



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

Whisper Verse: "Jesus was born."

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"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 explore ways to 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.

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Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of the baby Jesus in the manger
		Whisper Verse	Sign language for "Jesus was born."
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org.	Advent wreath (See GOT TIME?) Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "His One and Only Son" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "It's Praise Time" "I Bring You Good News" "Give Thanks to the Lord" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "Away in a Manger," "Go Tell It On the Mountain," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "What Can I Give Him" Additional Song Collection Suggestions: Countdown Kids: 60 Christmas Carols For Kids! Great Christmas Songs For God's Kids
		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: Box with hay as a manger
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 manger (box filled with hay), stuffed animals (or pictures of stable 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
		Circle of Prayer	None
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10, Lesson 50 Color This Story: "Jesus Was Born in Bethlehem"
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Luke 2:1-7	None
	Up to 10	Game: Hop Around the World	Globe or picture of the world
	Up to 10	Game: Poster Pictogram	Five large sheets of paper, crayons or markers
		Craft: Advent Crown Wreath	See GOT TIME?
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about the events surrounding Jesus' birth

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Jesus was born

THE WELCOME

Optional: Decorate the room to be the field in Bethlehem. Use soft lighting or white Christmas lights as stars, stuffed animals, a box with straw, and a baby doll wrapped in cloth. As children arrive, greet each child by name and say, **"Welcome to Bethlehem!"**

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 the baby Jesus in the manger. **Let this sticker help you remember Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem. A manger is a container that holds food for stable animals. Today's Whisper Verse is "Jesus was born."** Teach the Whisper Verse in spoken language and in sign language below. **We call it the Whisper Verse so you can whisper it to others.***

SIGN LANGUAGE: "Jesus was born."

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

Each time we say today's Whisper Verse, let's say it with two hand motions:

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| "Jesus" | The middle finger of one hand touches the middle of the palm of the other hand, then the same is repeated using the middle finger of the other hand. This action indicates the wounds in Jesus' hands after He was nailed to the cross. |
| "(was) born." | Place left palm, facing the body, approximately six inches from chest. Move right hand and arm away from body, palm facing down, crossing under the left. |

Allow children to enjoy free play until everyone has arrived. **Let's sing the "Clean Up Song" as we put toys away before Praise Time.** Praise any child who helps. Allow several minutes for clean up.

"Clean Up Song": **Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!**
 Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!

Gather and seat children in Praise Time area.

***Today's Whisper Verse:** "Jesus was born," Matthew 2:1. The Whisper Verse is a tool to help the children learn a major point in the lesson. It is coupled with sign language or hand motions as a memory aid. The verse is not necessarily chosen from today's Bible story.



The King who came to us

THE WORSHIP

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 "It's Praise Time!" as children move to that designated area.

In preparation for the Lighting of the Christmas Candles, light the first two candles on the Advent Wreath.

It's Praise Time—our time to sing praise to the King who came to us. On Christmas Day, we will celebrate the day King Jesus was born. That is our Whisper Verse today: "Jesus was born." Let's try it together. Review Whisper Verse together: "Jesus was born." Include sign language.



Let's give our offering to King Jesus and celebrate the day He was born. Sing: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" 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."

Jesus came to teach us about God's love. God loves you very much. Sing: "His One and Only Son."



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.



Many years before King Jesus was born in Bethlehem, King David was born there. That's why the angel called Bethlehem the town of David. Let's sing about the good news that Jesus was born. Sing: "I Bring You Good News."



Born in Bethlehem

THE WORD

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

With my eyes on my teacher;

My mouth quiet as can be,

I will listen to hear,

How God loves you and me.

Point to eyes.

Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.

Cup hand around ear.

Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Last time, we learned Joseph named baby Jesus. Today, we will hear how baby Jesus was born in a manger in the town of Bethlehem. A manger is a container that holds food for stable animals.

Handle Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 2:7.

WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 2:1-7

Read the points below or retell the passage in your own words using the points below as a general guide. To illustrate the story, display a box with hay as a manger. Other visual options include the craft sample, Color This Story, or any related picture.

- 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.) Our Whisper Verse tells us the answer. Let's say it together: "Jesus was born." Include sign language or hand motions.



Where did Mary lay baby Jesus? (In a manger.) Let's find our answer in the Bible. Read Luke 2:7 from the teacher's Bible.



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 to make 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. Place a large star sticker at the top of the envelope flap.

Directions for children:

1. Color Mary.
2. Color baby Jesus.
3. Attach Mary to the left side of the open envelope.
4. Attach baby Jesus to the inside of the open envelope just above the pocket as if cradled in a manger.
5. Place hay inside the envelope pocket, under Jesus, for the manger.
6. Attach star stickers to the blue sky.

Craft Discussion:

- **Who was born in Bethlehem?** (Jesus.) **Our Whisper Verse tells us the answer. Let's say it with our motions right now!** Say the Whisper Verse together with hand motions.
- **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.**

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), stuffed animals (or pictures of stable 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.)
 - **Our Whisper Verse tells us the answer.** Children say and sign, "Jesus was born."
 - **Do you know where you were born?** (Children respond.)
 - **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 have sheep, cows, and donkeys around His manger?** (Yes.)



CIRCLE OF PRAYER

God made you and He cares for you. He loves to hear you pray with private words or words you say out loud. Let's fold our hands and close our eyes. As I lift up your name to God in heaven, I will lay my hand on your shoulder. Let's pray together.

Dear God, thank You for making us and loving us. We lift up to You a special prayer for ____, ____, ____ (say each name). We pray for our families and friends. Thank You for teaching us how to love one another. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

COMPLETED CRAFT: Take home your "Bethlehem Manger" craft. Tell someone Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY: Distribute Ponder, Pray & Play cards, if available. **Show this card to your family.** Talk about the way King Jesus was born.

COLOR THIS STORY: "Jesus Was Born in Bethlehem." Discuss the Bible story and play Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, "His One and Only Son," as children color.



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.** (Whisper Verse sign language.)
- **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 children stand in a circle around the world, then turn to face in one direction.
3. Say the Bible Memory Verse. On each word, children hop one time in the same direction.
4. Continue hopping around the world until you finish the Bible Memory Verse.
5. Have children turn around to play again, hopping on the other foot in the opposite direction.

GAME: POSTER PICTOGRAM

Purpose: Children will learn and understand the meaning of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Five large sheets of paper, crayons or markers

Prepare: Draw each one of the following symbols below on a separate sheet of paper.

- Cross (God)
- Heart (so loved)
- Globe (the world)
- Gift (that He gave)
- Baby in manger (His one and only Son.)

Optional: Each week of this unit, let the children decorate one of the posters.

Directions:

1. Mix the order of the symbols. Choose five children and give one symbol to each child.
2. **These pictures will help us learn our Bible Memory Verse. Let's put them in order. The first word in our Bible Memory Verse is "God." Which picture goes with the word "God"? (Cross.) Which picture goes with the word "loved"? (Heart.) Which picture goes with "world"? (Globe.) Which picture goes with the word "gave"? (Gift.) Which picture goes with the words "His one and only Son"? (Baby in manger.)**
3. Use the symbols to repeat the Bible Memory Verse together.

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. (To create an Advent Crown Wreath, use gold foil to make a crown. Place four candles in holders around the inner rim. Place a fifth candle as the "Christ Candle" in a holder in the center.) Read Luke 2:1-7. Talk about the birthplace of baby Jesus.

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 the story of Luke 2:1-7. Assign the roles of Mary, Joseph, and innkeepers to family members. Choose rooms in your home to be Bethlehem inns and pretend one area is a stable. Mary and Joseph knock on the doors of the inns. The innkeepers say, "No room in the inn." Everyone gathers in the stable to talk about his or her birthplace.

Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse: John 3:16a

"God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son."