



# Advent 3: Birthplace of the King

Lesson Aim: To develop the humble attitude of Christ.

## THE WORSHIP

**Who God Is:** The King Who Came to Us

## THE WORD

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

**Scripture Focus:** Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 2:1-11 **Key Verse:** Luke 2:7

**Christ Connection:** 1 Samuel 16:1

## THE WAY

**The Big Question:** Why do you think God chose a humble birthplace for Jesus?

## UNIT 10 FOCUS VERSE

"He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.  
 The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David, and He will reign over  
 Jacob's descendants forever; His kingdom will never end." Luke 1:32-33

Unit 10: The King Who Came to Us			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim*
48	Advent 1: Announcing the King, Luke 1:26-38	God sent the angel Gabriel to Mary to announce the coming of Jesus as King.	To trust God's plan for your life.
49	Advent 2: Naming the King, Matthew 1:17-23	God brought Jesus into the world through Abraham's descendants.	To know Jesus came to save His people from their sins.
50	Advent 3: Birthplace of the King, Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 2:1-11	God chose Bethlehem as the birthplace of King Jesus.	To develop the humble attitude of Christ.
51	Advent 4: Worshiping the King, Luke 2:8-20	God led the shepherds to see and worship King Jesus.	To understand worship as a lifestyle.
52	Recognizing the King: The Magi and Herod, Matthew 2:1-3, 7-15	God led the Magi to Jesus.	To recognize God's presence and leading.

**LEADER'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."

**Lesson Aims** are based on reflecting God's character as we participate in His actions to, for, and in the world.

**Take Home Elements:** The Journal Entry, Action Card, and Family Discussion Card may be sent home to encourage students to reflect on the lesson. The Journal Entry is an in-depth personal study. The Action Card is a visual reminder of the Bible story, God's action, and how we can join into that action. The Family Discussion Card gives parents and guardians a way to engage their students in what they are learning.

**Leader's Tip:** For larger gatherings, teach THE WELCOME, THE WORSHIP, and THE WORD in a large group setting and divide into small groups for discussion with THE WAY.



Getting started

# THE WELCOME

**Suggestion:** Choose a game that focuses on ideas such as Bethlehem, travel, stable, or manger.

## **ACTIVITY OPTION 1: SILENT BALL**

**Purpose:** To introduce the story of Jesus' birth.

**Supplies:** Ball

**The song "Silent Night" may give us the wrong idea of what Jesus' birth was like. Jesus was born in a stable for animals in the midst of a city busy with people who had returned to their hometown to be counted. Let's see how silent we can be in this game of "Silent Ball."**

### **Directions:**

1. Students spread out in the play area.
2. On your signal, students toss the ball to each other.
3. Students are eliminated from the game if they
  - Drop the ball.
  - Throw the ball badly (at the discretion of the leader or a judge).
  - Talk or make a sound.
4. Add additional rules to eliminate students more quickly.
  - Students must stand on one leg.
  - Students must throw with their nondominant hand.
  - After catching the ball, students must throw the ball before you count to 3.
5. The last student in the game wins.

## **ACTIVITY OPTION: NAME THAT CHRISTMAS TUNE**

**Purpose:** To introduce the story of Jesus' birth.

**Supplies:** 15-20 Christmas songs, dry erase board (or large paper) and marker

### **Directions:**

1. Divide the group into teams of 4-5 people.
2. Instruct teams to choose a name. Write the names on the white board or paper.
3. Begin playing a Christmas song. The first person to call out the correct title of the song wins a point for their team. Mark the point under the team's name on the board.
4. Repeat with each song.
5. The team with the most points wins.



The King who comes to us

## THE WORSHIP

**Advent Wreath:** An Advent wreath is recommended for the four weeks of Advent. You may choose to include a center Christ candle.

**Note to Leader:** The instructions below are suggestions only. Adapt this time of worship to suit your environment, resources, and cultural expression. Encourage students to broaden their view of corporate worship by including a variety of expressions such as group prayer, group praise, silent meditation, singing, listening to music, reading scripture, collecting an offering, drama, dance, visual arts, and/or a physical exploration of nature or neighborhoods.

**Ideas for Optional Visuals:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Today, we worship the King who came to us. The word 'advent' means coming. The Advent season helps us get our hearts ready to celebrate the coming of Jesus.**

### **Advent Candle Lighting Ceremony: The Bethlehem Candle**

*In preparation, light the first two candles on the Advent wreath.*

**One way we can celebrate Advent is by lighting the candles on an Advent wreath. Our Advent wreath is round; it has no end, just as God's love for us has no end.** (Optional: It is decorated with gold to remind us that Jesus is the King of kings.) **Each of the four candles on the Advent wreath stands for one of the four Sundays before Christmas.** (Optional: Our Advent wreath includes a center candle, the Christ candle which is lit Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.)

**Let's light the third candle of Advent: The Bethlehem Candle. Jesus left His heavenly throne and came to us as a baby born in the little town of Bethlehem. Instead of choosing a famous city like Jerusalem, God chose the town of Bethlehem as His birthplace. Instead of a golden crib, God chose a lowly manger. Jesus truly gave up everything He had to come to earth as a baby for us.** Choose a student to light the third candle now.

Read Unit 10 Focus Verse: Luke 1:32-33.



Sing worship songs that focus on Jesus as the King Who comes to us.



Read Luke 2:7.



Invite students to offer sentences of praise to God by completing the following sentence:  
**"Lord, we worship You for \_\_\_\_\_."**



A humble birthplace

## THE WORD Presentation

**Note to Leader:** Adapt this segment to your setting (Sunday School class, youth group, multi-age gathering, youth camp, retreat, etc.). In some settings, you may choose to have a student read the scripture aloud, and then have the leader, in his or her own words, briefly communicate the Teaching Points, the Christ Connection, and the Big Question. In other settings, a teacher, pastor, or other experienced speaker may present a lecture or extended message that includes those same elements.

### Ideas for Optional Visuals:

You may choose to include an object lesson, video clip, drama, dance, song, or work of art to illustrate the teaching points.

Option 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Option 2: \_\_\_\_\_



## TEACHING POINTS

Consider current culture and influences impacting your students, and adjust the teaching accordingly.

*Read the suggested scripture and communicate each of the points noted.*

Last time, we learned an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph to name the baby Jesus because He would save His people from their sins. (Jesus is the Greek form of the name Joshua, which means "the Lord saves.") Today's story takes place while Mary was pregnant.

The leader or a student reads Luke 2:1-7.

- The Roman government declared everyone under their rule must go to their hometown to be counted. Because Joseph's family was from Bethlehem, Mary and Joseph had to travel to Bethlehem to be counted.
- The Bible doesn't tell us how Mary and Joseph traveled or how long a journey it was. It was about 70 miles from Nazareth to Bethlehem and it would have taken 3-7 days to walk or ride a donkey. Mary would have had to travel slowly because she was pregnant.
- Jesus' birth most likely did not happen the way Joseph and Mary would have expected. Mary may have expected to birth her baby boy in her home under the care of women experienced with childbirth. She may have expected to wrap him in a clean, soft blanket and lay him in a comfortable soft place for sleeping. Joseph was a carpenter. He may have expected to build a place for baby Jesus to sleep.
- Because Mary and Joseph knew their baby was God's Son, they may have expected Him to be born in a special place or, at the very least, in a clean and comfortable room. Instead, Jesus' birthplace was one the humblest imaginable.
- As God's Son, Jesus deserved royal treatment, but instead God chose a humble birth and a humble lifestyle for His own Son.
- Jesus gave up everything when He left His throne in heaven and came to earth to save us. His humble birthplace reminds us that every place and every person in the world is special and important to Jesus. None of us are more deserving than others of God's love, blessings, or salvation. He came to save us all.

# THE WORD Presentation *continued*

- His humble birth reminds us that God includes difficult situations and humble surroundings in His good plan for the world.

The leader or a student reads Philippians 2:1-11.

- Jesus' mindset was that of a humble servant. A humble attitude is one in which we have no expectation of special treatment or unearned privileges. It is one in which we love others and treat them as more important than ourselves.
- The opposite of a humble attitude is an attitude of self-entitlement. Self-entitlement means you put yourself first, see yourself as more important and deserving of unearned privileges. When people with a sense of entitlement are given equal treatment, they sometimes feel as if they are being treated unfairly or unjustly because they expect to be treated better than others who they see as less important than themselves.
- Putting God and His plan for our lives first, develops in us a humble attitude, the mindset of Jesus. A humble attitude not only pleases God, but it also points others to His Son, who humbly served and loved others more than His own self.



Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

## **CHRIST CONNECTION**

**In the whole story of God, what's the connection between this New Testament story and the Old Testament?**

- God chose a stable in Bethlehem as the humble birthplace of the King of heaven and earth. One thousand years before Jesus was born, God chose another child from Bethlehem to be the king of Israel. He sent Samuel to find this king who would replace King Saul.

The leader or a student reads aloud 1 Samuel 16:1.

- Jesse and his sons were born in Bethlehem. David was one of those sons and he was the one God chose as king (1 Samuel 16:10-13).
- Joseph was a descendant of King David. About 1,000 years passed from David to Joseph. Then, Joseph married Mary who became the mother of Jesus.
- Jesus' birth fulfilled God's promise to David that the Messiah would be his descendant (2 Samuel 7:12-13).



## **THE BIG QUESTION**

Introduce and elaborate on this question. Students will answer it in their discussion group.

**Why do you think God chose a humble birthplace for Jesus?**



## THE WAY Discussion



**GETTING STARTED** Display and review the Discussion Group Covenant below:

**We will include everyone here, treating one another with respect and kindness.  
We will encourage everyone here to express their thoughts and opposing views.**

Every student shares his or her best experience or greatest challenge of the past week.



### READ IT AGAIN

Read Luke 2:1-7 and Philippians 2:1-11 silently or aloud.

**What do you think the trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem was like for Joseph and Mary?**

**What happened when they arrived in Bethlehem?**



**THE BIG QUESTION** Invite students to share their answers.

**Why do you think God chose a humble birthplace for Jesus?**



**TAKE ACTION** Lead students in a discussion using the questions below.

**How do you think Mary felt when she learned she had to travel to Bethlehem while she was pregnant?**

**How do you think she felt when she realized her baby would be born in a stable?**

**Difficult situations may surprise us if we feel we deserve only good things. What unexpected difficult situation did you experience this year?**

**When in a difficult situation, how might your attitude improve if you remember that what is happening to you is somehow part of God's good plan for the world?**

Ask each student to complete this sentence: **God calls us to have a humble attitude SO THAT others might \_\_\_\_\_.**



**PRAY** Share prayer requests and answered prayers.

Have students pray with partners, or have the whole group pray together.



**FINAL FIVE MINUTES** When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

Give each student Action Card #50 and Journal Entry #50. **Take home today's Action Card as a reminder of how we can join in what God is doing. Use the Journal Entry as your personal devotional study. Complete your Journal Entries at home and keep them together in a notebook or in your Bible.** Optional: Provide parent or guardian with Family Discussion Card #50.

# KINGS & KINGDOMS

## JOURNAL ENTRY #50

**Advent 3: Birthplace of the King**  
**Luke 2:1-7; Philippians 2:1-11**

### WHAT DOES IT SAY?

- **Pray!!!** Ask the Holy Spirit to show you what He wants you to learn from this passage.
- **Read Luke 2:1-7 and Philippians 2:1-11.**
- What caused Joseph and Mary to have to travel to Bethlehem?
- What difficult circumstances did they find when they arrived in Bethlehem?

### WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

- Why do you think God chose such a humble birthplace for His Son?

- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they realized it was time for the baby to be born?
- Describe in your own words the humble attitude of Jesus explained in Philippians 2:1-11.

### WHAT CAN I DO?

- The opposite of a humble attitude is one of self-entitlement. It means you think of yourself as more important than others and deserving of unearned privileges. Looking over the past year, would others say your words and actions reveal a humble attitude or an attitude of self-entitlement?
- If you are not pleased with your attitude, ask God to help you develop a more humble attitude, like Jesus.
- What unexpected difficult situation did you experience this year?
- How might your attitude improve if you remember the difficult situations you face are somehow part of God's good plan?

Action Card #50/K&K

## ADVENT 3: BIRTHPLACE OF THE KING

LUKE 2:1-7; PHILIPPIANS 2:1-11

JESUS WAS BORN IN A **HUMBLE** MANGER IN THE LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM.

WE ARE CALLED TO HAVE A **HUMBLE** ATTITUDE.

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