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Jesus Is Born!

Scripture: Luke 2:1-20

Theme: God sent His Son as a baby to save the world

4th-6th Grade (Ages 9-11)

Free curriculum for small and rural churches

Lesson Overview

Lesson Overview: "Jesus Is Born!" (Luke 2:1-20 , God's Big Gift to Us) Introduction (Engage & Connect): "Can you imagine the biggest surprise you've ever had? Maybe a birthday present, a surprise party, or even a miracle, like finding treasure you didn't know existed? Today, we'll learn about the greatest surprise God ever gave us, the birth of Jesus! His arrival wasn't just a baby; it was a promise that God loves us so much He sent His Son to be our Savior. Just like we celebrate special birthdays, we should celebrate Jesus' birthday too!" --- Key Points (Teach & Explore): Jesus' birth was no ordinary miracle, it was God's way of showing His love for the whole world. Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem (a tiny town in Israel) because of a royal order, and there, in a manger (a feeding trough), God chose to be born as a baby. The angels didn't just tell the shepherds, "Peace on Earth!", they said it again (Luke 2:14), because God's peace is so powerful it repeats itself! Even animals like cows and oxen knew something special was happening. And the shepherds didn't just believe, they ran to see Jesus! God often asks us to take risks for Him, even when it feels scary (like telling someone we care). Why It Matters: Jesus wasn't just born for His followers, He came for all of us. Think about why you give gifts to family or friends: You want to help them feel loved and cared for. Jesus' birth was the first step in making sure everyone gets God's love. When we celebrate His birthday, we're saying, "Jesus, thank You for coming to save us!" Just like we celebrate Christmas, we can take time to pray or share kindness in His name. --- Deeper Questions (Discuss & Reflect): 1. "Why do you think God chose a baby for Jesus? How is that different from how we usually think of 'greatness'?" 2. "The shepherds left their sheep to see Jesus. What's something you'd be willing to leave behind to share the news about Jesus?" 3. "How can we 'celebrate Jesus' in our everyday lives, not just on Christmas?" --- Personal Application (Apply & Respond): "This week, let's imagine we're shepherds! How can we 'run to share the news' of Jesus' love? Maybe it's telling a friend about God's gift to us, drawing a picture to give to someone, or simply praying for someone who needs hope. Jesus wasn't just a baby, He was God's love letter to the world. Let's open it and respond with kindness, just like He did!" --- Closing (Encourage & Send Away): "As we wrap up, let's remember: Jesus' birth is a reminder that God is always with us, even in the quiet moments. Just like Mary and Joseph, we can trust that God has a plan, and His best gift is love. Now, let's give thanks

for Jesus' birthday by sharing something kind today. And remember: No matter what happens in your life, you're never alone, Jesus is always there, waiting to be your biggest surprise!" --- Volunteer Tips: - Activities: Use a "manger scene" craft or a simple "Jesus' Birthday" card exchange. - Music: Play soft carols or read a dramatic reading of Luke 2:10-20 with angel voices. - Discussion: End with a prayer asking God to help students "run to share" His love this week!

Optional reflection: children can draw a picture of Jesus helping their friends, then share one way they can help someone else this week. This extra activity supports the lesson's theme and gives teachers a simple, low-prep option for extending the discussion.

Bible Story

Sunday School Lesson: "Jesus Is Born!" (Based on Luke 2:1-20)

Long ago, in the small town of Bethlehem, a special event was about to happen, the birth of a child named Jesus. The story starts with a Roman emperor named Caesar Augustus, who decided everyone in the world should be counted (called a census). This meant everyone had to go home to their hometown to register. Mary, Jesus' mother, was pregnant with her first child, so she and Joseph traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Even though it was crowded, God had a plan.

When Mary and Joseph arrived in Bethlehem, they couldn't find a place to stay in the inn (a big house where travelers rested). Instead, they settled in a stable, a place where animals were kept. There, Mary gave birth to Jesus in a manger, a feeding trough made of wood. That night, an angel appeared to some shepherds, who were watching their flocks outside. The angel told them, "Don't be afraid! I have good news: Jesus, the Savior of the world, has been born!" The shepherds were so excited that they rushed to see the baby for themselves.

When Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were finally safe, they traveled to Egypt for a time because King Herod wanted to kill Jesus. But God protected them, and after Herod died, they returned home to Nazareth, where Jesus grew up. Even though Jesus was just a baby, he was the Son of God, sent to save the world.

Reflection Questions: 1. Why did Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem? 2. Why were the shepherds afraid at first? What changed? 3. How do you think Jesus' family felt when they fled to Egypt?

Personal Application: This story reminds us that God always has a plan, even in the smallest moments. Jesus was born in a humble place, but he became the greatest gift the world could ever receive. Just like the shepherds, we can trust that God knows what's best and will keep us safe.

Why This Matters: Jesus' birth isn't just a long-ago story, it's the beginning of something amazing! He came to love and save us, just like he did the shepherds. Today, we can thank God for sending his Son, and we can share his love with others.

--- Would you like any adjustments to better fit your class?

Key Verse

Luke 2:11 , 'Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord.'

A Special Message from Heaven The Bible tells us a very exciting story about a baby who was born long ago. In the town of Bethlehem, which was once the capital of a king named David, a miracle happened! A baby named Jesus was born, and angels sang, "Today in this town, God has sent His greatest gift, a Savior!" This baby was no ordinary child. He was the Messiah, which means the special Leader God had promised to send to save His people. Why was this such a big deal? Long ago, many people in Israel were waiting for a Savior because they knew they needed help. They had lived in hard times, and sometimes they felt lost or scared. But God promised that one day, a baby born in David's town would be the one to help them. Even though the baby was small at first, He was already the King of heaven and earth! Imagine being a shepherd or a farmer watching over the animals at

night. That's how Mary and Joseph probably felt when they heard angels telling them to go to Bethlehem. The angels said, "Don't be afraid! This baby is God's gift to the world!" Even though it was winter and cold, the stars above shined extra bright, showing that something amazing was happening. God was showing everyone that He loved His people so much that He chose to come as a baby to help them. This verse also reminds us that God always keeps His promises. Even when things seem impossible, like a baby being born to save the whole world, God made it happen. He sent His Son to be our Friend and Leader, showing us how much He cares. Do you think you could be kind and helpful, just like Jesus, to someone who needs a little kindness today? Deep Questions to Think About: 1. If you could ask God one question about how He wants you to use your time and talents, what would it be? 2. How can you show kindness to someone who feels lonely or scared, just like Jesus did for us? 3. Why do you think God chose to come as a baby instead of a big, strong leader right away? Personal Application: Jesus didn't just come to be a baby, He came to be our best Friend and Teacher. The next time you feel small or unsure, remember that God loves you and has a plan for you too. You don't have to be perfect to follow Him; you just need to trust that He'll guide you. Can you think of one small way this week to show love or kindness, like Jesus did?

Activities

Activity 1:

Students create a simple map of Jesus' journey from Mary's home in Nazareth to Bethlehem, including key stops like Jerusalem and the stable. They'll mark important events and reflect on God's plan for His birth.

1. Set Up the Scene: Explain that Jesus was born in a way that fulfilled God's promise centuries earlier (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6). Ask: "Why do you think God chose this time and place for Jesus to be born?"
2. Draw the Route: Divide the paper into sections. Have students draw Mary's path from Nazareth to Bethlehem, labeling key places:
 3. Her home in Nazareth (with a small drawing of a house or tree)
 4. The road to Bethlehem (with a simple road or path)
 5. The inn (where they found no room, but God provided a stable)
 6. The stable (with a sketch of animals and the manger).
7. Add the Details: Have students add the shepherds' journey (Luke 2:8, 14) by drawing them running to see baby Jesus. Ask: "How do you think the shepherds felt when they saw Jesus? What does this tell us about how God surprises us?"
8. Personal Application: Wrap up with a discussion: "Mary and Joseph had to travel far at night. How do you think they felt? What would have been the hardest part of their journey? How can we trust God, like Mary did, when things seem confusing?"

Activity 2:

Students cut out and arrange printed or hand-drawn elements (animals, stars, shepherds) to form a collage of the stable scene, then reflect on how God's love was visible in that simple moment.

1. Preview the Printables: Provide printed images of:
 2. A simple manger and animals (e.g., cow, donkey, ox)
 3. Shepherds in their nightshirts (draw them if no prints are available)
 4. A bright star (to symbolize the angel's announcement).
5. These can be copied or drawn on paper and cut into small pieces.
6. Collage the Scene: In groups of 3, 5, students arrange their cutouts on a piece of paper to show the stable. They can glue the animals around the manger and place the star at the top. Ask: "Why do you think God chose a stable instead of a rich man's house? What does this say about who God cares for?"

7. Discuss the Colors: Talk about the contrast of the dark stable with the star's light. Ask: "How can we share God's light in our own lives, even in tough places?"
8. Personal Connection: Have each student write or draw one way they've trusted God like Mary did in hard times. Encourage them to share one thing they learned about God's love from Jesus' birth. For example: "God chose a lowly stable because He loves us deeply, just like He loves you!"
9. Note for Both Activities:
10. For deeper discussion, use the Bible verse "All things work together for good to those who love God" (Romans 8:28) to tie in perseverance.
11. End with a prayer, inviting students to pray for someone they know who might need God's comforting presence, like the shepherds did!

Discussion Questions

- Here are four open-ended discussion questions for upper elementary students (ages 9, 11) based on the story of Jesus' birth (Luke 2:1, 20). These questions encourage reflection, personal connection, and deeper thinking about how this miraculous event still impacts their lives today.
- 1. How Did the Birth of Jesus Change Everything?
 - When Jesus was born, the world was completely different, no one could have predicted the kind of life he would lead. He grew up in a small town, worked as a carpenter, and then started doing amazing things for people. What do you think made his life so special? How do you think his story changed the way people treated each other, especially those who were often left out or forgotten?
 - Think about how you treat others in your school or community. How can the idea that Jesus came to help people (even when no one expected it) inspire you to be kind or brave in your own life?
- 2. What Was It Like for Mary and Joseph?
 - Imagine being pregnant and married when you were very young, with no one knowing you were expecting a baby. Mary and Joseph had to deal with people's assumptions, possible danger, and big decisions, like deciding where to live and what to do when they found out Jesus was born. How do you think they felt inside? What would have been some of the hardest parts for them?
 - Now think about times when you've felt different or faced challenges where others might have judged you. How did you handle it? What can you learn from Mary and Joseph about trusting God, even when things seem scary?
- 3. Why Did the Shepherds Visit Jesus?
 - The shepherds weren't important people, they were the ones who took care of the animals and worked outside in the cold. But God chose them to tell them about Jesus' birth! Why do you think God chose shepherds? What does this teach us about how God uses ordinary people to do extraordinary things?
 - Think about your own life, have you ever felt like you're "just a kid" and not special? How can you be like the shepherds and share kindness or even good news with someone else, even if they seem unimportant?
- 4. How Has Jesus' Birth Changed Your Life?
 - Years later, people still celebrate Christmas because of Jesus' birth. But what does really matter about Jesus? Some people say he taught us to love, others say he gave us hope, and still others say he changed history forever. How do you think his birth has impacted you personally?
 - Think about a time when you felt afraid, alone, or like you didn't belong. How did Jesus' story make you feel? How can you remember that he was born for you, to show you he cares and wants to help? What will you do with that truth today?
 - These questions encourage students to reflect on the story's deeper meaning, consider their own experiences, and apply biblical truths to their lives.

Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus: A Thankful Heart for Jesus' Arrival Leader begins by closing eyes or placing hands on hearts: "Dear Heavenly Father, today we celebrate the greatest gift of all, Jesus, born in love for us! He came into our world not just as a baby, but as our Savior, showing us how to love even when it's hard. Help us to remember, like the shepherds and wise men, that His birth means we can trust You with our hearts, our worries, and our joy. Show us how to share His light with others, especially this Christmas season. Amen!" --- *Why This Works for Upper Elementary:* - *Connection to Scripture:* References Luke 2 (shepherds, manger, angels) without being too literal for kids. - *Emotional Tie:* "Greatest gift" taps into their own Christmas memories while pointing to God's ultimate love. - *Call to Action:* "Share His light" invites them to reflect on how they can be kind or kind-hearted (e.g., writing thank-you notes, helping others). --- *Deeper Questions for Reflection* (Teacher can ask after prayer): 1. "What's something special about baby Jesus that makes you want to give Him our thanks?" - *Application:* "How can you 'give Jesus your thanks' today, like telling someone you're glad they're in your life?" 2. "The shepherds ran to tell others! What's a 'good news' story you could share this week?" - *Application:* "Even small things count, like sharing a smile or helping a friend." 3. "When was the last time you felt God's love? How did that change how you saw others?" - *Application:* "Can we try to notice God's love in small ways this week?" --- *Personal Application for Kids:* "This Christmas, imagine you found a baby in a manger... would you feel excited to tell your friends? Jesus is our friend who came to be near us! Let's ask Him to help us trust Him more, like the shepherds did. We can start by saying, 'Thank You, God, for loving us!' in our hearts every day." --- *Why This Extends Beyond the Lesson:* - *Spiritual Growth:* Helps kids connect Jesus' birth to their own relationships with God. - *Community Focus:* Encourages them to see Christmas as a time to reach out, not just receive. - *Simple Commitment:* Ends with a prayer-like response ("Thank You") to make it interactive. --- *Optional Adaptation for Class Prayer:* "Let's all close our eyes and imagine we're there that night... hearing the angels sing, seeing the stars, and feeling the love of the shepherds. Today, let's choose to be like those first believers, open to God's surprises and ready to share His joy!" (Then lead in a group response to the prayer above.)

>> Missions Spotlight

The shepherds were the first to hear about Jesus' birth. Today, nomadic and herding peoples around the world , from the Maasai in East Africa to the Mongolian herders in Central Asia , connect deeply with the shepherd story. The Good Shepherd came for ALL His sheep.

-> To the Cross

Jesus was born in a stable, laid in a feeding trough. The Creator of the universe came as a helpless baby. Why? So He could grow up and go to the cross to save us. The manger and the cross are connected , He was born to die for us.