



Advent 3: Birthplace of the King

Lesson Aim: To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The King Who Came to Us

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 2:1-7

What He Has Done: God chose Bethlehem as the birthplace of King Jesus.

THE WAY

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son." John 3:16a

| Unit 10: The King Who Came to Us | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| | Bible Story | What He Has Done | Lesson Aim |
| 48 | Advent 1: Announcing the King, Luke 1:26-33 | God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary. | To know God sent His Son as our King. |
| 49 | Advent 2: Naming the King, Matthew 1:18, 20-21 | God sent the angel to tell Joseph to name the baby Jesus. | To know Jesus is the name of God's Son, our King. |
| 50 | Advent 3: Birthplace of the King, Luke 2:1-7 | God chose Bethlehem as the birthplace of King Jesus. | To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem. |
| 51 | Advent 4: Worshiping The King, Luke 2:8-20 | God led the shepherds to see and worship King Jesus. | To praise God for sending King Jesus to us. |
| 52 | Giving to the King: The Wise Men, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11 | God showed baby Jesus to the wise men. | To know we can give our treasures to Jesus. |

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Micah 5:2. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for sending Your Son to Bethlehem and to the whole world. Amen."

WHAT ABOUT SANTA? Many cultures incorporate the story of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) into their family traditions at Christmas. Many young children are very excited about this tradition. To honor all parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) their family traditions, but to redirect their focus to celebrate the gift of God's Son.



**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

| Segment | Minutes | Activity | Supplies |
|-------------|----------|---|--|
| THE WELCOME | Up to 15 | Welcome | Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of baby Jesus in the manger |
| | | Coloring Center: Birthplace of the King | Coloring pages of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus in a stable, crayons or markers |
| | | Play-Dough Center: Moo, Baa, Hee-Haw! | Play-dough, Christmas and animal cookie cutters, play-dough tools |
| | | Block Center: Born in a Stable | Blocks, toy or stuffed animals, baby with blanket |
| | | Nativity Center: Act It Out! | Nativity set |
| | Up to 5 | Prepare for Worship | None |
| THE WORSHIP | Up to 20 | Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org. Additional Song Suggestions: "Away in a Manger" "Go Tell It on the Mountain" "Joy to the World" "Silent Night" Additional Supplies: Advent wreath (See GOT TIME?) | Praise music, optional: musical instruments Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "His One and Only Son" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Give Thanks to the Lord" "I Bring You Good News" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" |
| | | Offering | Baskets |
| | | Worship Illustration | <i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: Kings & Kingdoms Unit 10, Lesson 50 |
| THE WORD | Up to 10 | Watch the Word: Luke 2:1-7 | Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:7 Visual: Picture of the Bible story, gift bag or box filled with hay |
| THE WAY | Up to 25 | Craft: Bethlehem Manger | Standard-size envelope, blue and tan sturdy paper, yarn or straw, star stickers, crayons or markers, glue, optional: yarn or string, tape |
| | | Game: Travel to Bethlehem | Two Bible times costumes, baby doll wrapped in cloth in a manger (box filled with hay), two or more stuffed animals |
| | | Game: The Baby King | Three royal pictures (expensive crib, baby toys, castle, crown, etc.), three stable pictures (sheep, cows, donkeys, manger with hay, etc.) |
| | | Snack: Manger Snack | Animal crackers |
| | Final 5 | Final Five | Ponder, Pray & Play for 2-3's: Unit 10, Lesson 50 |
| GOT TIME? | Up to 10 | Say & Do: Luke 2:1-7 | None |
| | Up to 15 | Craft: Advent Crown Wreath | See craft for supplies. |
| | Up to 10 | Game: Hop Around the World | Globe or picture of the world |
| | Up to 10 | Game: I Bring You Good News! | None |
| | Up to 10 | Story Time | Any story about the events surrounding Jesus' birth |

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



The King who came to us

THE WELCOME

WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____.** I'm glad you are here! **Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a stamp or sticker of baby Jesus in the manger. **Let this stamp (or sticker) help you remember Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem. A manger is a container that holds food for stable animals.**

Teacher's Note: These activity centers are designed to reinforce the lesson through hands-on learning experiences either individually or in small groups with the guidance of the teacher. Choose the Bible Activity Centers that best suit the children in your class. Set up the activity centers around the room before children arrive. Allow children to move freely among them.

COLORING CENTER: BIRTHPLACE OF THE KING

SUPPLIES

Coloring pages of Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus in a stable, crayons or markers

DO

Children color their picture as they talk about today's story.

TALK ABOUT

Tell me what you see in the picture. (Children respond.) **Let's pretend we are holding baby Jesus** (cradle arms and rock imaginary baby) **and rocking Him to sleep.** You may choose to sing "Away in the Manger" or "Silent Night" as you rock the baby.

PLAY-DOUGH CENTER: MOO, BAA, HEE-HAW!

SUPPLIES

Play-dough, Christmas and animal cookie cutters, play-dough tools

DO

Children play with the play-dough while talking about Jesus' birthplace. Encourage children to make one of the animals that may have been in the stable when baby Jesus was born with the play-dough.

TALK ABOUT

God chose a small town called Bethlehem for Jesus' birthplace. Jesus came to teach us about God's love. God loves you very much. Jesus wasn't born in a palace or even a house. He was born in a stable—a place for animals. Talk about the animals that may have been in the stable when Jesus was born (cows, donkeys, sheep, etc.). **What sounds did the animals make? Was it a quiet place for baby Jesus to sleep?** (Children respond.)

THE WELCOME *continued...*

BLOCK CENTER: BORN IN A STABLE

SUPPLIES

Blocks, toy or stuffed animals, baby wrapped in a blanket

DO

Children build a stable for baby Jesus.

TALK ABOUT

Baby Jesus was born in a stable because there was nowhere else to go. A stable is like a barn—animals live there. Can you build a stable for the animals and for baby Jesus? The Bible tells us Jesus' mother wrapped him in cloth and laid him in a manger. A manger is a long box that holds food for animals to eat. Can you make a manger for baby Jesus?

NATIVITY CENTER: ACT IT OUT!

SUPPLIES

Nativity set

DO & TALK ABOUT

Children use the nativity set to act out the story as you tell it using the points below. **Let's help each other tell the story of Jesus' birth.**

- **An angel told Mary about Jesus' birth.**
- **Then, an angel told Joseph to name the baby Jesus.**
- **Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem.**
- **There was no room for them in the inn so they stayed in a stable.**
- **The stable was the home for many animals.**
- **Baby Jesus was born in the stable.**
- **Angels told the shepherds about baby Jesus.**
- **The shepherds came to see the baby.**
- **The wise men followed a star and traveled from far away to see the baby Jesus.**

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

It's time for Praise Time. Let's sing a "Clean Up Song" as we put things away. Praise children as they help clean.

**Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE

(For visual demonstrations, see www.signingsavvy.com)

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| "God | Open right hand (fingers together and palm facing left) moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. |
| so loved | Fists closed, both arms move to the body and cross in front of the chest. |
| the world | Both W-handshapes (Extend middle three fingers, touch pinky to thumb) circle around each other. |
| that He gave His | (gave) With thumb touching the fingers, the hand moves forward away from body. |
| one and only Son." | (Son) The closed fist touches the forehead, then the hand opens as it comes down and is cradled in the opposite arm (palm open). |
| John 3:16a | Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible. |

Adding sign language or motions to the Bible Memory Verse helps children recall what they are learning.



The King who came to us

THE WORSHIP

Supplies: Christmas praise music, optional: musical instruments, Advent wreath (Consider battery powered candles for safety purposes. Other options are suggested in the GOT TIME? Advent Crown Wreath craft.)

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" as children move to that designated area.



Before we begin Praise Time, let's pray. Have the children bow their heads and close their eyes. **Dear Jesus, thank You for loving us so much that You came into the world to save us. Amen.**



Let's give our offering to King Jesus and celebrate the day He was born. Sing: "Joy to the World" while collecting the offering. **King Jesus left His throne in heaven to come to us. Instead of being born in a golden crib in a palace, Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.** Sing: "Away in a Manger."



The Lighting of the Christmas Candles: The Bethlehem Candle

Advent Wreath: 4 candles set in a wreath

We light the Christmas candles to get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas. We have lit Mary's Candle and Joseph's Candle. Today, we light the Bethlehem Candle to remember Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Choose one child to assist in lighting the third of the four candles on the Advent Wreath.



Let's see what our friend Delbert knows about the manger that was in Bethlehem. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: Kings & Kingdoms Unit 10, Lesson 50.



Whose son is Jesus? (God's Son.) God loved us so much He sent His only Son into the world as a baby just for us. Let's say our verse together. Practice a few times together.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| "God | Open right hand (fingers together and palm facing left) moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. |
| so loved | Fists closed, both arms move to the body and cross in front of the chest. |
| the world | Both W-handshapes (Extend middle three fingers, touch pinky to thumb) circle around each other. |
| that He gave His | (gave) With the thumb touching the fingers, the hand moves forward away from the body. |
| one and only Son." | (Son) The closed fist touches the forehead, then the hand opens as it comes down and is cradled in the opposite arm (palm open). |
| John 3:16a | Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible. |



Let's sing our Bible Memory Verse Song together. Sing: "His One and Only Son."



Born in Bethlehem

THE WORD

Supplies: Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:7; picture of the Bible story, gift bag or box filled with hay

Before we begin our Bible Time, let's say our Classroom Promise with the motions.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| With my eyes on my teacher; | Point to eyes. |
| My mouth quiet as can be, | Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign. |
| I will listen to hear, | Cup hand around ear. |
| How God loves you and me. | Hug self, point to others, and then self. |

Let's reach deep in our pockets and pull out our listening ears. Reach in your pocket and cup your hands behind your ears as if listening.

Who remembers the names of baby Jesus' parents? (Mary and Joseph.) **Jesus was King of all kings but He wasn't born in a palace. He didn't have special toys or even a crib. When King Jesus was born, Mary placed Him in a manger. A manger is a long box that holds food for animals to eat. That doesn't sound very nice does it?** (Children respond.)

Do you know what Mary and Joseph put inside the manger for Jesus to lay on? (Hay.) **I brought some hay so you could see and feel what Jesus' birthplace was like.** Open the gift bag and let the children see and touch the hay. **Let's listen to our story.** Handle the Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 2:7.



WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 2:1-7

Read the story below or retell the passage in your own words. To illustrate the story, show a picture of the Bible story from a children's Bible, the coloring page, or other source.

Optional: Read a Christmas storybook.

- **Mary went with Joseph on a trip.**
- **They traveled to Bethlehem.**
- **They found no place for her son to be born,**
- **For there was no room in the inn.**

- **When Jesus was born, Mary wrapped Him in cloth;**
- **In a manger she lay Him down.**
- **God chose that His Son would be born this way,**
- **In a manger in Bethlehem town.**

Who was born in Bethlehem? (Baby Jesus.) **Where did Mary lay baby Jesus?** (In a manger.)



Think about the manger

THE WAY

Teacher Tip: Craft and games can be presented at the same time in different areas or one at a time depending on class size and teaching style.

CRAFT: BETHLEHEM MANGER

Purpose: To remind the children of the story of the birthplace of the King.

Supplies: Standard-size envelope, blue and tan sturdy paper, yarn or straw, star stickers, crayons or markers, glue, optional: yarn or string, tape

Prepare: From tan paper, draw and cut out a 3-inch tall Mary and a 2-inch tall baby Jesus. From blue paper, cut out and glue on a triangle which fits the underside of the open envelope flap for the sky. Cut four short pieces of yarn or straw for hay. Along the bottom of the envelope, print:

Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Luke 2:1-7

Optional: To make a hanging ornament, cut a 7-inch length of yarn. Punch a hole at the top of the open envelope flap. Thread the yarn through the hole and tie a knot to create a loop. Instead of paper, use a miniature clothespin or doll-style clothes pin as Jesus. Shredded paper can be used for hay. Place a large star sticker at the top of the envelope flap.

Adaptation for Ages 2-3: This craft was developed for ages 4-5. To adapt the craft for younger children, you may choose to simplify the craft or eliminate steps in the directions. One possible adaptation for this craft is to pre-attach the hay and/or use a full color Mary figure.

Directions:

1. Color Mary.
2. Color baby Jesus.
3. Place hay in the open envelope, for the manger.
4. Place baby Jesus in the open envelope, as if cradled in a manger.
5. Attach star stickers to the blue sky.
6. Mary may be attached to the side of the manger or left unattached so children can act out the story.

Craft Discussion:

- **Who was born in Bethlehem?** (Jesus.)
- **Where did Mary lay baby Jesus?** (In a manger.)
- **A manger holds food for stable animals. Does that seem like a king's crib?** (No!)
- **Baby Jesus was the King, but He was born in a manger. He came to earth as a baby because He loves us so much.**

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: TRAVEL TO BETHLEHEM

Purpose: Children will act out the story of Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem.

Supplies: Two Bible times costumes, baby doll wrapped in cloth in a manger (box filled with hay), two or more stuffed animals

Teacher's Tip: To create costumes, wrap a cloth around the child as robe or cut three slits in a large pillowcase for child's head and arms. Add a rope belt.

In Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph wanted to stay at the inn. An inn is like a hotel. However, the innkeeper said there was no room in the inn.

Directions:

1. Create a stable by placing the stuffed animals and the baby doll in the manger in one end of the room.
2. Choose a boy and a girl to be Mary and Joseph. Mary and Joseph put on costumes.
3. Divide the remaining children into 3 or 4 innkeeper groups and place the groups around the room.
4. Mary and Joseph walk together to each inn and pretend to knock. Each innkeeper group says, "**No room in the inn.**"
5. Mary and Joseph walk to the stable and pretend to knock. You say, "**You may stay here.**" Give Mary the baby doll.
6. **Baby Jesus was born in a manger because there was no room in the inn.**
7. Switch roles and play again.

GAME: THE BABY KING

Purpose: Children compare Jesus' birth to the typical birth of a king.

Supplies: Three royal pictures (expensive crib, baby toys, castle, crown, etc.), three stable pictures (sheep, cows, donkeys, manger with hay, etc.)

Directions:

1. Shuffle the six pictures in random order.
2. Children sit in circle.
3. **Where should a baby king be born? (In a castle or palace.) Stand up when you see something a baby king should have. Then, quickly sit back down.**
4. Show each picture one at a time.
5. Guide the children when they see the royal pictures to stand and then sit back down.
6. **King Jesus was not born in a castle or a palace with a nice crib or baby toys. Stand up when you see something that may have been near baby Jesus when He was born.**
7. Show each picture one at a time.
8. This time, guide children when they see the stable pictures to stand and then sit back down.

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: MANGER SNACK

Purpose: Children enjoy a snack that reminds them that Jesus was born in a manger.

Snack Suggestion: Animal crackers

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or other familiar tune.
God our Father, God our Father. Once again, once again.
Thank You for our blessings. Thank You for our blessings. Amen. Amen.
3. Lead discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
 - **Who was born in Bethlehem?** (Jesus.)
 - **When you were a baby, did you sleep in a manger or a crib?** (Children respond.)
 - **Where did Mary lay baby Jesus down?** (In a manger.)
 - **Did you have sheep, cows, and donkeys around your crib when you were a baby?** (No.)
 - **Do you think baby King Jesus may have had sheep, cows, and donkeys around His manger?** (Yes.)



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

Gather children in a circle sitting or standing and practice the words and motions.

| | |
|---------------------------|---|
| "God | Open right hand (fingers together and palm facing left) moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. |
| so loved | Fists closed, both arms move to the body and cross in front of the chest. |
| the world | Both W-handshapes (Extend middle three fingers, touch pinky to thumb) circle around each other. |
| that He gave His | (gave) With the thumb touching the fingers, the hand moves forward away from the body. |
| one and only Son." | (Son) The closed fist touches the forehead, then the hand opens as it comes down and is cradled in the opposite arm (palm open). |
| John 3:16a | Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible. |

PRAY

Let's pray together. Say a closing prayer with the children.

PLAY

Allow children to play with selected toys or centers or choose a book to read to them.

DISMISSAL

Have children take home their coloring page, craft, and a copy of the Ponder, Pray & Play for 2-3's.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SAY & DO: LUKE 2:1-7

Purpose: This pantomime version of the Bible Story helps children remember the story details.

Supplies: None

Directions: With each phrase, the teacher says the phrase and acts it out with hand motions; then repeats the same phrase and motions with the children.

- **Mary went with Joseph on a trip.** (Walk in place.)
- **They traveled to Bethlehem.** (Point far away.)
- **They found no place for her son to be born,** (Look around with hand above eyes.)
- **For there was no room in the inn.** (Shake head no.)

- **When Jesus was born, Mary wrapped Him in cloth.** (Hug arms to chest.)
- **In a manger she lay Him down.** (Pretend to rock baby in arms.)
- **God chose that His Son would be born this way,** (Point to heaven.)
- **In a manger in Bethlehem town.** (Make a triangle with hands like a stable roof.)

CRAFT: ADVENT CROWN WREATH

Purpose: Children work together to create an Advent crown wreath.

Supplies: Poster board or sturdy paper, craft jewels or costume jewelry, gold paint (or gold foil, gold wrapping paper, etc.), four tall gold candles, four candleholders, one gold dinner plate or plate wrapped in gold foil or paper, stapler, glue

Prepare: Cut a 3-inch x 24-inch strip of poster board. Paint the poster board strip gold. Let it dry. Staple the ends to create a circle (crown) shape.

Teacher Tip: Create one wreath for the classroom or individual wreaths for children to take home. The directions for this wreath suggest four candles. Some wreaths add a fifth candle, "the Christ Candle" which is in the center of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Advent means coming. In the four weeks before Christmas, believers use an Advent wreath to celebrate the coming of King Jesus. Each week we light a new candle. Our Advent wreath is in the shape of a crown to remind us Jesus is the King of kings. The circle shape of the crown which has no beginning and no end reminds us of the promise of a never ending life forever with God.

Directions:

1. Decorate the circle (crown) with craft jewels or costume jewelry.
2. Place the crown on a gold dinner plate or plate wrapped in gold foil or paper.
3. Place the four gold candles in holders evenly along the inner rim of crown.

Optional Flameless Advent Crown Wreaths: (1) Cut candle shapes from sturdy gold or yellow paper. Color the flames red or orange. Attach the candles to the crown with tape. (2) Use battery operated candles.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son." John 3:16a

GAME: HOP AROUND THE WORLD

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Globe or picture of the world

Our Bible Memory Verse says, "God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son." Who is God's one and only Son? (King Jesus.) God loves everyone in the world very much! That's why He gave King Jesus to everyone! Let's hop around the world as we say our Bible Memory Verse.

Directions:

1. Place the globe or picture of the world in the center of the play area.
2. Have the children line up behind you.
3. As you say the Bible Memory Verse, lead the children in hopping around the globe or picture of the world.
4. Continue hopping around the world until you finish the Bible Memory Verse.
5. Play as often as you like. Allow the children to take turns leading the line.

GAME: I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS!

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: None

Let's practice our Bible Memory Verse.

Directions:

1. Children stand or sit in a circle holding their closed hands to their mouths to make a "trumpet."
2. Have children repeat the verse after you: **"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son."**
3. Once the children are comfortable saying the verse, lead the children in saying the verse in different ways such as slowly, quickly, quietly, or loudly. You can also change whether they are sitting, standing, or slowly rising or sitting as they say the verse.
4. Play as often as you like.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



STORY TIME

Gather the children and read a favorite story. This can be a Bible Story, a chapter from *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello*, or a story about the events surrounding Jesus' birth.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 10, Lesson 50 - Advent 3: Birthplace of the King

PONDER! Gather your family to light the Bethlehem Candle, the third candle on your Advent Crown Wreath. (Create wreath using gold foil for a crown. Place four candles in holders around the inner rim. Place a fifth candle as the Christ Candle in a center holder.) Read Luke 2:1-7 and talk about the Jesus' birthplace.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, thank You that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Thank You that Jesus is our King. Amen."

PLAY! Act out Luke 2:1-7. Choose Mary, Joseph, and innkeepers. Assign rooms for inns and a stable. Mary and Joseph knock on the inn doors. The innkeepers say, "No room." Gather in the stable to talk about your birthplace.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"God

Open right hand (fingers together and palm facing left) moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.

**so loved
the world**

Fists closed, both arms move to the body and cross in front of the chest.

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Both W-handshapes (Extend middle three fingers, touch pinky to thumb) circle around each other.

one and only Son."

(gave) With the thumb touching the fingers, the hand moves forward away from the body.

(Son) The closed fist touches the forehead, then the hand opens as it comes down and is cradled in the opposite arm (palm open).

John 3:16a

Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.