baby in Mary is a miracle from God. She will have a son, and you shall call Him Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

### SLIDE 6



There was another problem. The emperor of the land, Caesar Augustus, sent out a law that everyone should be counted in a census. Every single citizen was required to go to their hometown. Joseph and Mary's hometown was Bethlehem. Although Mary's due date was approaching, they began the long and difficult journey to Bethlehem.

### SLIDE 7



Mile after mile, they traveled. It was very uncomfortable for Mary as her labor pains grew more intense. While she was happy that she would be delivering a miracle baby boy, her current situation was difficult. She was on a long journey, and she knew that the baby was going to come any minute.

### SLIDE 8



When they finally arrived in Bethlehem, there was no place for them to stay. All the hotels and houses were filled up. They could not find a single room, not even for a mother who was about to have a baby. There was only one place left—a barn for animals.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 9



There in that stable, surrounded by the animals, the Savior of the world was born. They took Jesus, wrapped him warmly in cloths, and used a manger as His bed. Little did Mary and Joseph know of the wonderful redemption that Jesus would bring. One day, this little baby boy would hang on the cross for the sin of all mankind. He would die and then rise again to defeat sin and death forever.

### SLIDE 10



That night, in the cold dark fields surrounding Bethlehem, there was a group of shepherds taking care of their sheep. An angel appeared in the sky and announced, "I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!" Then a whole choir of bright angels lit up the night sky and sang a beautiful song, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace on earth to all who please God!" The shepherds immediately went into Bethlehem and worshiped Jesus.

### SLIDE 11



Thousands of miles away in the foreign lands of the East, a group of wise men heard about the news of Jesus' birth, too. They followed a star that led them across deserts and mountains on a long and difficult journey. The bright star led them to the land of Israel.



## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 12



They knew that a king was going to be born, so they went to the leader, Herod. "We have come from the East to worship the One who has been born King of the Jews," they proclaimed. Herod was concerned. He hadn't heard of this. "A king? But I'm the king!" he said. He demanded that his court scholars find out what this meant. Sure enough, there was a prophecy: A king would be born in Israel. This was the Messiah, promised thousands of years before. Herod told the wise men to find this king and then bring the news back to him so he could worship the king, too. But Herod didn't want to worship the king, he wanted to kill Him!

### SLIDE 13



The wise men left Herod's palace and saw the star moving again. This time it led them right to the house of Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem. There they met the young child growing up in the home of the carpenter and his wife. They worshiped Him and brought Him beautiful gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh—all gifts fit for a king.





## LESSON TRANSCRIPT

### SLIDE 14



God warned the wise men in a dream that they should not tell Herod where to find Jesus, so the wise men returned a different way home. Jesus' birth was the fulfillment of many old prophecies. It was also the beginning of a new era in history. He had come! He was here! The God-Man born to a virgin who was born sinless and holy to save His people from their sins. His life, death, and resurrection would become the cornerstone of our faith. The world would never be the same.