



Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah

Lesson Aim: To know God gets believers ready for Christmas.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God Who Comes Near

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 1:11-22, 62-64

What He Has Done: God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.

THE WAY - BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

Unit 10: The God Who Comes Near			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
48	Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah, Luke 1:11-22, 62-64	God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.	To know God gets believers ready for Christmas.
49	Advent 2: Gabriel and Mary, Luke 1:28-33	God sent His angel Gabriel to prepare Mary for the birth of Jesus.	To know the Lord is with us.
50	Advent 3: Jesus Is Born, Luke 2:1-7	God gave us His Son, baby Jesus.	To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.
51	Advent 4: An Angel Visits the Shepherds, Luke 2:8-16	God sent an angel to announce the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.	To know God sent an angel to tell the shepherds about Jesus.
52	Following the Star, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	God sent a star.	To know the wise men followed a star.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Lamentations 3:24-29. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for the good news that You bring us. Provide us with the quiet moments we need to prepare our hearts to worship You this Christmas. Amen."

TEACHER'S TIP

What about Santa? Many cultures incorporate the story of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) into their family traditions at Christmas. However, not every family follows this tradition. To honor all parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) this tradition, but to redirect the children's focus to celebrating the gift of God's Son.

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 20	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of an angel
		Coloring Center: Gabriel Visits Zechariah	Coloring pages of Gabriel and Zechariah, crayons
		Play-Dough Center: A Special Gift	Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools, gift box
		Block and Car Center: Glory to God!	Blocks, cars
		Dramatic Play Center: A New Baby	Baby doll, basket, baby blanket, items for a baby's care
		Nativity Center: Born in a Stable	Nativity set, Christmas praise music
		Preparing for Worship	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs are available at ResourceWell.org. An Advent Wreath is recommended for the four weeks of Advent. Four purple candles (traditional or battery-operated) are suggested, but use the colors familiar to you. You may choose to include a center Christ candle.	Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Give Thanks to the Lord" "His One and Only Son" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" "Sing Praises" "The Lord Is Faithful" "We Love"
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	<i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 48
THE WORD	Up to 10	Watch the Word: Luke 1:11-22, 62-64	Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 1:19 Visual: Picture of the Bible story, baby doll wrapped in a blanket
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: The Advent Angel	Angel template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white paper, yarn, glitter paint (or glue and glitter), cotton swabs, tape or glue, crayons
		Game: Break the Silence	None
		Game: Memory Verse Echo	None
		Snack: Sent from Above	Marshmallows, cotton candy, or angel food cake to represent the clouds
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10 Lesson 48
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Luke 1:11-22, 62-64	None
	Up to 10	Game: Glory to God!	Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Game: Quiet Time	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about the birth of Jesus

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



The God who comes near

THE WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____. I am glad you are here! Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a sticker or stamp of an angel. **Let this stamp (or sticker) remind you of the angel Gabriel who came to visit Zechariah.**

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: GABRIEL VISITS ZECHARIAH

SUPPLIES

Coloring pages of Gabriel and Zechariah, crayons

DO

Children color their pictures while talking about the story.

TALK ABOUT

Before the first Christmas when Jesus was born, God sent angels to come near to people and give them the good news. Talk about the angel visits: (1) The angel Gabriel told Zechariah he would have a special baby named John who would tell people Jesus was coming. (2) Gabriel told Mary she would have baby Jesus. (3) An angel told Joseph that Jesus would be born. (4) An angel told the shepherds of Jesus' birth.

PLAY-DOUGH CENTER: A SPECIAL GIFT

SUPPLIES

Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools, gift box

DO

Children create gifts with the play-dough while discussing today's lesson.

TALK ABOUT

What holiday are we going to be celebrating soon? (Christmas.) What do we celebrate on Christmas? (Jesus' birth.) Jesus' birth was a special gift to everyone. Let's thank Jesus for coming to earth as a baby by making some special gifts to place in our gift box.

BLOCK AND CAR CENTER: GLORY TO GOD!

SUPPLIES

Blocks, cars

DO

Children create places they can go and praise God.

TALK ABOUT

We have a new Bible verse, "Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a. That means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to God. Where do you go that you can praise God? (Home, church, school, stores.) Let's build some places we can go with the blocks and every time you travel to one of them, let's say "Glory to God in the highest!"

THE WELCOME *continued ...*

DRAMATIC PLAY CENTER: A NEW BABY

SUPPLIES

Baby doll, basket, baby blanket, items for a baby's care

DO

Children play while taking care of the baby.

TALK ABOUT

An angel told Zechariah his wife was going to have a very special baby boy. His son would be named John and he would tell everyone Jesus was coming. Let's take care of our baby like Zechariah and his wife, Elizabeth, would have taken care of their baby, John.

NATIVITY CENTER: BORN IN A STABLE

SUPPLIES

Nativity set, Christmas praise music

DO

Children play with the nativity set. Have the children identify each of the characters in the nativity set. Play Christmas praise music while children play.

TALK ABOUT

Who were Jesus' parents? (Mary and Joseph.) **Who came to see baby Jesus?** (Shepherds, Wise Men.) **Who told the shepherds baby Jesus was born?** (The angel.) **What animals do you see here? What noises do they make? What other animals might you find in a stable? What would it have been like to be born in a stable? Do you think the animals were quiet when Jesus was born?**

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.)

"Glory to God	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.
in the highest."	(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.
Luke 2:14a	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 God who comes near

THE WORSHIP

Supplies: Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments, Advent wreath

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.

Advent Wreath: An Advent Wreath is recommended for the four weeks of Advent. Four purple candles (traditional or battery-operated) are suggested, but use the candle colors familiar to you. You may choose to include a center Christ candle.



God is always with us. There are many ways we can be near to Him, such as singing, reading the Bible, and praying. Let's come near to God right now and talk with Him through prayer. Have the children bow their heads and close their eyes. **Dear God, thank You for always being with us. We give thanks because You are so good to us. Amen.**



Sing: "The Lord Is Faithful." **Let's spend time being near to God today by giving our offering and singing thanks to Him.** Sing: "Give Thanks to the Lord" while collecting the offering.



The Lighting of the Christmas Candles: The Angel's Candle

We light the Christmas candles to get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas. Today, we light the first candle. It is called the Angel's candle to remind us that God sent the angel to a man named Zechariah. Choose a child to assist in lighting the first candle on the Advent wreath. The candle lighting takes place during the performance of *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello* puppet script or after reading the storybook version.



Before we light the Angel's candle, let's see if Delbert and Lello know about our Christmas candles. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 48. If you read the storybook, light the candle now.



In today's story, God came near to a man named Zechariah by sending an angel to give him good news. Later, God sent an angel to the shepherds with more good news. Listen to what that angel said to the shepherds. Sing: "I Bring You Good News." Children listen to the verses and sing along on the chorus: "Glory to God in the highest."



"Glory to God in the highest!" That's our new Bible Memory Verse. Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to God. Practice with the motions.

"Glory

Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion.

to God

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

in the highest."

(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.

Luke 2:14a

Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.



God prepares Zechariah

THE WORD

Supplies: Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 1:19, picture of the Bible story, baby doll wrapped in a blanket

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.

Hold the baby in front of you. **This baby doll reminds me of a holiday that is coming soon. Who knows what that holiday is?** (Christmas.) **What do we celebrate on Christmas?** (Jesus' birth.) **Before Jesus was born, another special baby was born. His name was John and he would tell everyone Jesus was coming soon. Let's listen to how John's father, Zechariah, found out he would have a son.** Handle Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 1:19.



WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 1:11-22, 62-64

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.

- **God sent the angel to Zechariah one day,**
- **"Your prayer has been answered. Do not be afraid.**
- **Your wife is old, but will soon have a baby boy.**
- **You will name him John and he will bring you great joy.**

- **He will make hearts ready to meet God's Son.**
- **He will prepare the way when Jesus comes."**
- **But Zechariah did not believe this news at first.**
- **So the angel Gabriel said, "You will speak no more words."**

- **So Zechariah spoke not, not a word could he say.**
- **Until the baby was born and given John as a name.**
- **Then his mouth was opened and his words came out,**
- **And his very first words praised God out loud!**

Who sent the angel to Zechariah? (God.) **What was the angel's name?** (Gabriel.)



God prepares us for Christmas

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: THE ADVENT ANGEL

Purpose: To know God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.

Supplies: Angel template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white paper, yarn, glitter paint (or glue and glitter), cotton swabs, tape or glue, crayons

Prepare: Print and cut out the angel template from sturdy white paper. Punch a hole in the top of the angel. Cut a 8-inch piece of yarn (any color).

Adaptation for Ages 2-3: This craft has been adapted from the curriculum for ages 4-5.

Directions:

1. Before or after the children decorate the angel, thread the yarn through the hole in the top of the angel and tie the ends together for an ornament hanger.
2. Children use the crayons to color the angel's face and hair.
3. Teacher places small drops of glitter paint on the angel's wings.
4. Children spread the paint using a cotton swab.
5. Let the wings dry.
6. Teacher tapes or glues the ends of the angel's robe together in the back. Be sure the Bible verse is visible.

Craft Discussion:

- **The Bible says Gabriel was a male angel. What do you think his voice sounded like?** (Children respond.) **What do you think angels look like?** (Children respond.)
- **What would you say if an angel came to you with good news?** (Children respond.)

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: BREAK THE SILENCE

Purpose: To connect with Zechariah's experience of breaking his silence with praise.

Supplies: None

After baby John was born, Zechariah could speak again. He had been quiet for a long time and he had plenty of quiet time to think about God. The very first words he spoke were words of praise. Let's see what it was like to be Zechariah that day.

Directions:

1. First child pretends to be Zechariah in silence, covering his or her mouth with a hand.
2. The remaining children use their "whisper voices" to count aloud from 1 to 10.
3. When they say "10," Zechariah removes his or her hand and says in a loud voice:

"I praise God because He _____."

Examples: Sent the angel, does miracles, made me, give me friends, loves me, heals me, hears me, etc.)

4. All the children cheer with a shout: **"We praise God, too!"**
5. Repeat until each child has a turn as Zechariah.

GAME: MEMORY VERSE ECHO

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

Supplies: None

Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to God. Let's echo our praises to God.

Directions:

1. Have the children stand in a circle.
2. Divide your class into two groups.
3. Assign one group to be the loud echo and one the whisper echo.
4. The children crouch down until it's their turn to echo the verse.
5. Say the verse and have each group stand and echo your words, the loud group first then the whisper echo.
6. Repeat a few times.
7. If you have time, change groups and play again.

Optional: Add some variety to the echo. Do it faster, slower, or have the children clap, march, or spin in a circle when it is their turn to echo.

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: SENT FROM ABOVE

Purpose: To remember the angel God sent to Zechariah.

Snack Suggestion: Marshmallows, cotton candy, or angel food cake to represent the fluffy clouds in heaven where the angels live

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or another 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.
 - **Do you remember the angel's name?** (Gabriel.) **What was the good news the angel told Zechariah?** (That even though they were very old, he and his wife would have a baby boy named John.)
 - **The angel promised baby John would be very special because he would get people's hearts ready to know Jesus. Reading the Bible Story about the first Christmas is a way to get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas as Jesus' birthday. What are some other ways we can get our hearts ready for Christmas?** (Light candles, look at Christmas lights, sing Christmas carols, make angel decorations, gifts or cards to give away, etc.)



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.

**"Glory
to God**

Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.

in the highest."

(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.

Luke 2:14a

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 1:11-22, 62-64

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 leads the children in doing the hand motions.

- **God sent the angel to Zechariah one day,** (Connect fingers overhead, as a halo.)
- **"Your prayer has been answered. Do not be afraid.** (Make praying hands.)
- **Your wife is old, but will soon have a baby boy.** (Rock baby in arms.)
- **You will name him John and he will bring you great joy.** (Make a happy face.)

- **He will make hearts ready to meet God's Son.** (Place hands on heart.)
- **He will prepare the way when Jesus comes."** (Point to heaven.)
- **But Zechariah did not believe this news at first.** (Shake head no.)
- **So the angel Gabriel said, "You will speak no more words."** (Cup hand over mouth.)

- **So Zechariah spoke not, not a word could he say,** (Place index finger over lips.)
- **Until the baby was born and given John as a name.** (Rock baby in arms.)
- **Then his mouth was opened and his words came out,** (Move mouth, as if speaking.)
- **And his very first words praised God out loud!** (Palms up, as if praising God.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

GAME: GLORY TO GOD!

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

Supplies: Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

God sent an angel to the shepherds with good news. Do you know what that good news was? (Baby Jesus was born.) **The angel said, "Glory to God in the highest." Let's say that together, "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. As we sing, let's dance and wave these ribbons as a way to praise God for sending Jesus to us.**

Directions:

1. **Listen for the words, "Glory to God in the highest," and sing along.**
2. **Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News."**
3. **Lead the children in waving the ribbons as they dance about the room. Encourage them to sing along when they hear "Glory to God in the highest!"**

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: QUIET TIME

Purpose: To take a moment of silence to think about God's goodness.

Supplies: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

Zechariah could not say a word for about 300 days. Since he was not talking, he had plenty of time to think about God and to listen. Let's take a minute to be quiet and hear what the angel said to the shepherds about baby Jesus.

Directions:

1. Invite children to get in a comfortable position either by laying their heads on a table or by resting on the floor.
2. **Listen for the words: "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to Him.**
3. **It is good to take time to be quiet and think about God. Let's be quiet and think about God while we listen to our Bible Memory Verse Song.** Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News." Children rest quietly as they listen.



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 birth of Jesus.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 10, Lesson 48: Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah

PONDER! To celebrate the coming of Jesus, create a family Advent Wreath using a circle of greenery and four candles. Light the first candle as the Angel's Candle and read Luke 1:8-17. Talk about ways to get the hearts of your family members ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, thank You for coming near to us by sending Jesus. Help us get our hearts ready in the coming weeks to celebrate His birth. Amen."

PLAY! Choose one way your family can begin to prepare for Christmas together. Spend some quiet time looking at a children's Bible or Christmas storybook and thinking about what God has done for us.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.
in the highest."	(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.
Luke 2:14a	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.