



Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah

Lesson Aim: To see ways God comes near to prepare our hearts.

THE WORSHIP

Who God is: The God Who Comes Near

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 1:11-13, 16-20, 62-64

What He has done: God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.

Key Verse: Luke 1:13

THE WAY

Christ Connection: Daniel 9:21-22

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a

Unit 10: The God Who Comes Near			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
48	Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah, Luke 1:11-13, 16-20, 62-64	God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.	To see ways God comes near to prepare our hearts.
49	Advent 2: Angel Visits— Mary and Joseph, Luke 1:28-33; Matthew 1:20-21	God sent His angel Gabriel to prepare Mary for the birth of Jesus.	To know the Lord is with us and is pleased with those who believe in His Son.
50	Advent 3: Jesus is Born, Luke 2:4-7; John 1:1-2	Jesus was born.	To consider the miracle of the Savior coming near to us as a baby.
51	Advent 4: An Angel Visits the Shepherds, Luke 2:8-18	God sent an angel to announce the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.	To know the good news of Jesus' birth is for all people.
52	Following the Star, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	God sent a star to guide the Magi to Jesus.	To know God leads all of us to Jesus.

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."

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**THE WORSHIP
THE WORD &
THE WAY**

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Meet & Greet	None
		Game: Silent Draw	Large tablet of paper (or poster board or dry erase board), markers, stopwatch or clock, index cards
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Search Me, O God" "For God So Loved the World" "You Will Seek Me" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" "Angels We Have Heard on High" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Worship Jamz Christmas—Worship Jamz Shout Praises Kids Christmas
		Worship Scripture Reading: Luke 1:13-14, 17	Bible, Advent wreath with candles. See THE WORSHIP for other supplies.
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	Lesson 48 High Seas Adventures script or storybook
THE WORD	Up to 10	Read the Word: Luke 1:11-13, 16-20, 62-64	Map—Jerusalem, Israel, Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster, highlighters
THE WAY	Up to 25	Discussion	Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, highlighters
		Christ Connection: Daniel 9:21-22	
		Golden Bowl	Golden Bowl, pencils, note cards
	Final 5	Final Five Minutes	Treasure Treat—Advent Calendar, Daily Ways, basket, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Snack: Prepared to Snack	Fruit (easy to cut) or any snack children can help prepare, hand sanitizer or soap and water with towels, plastic knives, optional: yogurt dip
	Up to 10	Game: Zechariah's Silent Charades	Pencils, small pieces of paper
	Up to 10	Game: Listen Closely	Bag or box, collection of items to drop on the floor (e.g., pen, paper clip, plastic bottle, necklace, cup, pillow, bell, spoon, marbles, ping-pong ball)
	Up to 10	Craft: Listen to the Bells Ornament	Small bells (15 mm), red or green ribbon, pipe cleaners (red, green, white), scissors
	Up to 10	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Appearing Angel	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker (or chalkboard and chalk or large piece of paper and pencil)
	Up to 5	Bible Memory Verse Activity: Memory Verse Circle	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player
	Up to 5	Bible Timeline Review	Timeline

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Getting started

THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.

Meet & Greet Question: What is your favorite way to get ready for Christmas?

GAME: SILENT DRAW

Purpose: Children review the Bible miracles learned this year by drawing and guessing the miracles.

Supplies: Large tablet of paper (or poster board or dry erase board), markers, stopwatch or clock, index cards

Prepare: Write one miracle on each index card. If possible, create enough for each child to have a card. Here is a sample list of familiar miracles you may want to use: God made the world, the animals boarded Noah's ark, God parted the Red Sea, God sent manna from heaven, the wall of Jericho fell down, and God gives us baby Jesus. On Resourcewell.org, see a list of lessons from this year for more ideas.

Teacher Tip: If possible, allow enough time for each child to have a turn. If you have a large class and/or limited classroom time, have the children draw in pairs or divide the class into smaller groups that play simultaneously.

Today, we will discover how God prepares us to celebrate Jesus' birthday at Christmas. God made Zechariah silent for a long time. During that time, Zechariah had to write or draw his messages. Let's play a game where we take turns drawing one of the Bible miracles we have learned this year and the rest of the class guesses what you are drawing. Remember, you cannot talk or write words.

Directions:

1. Ask for a volunteer. Give him or her an index card with a miracle. You may need to whisper what is on the card to non-readers.
2. On your signal, start the stopwatch as the child draws a picture of the miracle. Allow 90 seconds for the child to draw. They are not to write words or talk.
3. While the child draws, the rest of the children try to guess the miracle.
 - If a child guesses correctly, he or she is the next to draw. If that child has already drawn, he or she may choose someone else to draw.
 - If no one guesses correctly, tell the children what the miracle is and lead everyone in giving a loud cheer for the miracle God has done. Then, choose a child to draw the next miracle.
4. If you used a tablet of paper, give each child their drawing to take home.



The God who comes near

THE WORSHIP

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting the offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play music as children move to the designated area.



Today, we worship the God who comes near. He came near to Zechariah as he worshiped and prayed. He came near to us by sending His Son. Let's celebrate the way God come near to us as we sing and give Him our offering. Sing Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News" while collecting the offering.



Advent Candle Lighting Ceremony: Angel's Candle

Advent Wreath: 4 candles set in a wreath of greenery

At Christmastime, we get our hearts ready to celebrate the coming of Jesus by lighting the candles on the Advent wreath. Advent means coming—the coming of Jesus. Our Advent wreath is round; it has no end just as God's love for us has no end. Each candle on the Advent wreath stands for one of the four Sundays before Christmas. Today, we light the first candle of Advent, the Angel's candle. Gabriel is the name of the angel of the Lord who came to bring a message of good news to Zechariah. He announced the birth of John the Baptist. John would get the hearts of the people ready for the coming of Jesus. The candle lighting takes place during the performance of *High Seas Adventures* script or after reading the storybook version.



Before we light the Angel's candle, let's see how our friends get their hearts ready to celebrate Christmas on the High Seas. Perform *High Seas Adventures* script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 48.

If you chose to read the storybook, choose one child to light the first candle on the Advent wreath now. Read Luke 1:13-14, 17.



You may choose to sing songs that focus on the birth of Christ.



Gabriel came to Zechariah

THE WORD

Teacher Tip: As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word; knowing God is my goal."

Last time, we learned God sent Joshua and the Israelites to defeat the city of Jericho. Today, we move ahead almost 1,400 years to learn how God prepared His people for the coming birth of Jesus. For a Bible Timeline Review activity, see the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson.

This story takes place inside the temple in Jerusalem. If a map is available, point to Jerusalem. **God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah he would have a son. He was to name him John.** If a Bible Timeline is available, point to John the Baptist (Circa 1 A.D.). **This was the very same John who would tell the world about Jesus.**



Let's play Find It First! Bring out your Bible; keep it right in front of you. Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals the Bible Story Scripture reference: Luke 1:11-13, 16-20, 62-64. **Let's see who can Find It First. Ready? Set? Go!** Children race to find it first. The winner helps others find it. **Let's highlight our Key Verse: Luke 1:13.**

Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us? Child prays aloud. **Be seated.**

When we read about Moses, we learned of a special tent where God's people worshiped Him in the desert. The altar of incense was kept in the tent. Do you remember what the tent was called? (The tabernacle.) **Years later, the altar of incense was kept in the temple.**

In the temple, Zechariah was standing next to the altar of incense when Gabriel appeared to him. Read Luke 1:11-13, 16-20. **Let's read what happened when the baby was born.** Read Luke 1:62-64. **Zechariah was so happy; his first words were a song of praise to God.**



God comes near to us

THE WAY

Where was Zechariah and what was he doing when the angel Gabriel appeared to him? (He was in the temple worshiping God by burning incense at the altar of incense.) **What did Gabriel tell Zechariah about his prayer for a baby?** (His prayer had been heard.) **Why was it hard for Zechariah to believe he and his wife would have a baby?** (They were very old.) **Have you ever been surprised when God answered your prayer?** (Children respond.)

Where did Gabriel say he usually stood? (In the presence of God.) **What happened to Zechariah when he did not believe Gabriel?** (He could not speak until his baby was born.) **What do you think Zechariah thought about during his many months of silence?** (Children respond.) **How might being quiet have helped Zechariah grow closer to God?** (Children respond.) **What was the first thing Zechariah did when he was able to speak?** (He praised God.)

What did Zechariah name his baby? (John.) **Who would John be preparing the people to receive?** (Jesus.) **God wants us to prepare our hearts to celebrate how He came near to us through Jesus' birth at Christmas. Being quiet helps us to listen to God. What would you think if you had to be quiet from now until Christmas?** (Children respond.) **Let's practice being quiet and listening to God right now. For the next minute, let's be silent and ask God to come near to us during this Christmas season. Ask Him to show you ways you can come near to Him each day.** Pray silently.

God came near to Zechariah by hearing his prayer, sending an angel, making him silent, answering his prayer for a baby, and by giving him a son who would prepare the way for God's Son. List the things Zechariah did to come near to God. (He lived a life obeying God, prayed for a baby, he burned incense in the temple, prayed for other's sins to be forgiven, he praised God when John was born.) **God came near to us all when He sent Jesus. All who believe in Jesus have life forever close with God. In what other ways have you felt God come near to you?** (Children respond.) **What things do you do to come near to God?** (Children respond.)



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

CHRIST CONNECTION

Did you know the angel Gabriel also appeared to others in the Bible? Over 500 years before Gabriel appeared to Zechariah, he appeared to Daniel. Both times, Gabriel came during a moment of worship and both times, Gabriel came with news of answered prayer.



FIND IT FIRST > Everyone, place your Bible closed on your lap. Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Daniel 9:21-22. **Let's see who can Find It First! Ready? Set? Go! Find it and highlight it.** Read Daniel 9:21-22.

Why did Gabriel go to Daniel? (To help him understand a message from God.) **Understanding more about God brings us closer to Him. Who has God sent to you to help you understand more about Him?** (Children respond.)

THE WAY *continued...*



Revelation 5:8

GOLDEN BOWL

Teacher Tip: Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, children in other nations, or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I will lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13) aloud together. Let's pray.

Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ____, ____, ____. Read names in Golden Bowl.

Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is an Advent Calendar. Use the calendar to help prepare for the celebration of Jesus' birthday. From now until Christmas, look at the calendar and do the activity listed each day. Invite your family to do the activities with you.

DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time? Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 48 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Join the Daily Way Challenge by returning your completed Daily Way.**

Teacher Tip: Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, let's make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of Gabriel talking to Zechariah in the temple. The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering for the teacher to display.

PRAYER REQUESTS: As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG: Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, "I Bring You Good News," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SNACK: PREPARED TO SNACK

Purpose: To enjoy a snack break while introducing the lesson and getting to know your students better.

Snack Suggestion: Fruit (easy to cut) or any snack the children can help prepare, hand sanitizer or soap and water with towels, plastic knives, optional: yogurt dip

Today, we discussed how God prepares us, or helps us get ready, to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. Let's work together to prepare our snack. As we work, let's talk about how you and your family prepare for Christmas.

Directions:

1. Help the children clean their hands with the hand sanitizer or soap and water.
2. Assign a job to each child: wash the fruit, cut the fruit with a plastic knife, stir the yogurt dip, pour drinks into cups, hand out plates and napkins, etc.
3. Ask a child to pray and thank God for the snack.
4. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **What are some of the special ways you and your family prepare for Christmas?**

GAME: ZECHARIAH'S SILENT CHARADES

Purpose: Children experience Zechariah's challenge of silence by acting out Bible stories in silence.

Supplies: Pencils, small pieces of paper

Directions:

1. Divide children into two teams.
2. Team 1 acts out a favorite Bible story without speaking.
3. Team 2 writes their guesses on paper and passes them to one another until they determine (without speaking) their group answer for the name of the Bible story. Have the team keep trying until they get the correct answer.
4. Have the teams switch roles and play again.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: LISTEN CLOSELY!

Purpose: Children will remember to stop and listen as they prepare for Jesus' birthday.

Supplies: Bag or box, collection of items to drop on the floor (e.g., pen, paper clip, plastic bottle, necklace, cup, pillow, bell, spoon, marbles, ping-pong ball)

Prepare: Conceal the items in the bag (or box) so the children can't see what they are.

God wants us to stop and listen to Him so He can prepare us for Jesus' birthday. Let's practice careful listening. I am going to drop an item on the floor. When you hear it, raise your hand if you have a guess as to what it is.

Directions:

1. Have the children turn their backs to you and sit very quietly. Ask them to close or cover their eyes so they can concentrate on listening.
2. Drop one of the objects on a hard surface.
3. Choose a child who has his or her hand raised to guess what the object is. Continue choosing children to guess until someone guesses correctly.
4. Show the object to the children.
5. Play again with another object. Play for as long as you like or until you run out of objects.

CRAFT: LISTEN TO THE BELLS ORNAMENT

Purpose: Children will prepare to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas by creating an ornament.

Supplies: Small bells (15 mm), red or green ribbon, pipe cleaners (red, green, white), scissors

Today, we learned God prepares us to celebrate Jesus' birthday on Christmas. Let's make an ornament with bells to help us remember to listen to God, just like Zechariah did. Each time the bells jingle, remember to stop, listen, and think about Jesus' birthday.

Directions:

1. Push the end of a pipe cleaner through the slot on the top of the three bells. Space them evenly on the pipe cleaner.
2. Take the pipe cleaner with the bells and another pipe cleaner of a different color and twist them together. Twist the ends together to make a circle.
3. Cut six inches of ribbon and tie it around the circle for a hanger.
4. Optional: Cut ten inches of ribbon to tie a decorative bow around the pipe cleaners at the bottom of the circle.
5. Hang the ornament in your home and give the bells a shake to help you remember to listen as God prepares you to celebrate Jesus' birthday.

Alternate Craft: Cut a bell shape from sturdy paper or craft foam. Decorate the bell. Punch a hole in the top of the shape and thread a loop of yarn or ribbon through the hole for the hanger.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;
He is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a

GAME: APPEARING ANGEL

Purpose: Children learn the meaning of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse: Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a.

Supplies: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker (or chalkboard and chalk or large piece of paper and pencil)

Prepare: Display the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster.

Directions:

1. From the list below, choose one of the phrases of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.
2. Draw one line for each letter in the phrase. Leave a blank space between each word.
3. Choose a volunteer to guess a letter.
 - If the letter is found in the phrase, write it on every blank where it belongs.
 - If it is not in the phrase, draw one part of an angel (Head, robe, hands, feet, eyes, nose, mouth, hair, etc.) The goal is to guess all the letters before completing the angel.
4. Choose another volunteer to guess a letter.
5. Continue playing until all the letters are revealed or until the angel drawing is complete.
6. Read the phrase to the class and use the description below to explain that part of the verse.
7. If time allows, play again using another phrase.

Phrase

"I bring you good news of great joy."
"That will be for all the people."
"Today in the town of David,"
"A Savior has been born to you."
"He is Christ the Lord."
"Glory to God in the highest."

Description

The angel brought an announcement from God.
The announcement was for everyone.
Both Jesus and King David were born in Bethlehem.
Jesus came to save the world.
Jesus is the Lord Himself, the Messiah.
The heavenly host praised God with these words.

GAME: MEMORY VERSE CIRCLE

Purpose: Children memorize the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player

Directions:

1. Practice the verse together a few times.
2. Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song and sing along.
3. Children sit on chairs or kneel in a circle.
4. Pick one child to stand and say the first word of the Bible Memory Verse, "I."
5. The next child stands and says "bring." Continue around the circle until the Bible Memory Verse has been completed.
6. Play as often as you like. Challenge the children to see how fast they can say the verse or try reversing directions.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

God of Wonders Part Two studies the miracles and stories of the Bible from Genesis through Joshua. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and what He has done.

Moses (Circa 1500 B.C.) What did Moses hear and see while he was tending his sheep?

(God's voice coming from a burning bush.) **What did God tell Moses to do?** (Tell Pharaoh and the Israelites God would bring the Israelites out of Egypt.) **What did God say His name was?** ("I Am.")

How many plagues did God send to make Pharaoh let God's people go? (Ten.) **What did Moses tell the people just before God parted the Red Sea?** ("God will fight for you. You only need to be still.") **What did God send from heaven to feed the Israelites in the wilderness?** (Manna and quail.) **What was the covenant God sent to the Israelites?** (The Ten Commandments.)

What is your favorite story from their Israelites times in the wilderness? (Children respond.)

Joshua (Circa 1450 B.C.) Who replaced Moses as the leader of the Israelites? (Joshua.) **How did Rahab help the two spies Joshua sent to Jericho?** (She hid them and helped them escape.)

What was God's plan for conquering Jericho? (The Israelites marched around the city with the ark for six days. On the seventh day, after a long trumpet blast, everyone shouted and the wall crumbled to the ground.)

John the Baptist (Circa 1 A.D.) Who did God send to prepare Zechariah for the special son he and his wife Elizabeth would have? (The angel Gabriel.) **What happened to Zechariah when he didn't believe Gabriel?** (He could not speak until the baby was born.) **Who was the baby?** (John the Baptist.) **John prepared people for the coming of Jesus, our Savior.**

How to create a Bible Timeline from Genesis through Joshua:

1. Print each scroll on sturdy paper.
2. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
3. Before each lesson, add the scroll for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below. Add the two Unit 10 cards for God of Wonders Advent: Lessons 48-52.
4. To review the Bible Timeline, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated scroll.

Genesis through Joshua: Creation > Adam and Eve > Cain and Abel > Noah (Circa 2350 B.C.) > Tower of Babel > Abram (Circa 2100 B.C.) > Hagar and Ishmael (Circa 2065 B.C.) > Abraham and Isaac (Circa 2050 B.C.) > Isaac and Rebekah > Jacob and Esau (Circa 1900 B.C.) > Joseph (Circa 1850 B.C.) > Moses (Circa 1500 B.C.) > Joshua (Circa 1450 B.C.)

Unit 10: John the Baptist (Circa 7-2 B.C.) > Jesus on Earth (Circa 2 B.C.-33 A.D.)