



The King Is Born

Matthew 1:1–25



LESSON GOAL

Students will see God's grace in human history through the birth of the Son of God.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God is sovereign and shows grace to sinful men.
- Jesus is both God and man.
- Joseph showed faith when he obeyed God's commands.
- Jesus came to save people from their sins.

KEY VERSE

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

APPLICATION

- Believe that God's Word is true.
- Obey your authorities as Joseph obeyed the angel.
- Thank God that He sent Jesus to live a perfect life and die for sinful men.

NEXT WEEK

The King Is Adored
Read Matthew 2:1–12.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

The Purpose

Matthew has been described as a book written *by* a Jew, *to* Jews, *about* a Jew who was the *King* of the Jews. Matthew (who was also known as Levi) was a Jewish tax collector who left his sinful life to follow Jesus and become one of His 12 disciples (Matt. 9:9; Mark 2:14). His aim in writing this Gospel was to demonstrate that Jesus is the promised Messiah and King, the fulfillment of the Jewish Scriptures, which spoke of Him. In this book, Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah who was revealed, was rejected, and will return.

Of the New Testament books, Matthew (along with James and Hebrews) has some of the strongest Jewish Old Testament emphases, and only Romans has more Old Testament quotes than Matthew. This distinct Old Testament focus is apparent in Matthew’s opening chapter, where he quotes Old Testament prophecy (Matt. 1:22–23), calls Jesus “the Messiah, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham” (1:1), and traces His lineage through Abraham, the father of the Jews (1:2–6), as well as through David’s kingly line (1:6–11), from which Mary’s husband, Joseph, also descended. The angel reminded Joseph of his ancestry when explaining God’s plan to him (1:20). In contrast, Luke’s genealogy (Luke 3:23–38), with its Gentile emphasis, traces Mary’s lineage back past Abraham all the way to Adam, the father of all races.

In Matthew’s Gospel, Christ comes as “the King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2), but not in the sense of an earthly, temporal monarch. The Jews had been conquered by many nations and rulers, and they were looking for a Messiah to deliver them physically and politically. However, Matthew more than any biblical writer emphasizes “the Kingdom of heaven.” In fact, he uses this phrase 32 times, while it never appears anywhere else in the Bible. The Jews expected a royal ruler over Jerusalem—not a lowly, manger-born baby from a low-income Galilean family in the carpentry trade. Many expected the Messiah to ride in with his horse and army to conquer the Romans, but, instead, Matthew presents the Messiah-King as riding humbly on a donkey and teaching spiritual repentance rather than political revolution.

Why a Genealogy?

Knowing one’s “roots,” family tree, and origins is interesting, and many people have studied these things to gain perspective on who they are and where they have come from. To the Jews, tracing ancestry and heritage was not just interesting, but also extremely important, much more important than it is in our culture today. Although Joseph was not Jesus’ biological father, he was His legal father in the eyes of Jewish law. In keeping with the book’s purpose, the genealogy in Matthew 1 shows that Jesus had full Messianic legal and lineage credentials. The Jews knew that God had promised Abraham and David that the Messiah would be their descendant, and

Additional Reference Materials

God in a Manger by John MacArthur

Matthew: MacArthur New Testament Commentary

Matthew demonstrates that Jesus qualified in every respect. It was normal in that day to list names of only the most significant Jewish males when tracing one's family. But in Matthew's account there are several unusual exceptions. There is the Canaanite woman Tamar, who was guilty of immorality (Matt. 1:3; Gen. 38), as well as Bathsheba, Uriah's wife (Matt 1:6; 2 Sam. 12), whom God used to continue the dynasty through Solomon despite David's adultery and murder of Uriah. The genealogy also includes Rahab and Ruth (1:5), who were not only women, but also Gentiles. The former was a harlot from Jericho and was saved from destruction by her faith (Josh. 2), and the latter was a Moabite woman loved by Boaz, her "kinsman redeemer" (Ruth 1–4). Even the best of men in this list, Abraham and David, were guilty of serious sin against God and desperately needed a perfect Savior to intervene. This is no dull list of names; it is a testimony to God's grace and faithfulness in using sinful people to accomplish His plan for the birth of the Messiah, who would save His people from their sins.

Betrothal

In Jewish life and law, betrothal was a formal ceremony and celebration in which a contract was signed in front of witnesses, payment was made to the bride's father, gifts were given, wills were drafted regarding property and possessions in the event of death, and the couple were considered husband and wife. Unlike modern engagement, betrothal could be ended only by divorce (Matt. 1:18–19; Deut. 24:1) or death, which was the penalty for adultery (Deut. 22:23–24). In every legal sense, a betrothed couple already functioned as husband and wife, although there was no physical union until the actual wedding ceremony, which could be up to a year later. Joseph probably was between 17 and 20 years old, and Mary between 12 and 16, since these were the normal ages at which couples were betrothed.

The Virgin Birth

Isaiah 7:14 prophesied Messiah's virgin birth, and Matthew's language makes it clear that Mary was a virgin who had never been intimate with any man. Her pregnancy was a miracle with no human explanation. Jesus truly was "God with us" (the meaning of the name Immanuel; God in human form). Mary was a sinner who needed a Savior like everyone else (Luke 1:47). God blessed her with the privilege of being Christ's earthly mother, while God alone was His Father. This unique conception was necessary for a Messiah who would be fully God and fully man, yet without sin. Many believe that Genesis 3:15 refers to Christ, the seed (singular) of a woman rather than a man, and the One who would crush Satan. Mary remained pure until after her wedding ceremony and after Jesus was born, but she did not remain a virgin all her life, as some teach. In fact, Mary and Joseph had a number of other children, including James and Jude, who later would believe and write the New Testament books named after them (Matt. 13:55; Mark 3:31–35, etc.).

Pregnancy outside of marriage would make any Jewish woman the subject of much rumor and scandalous ridicule. In fact, critics later would accuse Jesus of being a Samaritan (John 8:38), born from fornication (8:41), or even the son of a Roman soldier. The Gospels reveal Mary and Joseph's strong faith in God when probably few, if any, others believed the truth and most looked down on them.

Joseph was an honorable and righteous man and was obedient to the angel, even though his message may have been hard to understand or believe. Normally, a Jewish father and mother would carefully choose a name for their child, as names in their culture were very significant. Although Immanuel was one of many names Jesus would be called, the angel told Joseph and Mary to give Him the name "Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins" (1:21). Jesus is the Greek form of the

Hebrew name Joshua. Both mean “Yahweh saves” or “Jehovah will save.” This is the culmination of chapter 1 and again shows the purpose of Matthew’s Gospel and the reason Jesus came. In Him, God was with us (John 1:14) to save sinners who repent and trust in Christ alone, who is the only one through whom people can be saved (Acts 4:12).

Note: Although Jesus’ virgin birth is a foundational truth, teachers should exercise sensitivity and discretion when presenting it to students.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Meaningful Names

Bring a baby-name book to class. Introduce the key verse, and emphasize the meaning of Jesus’ name. Then, as a class or in small groups, discuss the following questions:

Do you know how your mother and father decided on your name when you were born? *Allow two or three students to answer.*

Does anyone know how Jewish parents named their children around the time that Jesus was born? *Answer: the parents chose a name very carefully because a name was very significant in their culture.*

My first name is _____. Does anyone know what my name means? *Give your name and its meaning.*

Would anyone like to find out what their name means? *Use the baby book to look up the students’ names. Share the meanings with the class.*

Does anyone know what the name Jesus means? *Tell the students, “I’ll give you a hint: the meaning is found in Matthew 1:21.” Read the verse out loud.*

Explain the information on Jesus’ name from the Bible Background section.



Who’s in Your Family?

Bring in photos of your family members—your parents, grandparents, and even great-grandparents—and tell the students some stories about them. Ask the students about their families. How far back can they trace their family line? You could arrange your photos on a paper tree that you cut out before class time. Place the tree on the wall so the students can see how your lineage led to your birth. Tell the students that in today’s lesson, they will learn about the family tree and lineage of someone much more special than any of us.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Our lesson today is from the book of Matthew. A man named Matthew wrote this book telling us about Jesus’ life. Matthew had led a very sinful life, but when he met Jesus, he decided to follow Him because he knew that Jesus could save him from his sin. Matthew was a close friend of Jesus and knew all about His life. He knew that Mary was Jesus’ mother and that she had married a man named Joseph. He also knew that Jesus was the King of the Jews and the Messiah.

God had promised hundreds of years ago that He would send the Messiah, and the Jews were waiting for this promise to be fulfilled. In order to prove that Jesus was the Messiah, Matthew tells us about Joseph’s lineage. A lineage tells about a person’s family. Joseph’s lineage tells us who his father, grandfather, great-grandfather, great-great grandfather were, and so on. Matthew goes so far back in Joseph’s family that we learn that Joseph is one of Abraham’s relatives. This is important because the Old Testament said that Jesus would come from Abraham’s family, and Matthew shows that He did. The lineage also reminds us that all the men and women in Joseph’s lineage were sinful. Jesus did not have a family of perfect people. He had a family of people who needed to be saved from their sin, just like everyone else in the world. This shows us that God will use sinful people, like you and me, as part of His plan to bring salvation to the world.

After telling us about Joseph’s lineage, Matthew tells us about Jesus’ birth. Jesus’ birth was unique because He is the only person who ever has been born without having an earthly father. Jesus’ Father is God, and His mother was Mary. This proves that Jesus is fully God and fully man. He was sent to the earth to save people from their sins. God chose Joseph and Mary to raise and take care of Jesus while He was a child because they were faithful and obedient to His Word.

Before Joseph married Mary, he learned that she was pregnant. He knew that he was not the father of this baby and planned to end his relationship with Mary. Because he was a righteous man, he decided that he would do so in secret. He continued to think about what he should do, and he fell asleep. While he was sleeping, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. The angel said to him, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:20–21). This was a miracle! Mary was pregnant with the Son of God, who was coming to earth to save people from their sins. This was the long-awaited King and Messiah. Joseph woke up and did as the angel had commanded him. He believed the angel and took Mary as his wife. Although they were married, they did not live together as husband and wife until after Jesus was born.

Not many people believed Mary and Joseph when they said that Mary was preg-

nant with God's Son. It did sound very strange! But Mary and Joseph trusted God. When Mary gave birth to the baby, Joseph named him Jesus, as the angel of the Lord had commanded. The name Jesus means "the Lord saves," and this exactly describes Jesus. He is the Lord, and those who believe in Him and repent of their sin will be saved from hell and will live with Him in heaven. God was gracious to send Jesus to be the Savior. We should thank Him for His grace and faithfulness.



Lesson Questions

Why did Matthew write his Gospel?

Matthew wrote to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah and King, the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Who appeared to Joseph in a dream?

An angel of the Lord.

Did Joseph obey God and take Mary as his wife?

Yes.

What was unique about Jesus' birth?

Jesus was born of Mary, so He was fully man, but God was His father, so He was fully God.

What was special about Jesus' name?

The name Jesus means "the Lord saves."

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.

Praise and Worship

ABCDEFG

Away in a Manger

Praise the Name of Jesus

Silent Night

The B-I-B-L-E

Trust and Obey



J-E-S-U-S

(The following hand motions are the American Sign Language alphabet letters.)

J is Jehovah who saves us from sin.

(Trace a "j" with pinky finger, keeping other fingers tucked in.)

E is eternal; there's no one like Him.

(Bend all four fingers to palm, holding thumb underneath fingers.)

S is the Son, who came down from above.

(Bend all four fingers to palm, with thumb closed over fingers.)

U the unspeakable gift of His love.

(Hold up ring and index fingers side by side, bending other fingers to palm, thumb on top.)

S is the Savior; our debt He did pay.

(Bend all four fingers to palm, with thumb closed over fingers.)

He is the life and the truth and the way.

(Point upward.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



“Joseph Obeys God”

Materials: copies of the “Joseph Obeys God” craft page, crayons

Directions: Give the students each a copy of the craft page, and have them fold inward along the first dotted line, outward along the second dotted line, and inward along the third dotted line. When reading Matthew 1:18–19, leave the picture folded so that only Joseph turning away from Mary is visible. After reading the angel’s announcement, flip the picture of Joseph over, hiding the first verse and showing the second. Joseph now is being obedient to the angel and taking Mary as his wife.



“Unspeakable Gift”

Materials: Christmas wrapping paper, scissors, glue, copies of the “Unspeakable Gift” craft page



“Christmas Family Tree”

Materials: copies of the “Christmas Family Tree” craft page, pencils, crayons

Directions: Give the students each a copy of the craft pages, and have them connect the dots to form a Christmas tree shape. The dots are numbered and identified with each generation from Abraham to Jesus, with Jesus being the top dot on the star. After they connect the dots, the students can color their pictures.



“Family Portraits”

Materials: copies of the “Family Portraits” craft page, pencils, crayons

Directions: Give each student a copy of the craft page, and have him draw his family in one picture frame and Jesus’ family in the other. Talk about Jesus’ being the Son of God.



“Begot” Relay

Materials: one crown, one chair, masking tape

Directions: Before class, place a long masking-tape line on the floor. Place the chair about 10 feet from the tape. Cut out and assemble a crown. During class, have the students line up single-file across from the chair. Place the crown on the head of the first student. At your signal, he should run to the chair, around it, and back, and then should place the crown on the next student’s head and say, “Begot!” Continue until 14 trips around the chair have been made, illustrating the 14 generations in Matthew 1:17.

Coloring Pages

Give each student the coloring sheets from the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.



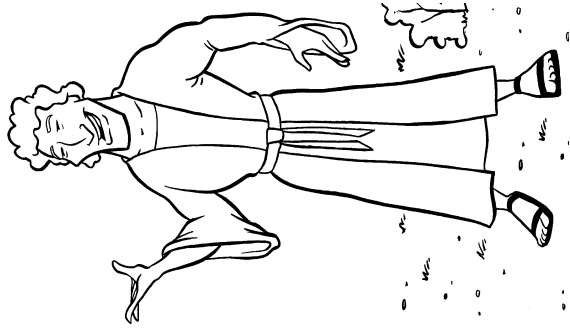
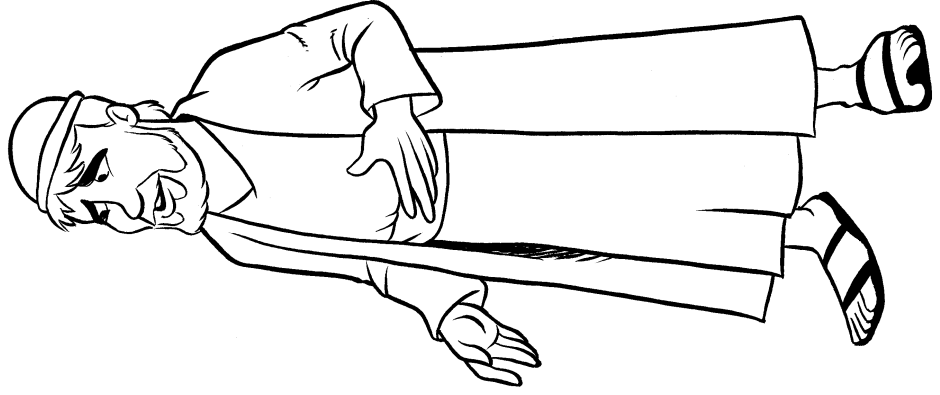
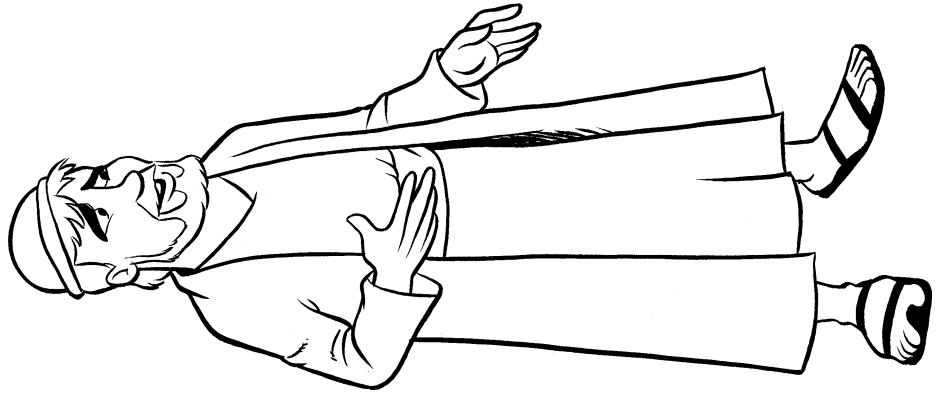
MEMORY VERSE

“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

Joseph Obeyes God



“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly” (Matthew 1:18–19).



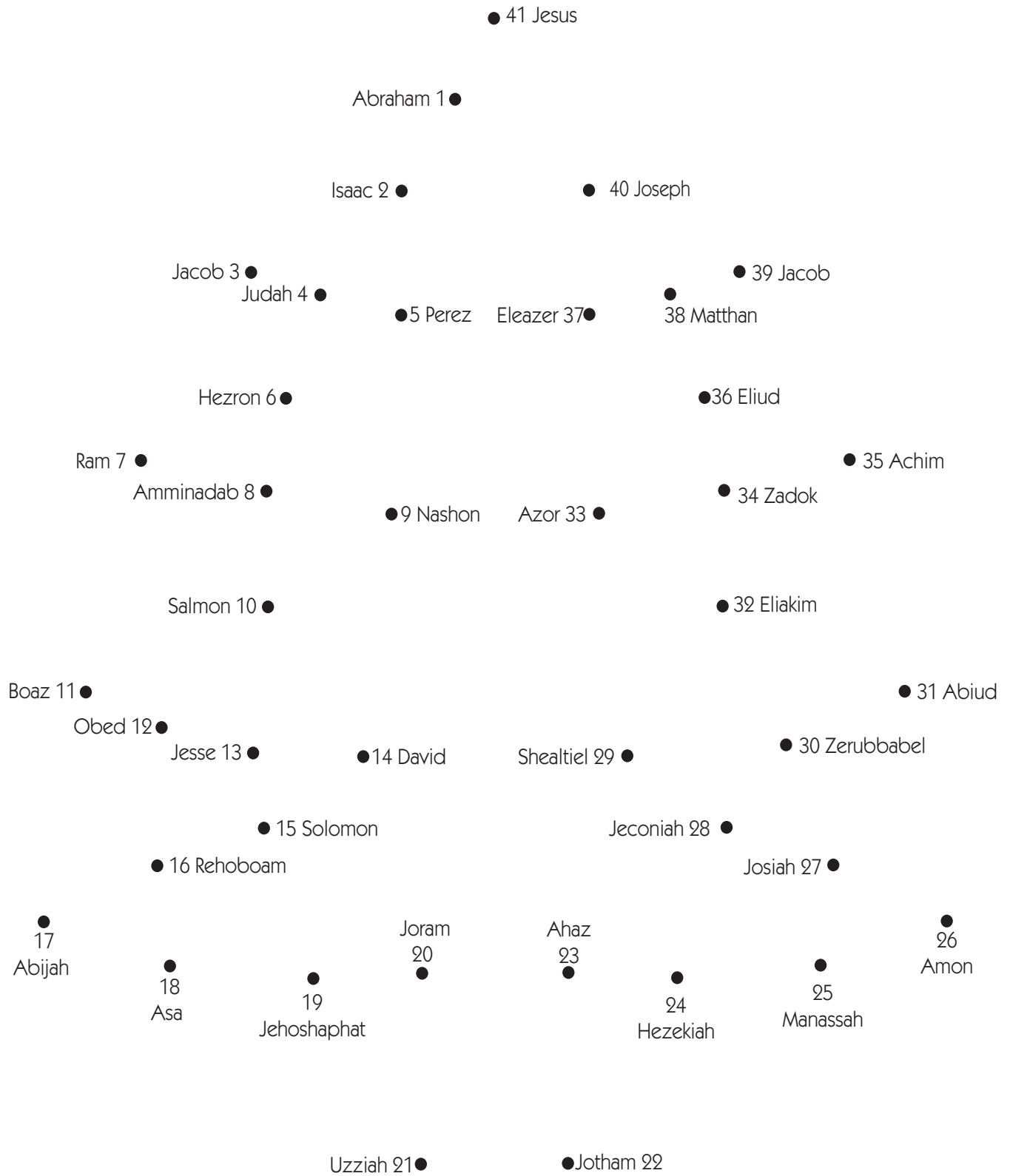
“But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream saying, ‘Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she shall bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.’” (Matthew 1:20–21).

Unspeakable Gift

JESUS

*“And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus,
for He will save His people from their sins”
(Matthew 1:21).*

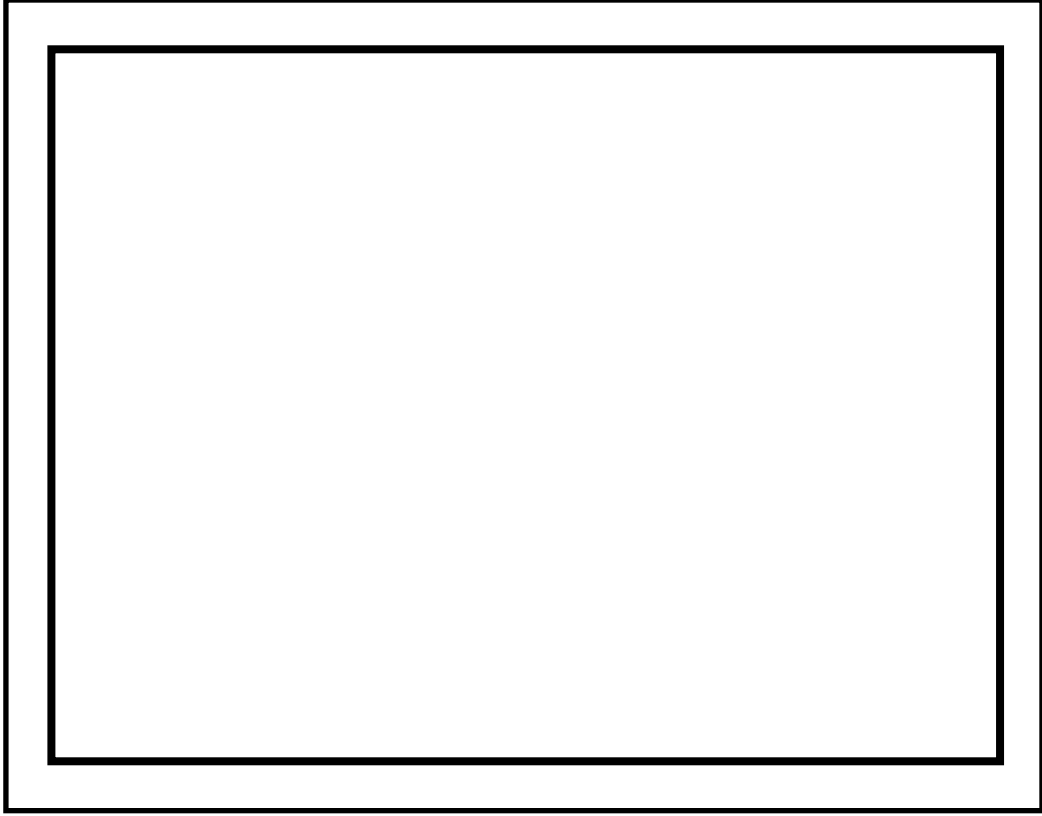
Christmas Family Tree



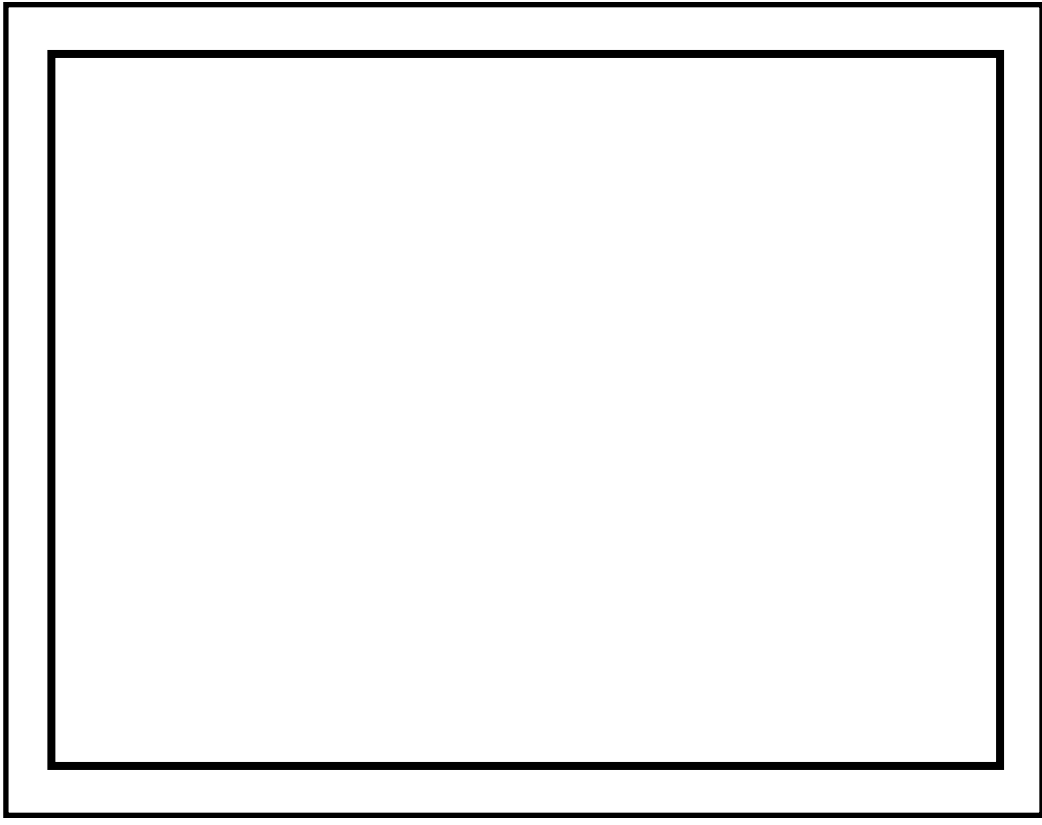
**“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life”
(John 3:16).**

Family Portraits

My Family



Jesus' Family



“Now the birth of Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 1:18).



An angel appeared to Joseph and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 1:20).



**Joseph did as the angel of the Lord commanded
and took Mary as his wife (Matthew 1:24).**



The King Is Adored

Matthew 2:1–12



LESSON GOAL

Students will learn from the wise men how to adore the King of kings.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God fulfilled His promise that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.
- The wise men came from the East to worship Jesus.
- The wise men followed a star to find where Jesus lived.
- The wise men brought Jesus gifts.

KEY VERSE

“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:2).

APPLICATION

- Thank God that Jesus came to earth as a child.
- Worship Christ with “exceeding joy.”
- Adore Jesus, as the wise men did.

NEXT WEEK

The King Is Preserved
Read Matthew 2:13–23.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

4

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
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- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
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Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
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POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

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PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
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Praise/Music Ideas

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Materials Needed

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

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Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Big Picture

The primary focus of the Gospels is the adult life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Only two of the Gospels mention His birth and childhood, and then only briefly. But Christ’s entrance into the world was important. The King of kings came as a tiny baby, not in a royal palace or even in a normal house, but among cattle in the cold. God could not have come to earth in a more humble, unsanitary, or unpleasant way. He didn’t come to the aroma of a clean hospital room, but to the stench of manure and livestock in a stable on a cold evening. He went from the presence of angels to that of animals, from heaven to hay, from a throne to a trough.

The circumstances surrounding our Lord’s birth point not just to His astonishingly lowly condescension (Phil. 2:6–8), but also to His purpose to live and die as a sacrifice. The first people the angels told of Christ’s birth were shepherds in a nearby field, some of whose sheep were likely being raised for Passover sacrifice in the temple. The only glimpse we have of Christ’s earliest years is when He and His family went to the Passover in Jerusalem (Luke 2:40–52) to have the priest slaughter a lamb as a sacrifice. When Christ first appears in John’s Gospel, John the Baptist introduces Him by saying, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). In continuing this idea, the details of Christ’s Passion Week entry into Jerusalem, the Lord’s Supper, and the exact time He died all were marvelously orchestrated around Old Testament Passover sacrifice rituals, which He fulfilled in every way (1 Cor. 5:7) as our sacrificial substitutionary lamb (Isa. 53).

Luke gives by far the most details about events surrounding the birth of Christ (Luke 1:5–80), as well as about the actual birth and manger scene (2:1–20) and about His newborn days (2:21–38). Reading both Luke’s and Matthew’s account may help form a composite picture of these earliest earthly days of our Lord. The importance of the incarnation (the Word becoming flesh) cannot be overstated. Christmas is our planet’s most universally celebrated holiday, and world history is dated by Christ’s birth (B.C. and A.D.). Both John’s and Mark’s Gospels go immediately to Christ’s adult life, but Matthew fills in a few additional details that are important for his purpose.

Bethlehem

Bethlehem was a small village on the outskirts of Jerusalem. It was home to Ruth and Boaz and was the birthplace of King David. It was many miles from where Mary and Joseph were living. However, God sovereignly used the decree of the pagan Caesar Augustus to force Mary and Joseph to make the difficult trip, which no woman normally would attempt when nine months pregnant. That was no coincidence, of course, but was for the fulfillment of prophecy. In verse 6, Herod’s scholars loosely quoted Micah 5:2, which, in its original text, contained the

Additional Reference Materials

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Matthew: MacArthur New Testament Commentary

important phrase “His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity.” John 7:42 indicates the Jews understood this as Messianic prophecy.

King Herod

Herod the Great was of Edomite descent and was appointed to govern the area of Galilee, which he ruled from 37 to 34 B.C. Historians record him as a cruel and evil man who executed his wives, relatives, and even his own children, apparently because he was paranoid of competition. That helps explain why he would be greatly troubled when he heard that “the King of the Jews” had been born in one of his villages (Matt. 2:3).

The Wise Men

Of all the people in the story, the wise men are perhaps the most misrepresented and misunderstood in traditional Christmas songs and nativity scenes. Matthew explains that when the wise men visited, Mary and Joseph were already in a “house” (Matt. 2:11), not in the original stable where the shepherds visited. Jesus was not a newborn, but a “child” (Matt. 2:8–9; a different Greek word than in Luke 2:12) who evidently was many months old though still under two years in age (Matt. 2:16). There were not necessarily three of these men; the number has traditionally been assumed because of their three gifts. And there is no evidence that they were kings from the Orient. The term “magi” referred to priestly astrologers or astronomers, magicians, or religious wise men, especially in the areas of Persia and Babylon. Geographically, such a journey may have been hundreds of miles, depending on which region(s) they were from. The book of Daniel gives some historical background on the magi.

The Star

It is possible that these men were familiar with the Jewish Scripture that says, “A star will come out of Jacob, a scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Num. 24:17; see also Revelation 22:16, where Christ calls Himself “the bright and morning star”). Some have suggested that what the wise men saw was a comet, meteor, supernova, or one or more planets, but the way it moved, stopped, reappeared, and then moved and settled over a certain house causes problems with such views. Rather than try to find a natural phenomenon, it may be best to understand it as a miraculous star-like manifestation that may or may not have been seen by people other than the magi. It could have been something like the Shekinah glory in the wilderness or an angel. (Angels are called “stars” in the Bible and similarly guided Israel in the Old Testament; Ex. 14:19.) The focus, however, is not on these things but on the greatest event in the universe. The King of the Jews was here at last, and God’s long-promised plan was about to unfold!

Various Responses to Jesus

When Herod heard that the magi were seeking the King of the Jews, he saw Him as a threat to his own ambitions, pride, and rule. Like many people today, Herod pretended to want to worship Jesus, but in reality, he hated the very thought and wanted nothing to do with this King but to eliminate Him. He was willing to sin greatly and go to any wicked extreme to suppress and extinguish the truth.

A second response, indifference, characterized the religious leaders Herod consulted. They knew the right answers intellectually and theologically, but they were spiritually unmoved when the arrival of the wise men from the East proclaimed the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

The third response, and the only right one, was that of the wise men: worship.

They may not have known as much as the Jews, but they “rejoiced exceedingly with great joy” (Matt. 2:10), sought to worship the young King (2:2), and knew enough to fall down on their faces in His presence (2:11). No human or angel deserves worship, but Christ accepted worship many times in His life, demonstrating His full deity. The gifts were equally appropriate to who He was. Gold symbolizes value, nobility, and royalty; the magi were giving royal gifts to the King of kings. Frankincense was expensive, sweet-smelling incense used for only the most special occasions. Perhaps more importantly, it was the traditional incense of deity. In Old Testament times, the Jews stored it in a special chamber in front of the temple for sprinkling on offerings. Myrrh was a valuable perfume that some interpreters say represented the gift for a mortal. It may have underscored Christ’s humanity. Myrrh would later be used with spices to prepare Christ’s body for burial (John 19:39–40).

Not all unbelievers will oppose Christ as violently and viciously as Herod did, but indifference or anything short of the magi’s response is unacceptable. Whoever is not fully with Him is against Him. The only proper response is to worship Christ the King as fully God and fully man.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

Why did Matthew write his Gospel?

Matthew wrote to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah and King, the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Who appeared to Joseph in a dream?

An angel of the Lord.

Did Joseph obey God and take Mary as his wife?

Yes.

What was unique about Jesus’ birth?

Jesus was born of Mary, so He was fully man, but God was His Father, so He was fully God.

What was special about Jesus’ name?

The name Jesus means “the Lord saves.”



Pin the Star on Bethlehem

Bring a large world map to class, and place it on the wall. Give each student a star and have him place it on the map where he thinks Bethlehem is. Then talk about

the Old Testament prophecy about the Messiah being born in Bethlehem. Show the students where Bethlehem actually is. Note how small and insignificant it is. Yet God chose it as the exact place where the Messiah would be born, and He told us about it in the Old Testament.



Where Were You Born?

Ask the students about when they were born. Do their parents have pictures or a scrapbook? Were they born in a hospital? Did they have blankets, booties, diapers, and cradles? Then discuss Jesus' humble birth.



The Magi's Worship

Discuss with the students what it meant to worship Christ with "exceeding joy" and in lowly reverence, as the magi did.



Follow the Star

Divide the students into two teams, and have each team stand in a single-file line against the wall. The first student in each line should stand in the middle of the room. Turn off the lights, and use a flashlight to bounce a shining "star" around the room. The two students in the middle should try to follow and step on the star. When one does, say, "You found the star!" Those two students should then return to their lines, and the next two students have a turn. Continue until all students have had a chance to play. End the game by having the students quietly sit on the floor in the dark. Shine the flashlight on a large, glittery star hanging from the ceiling, and tell the students that in today's lesson, the wise men follow a star to find Jesus.



4
5

Look for the Star

Paste stars up all over the classroom. Each star should have a Messianic prophecy written on it. As each student arrives, give him a Scripture reference and ask him to search for the star with that verse on it. Once he has found the star, he should bring it to you.



Star Light

Bring a lighted star to class (perhaps a Christmas tree topper), and plug it in. Spend a few minutes discussing what the star the wise men saw might have been and what it might have looked like. Explain to the students that in today's lesson, they will learn more about the wise men's search for and discovery of Jesus.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

“Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done” (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students’ understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, some men called prophets had said that the Savior of the world would be born in Bethlehem. Bethlehem was a small village near the big city of Jerusalem. In Bethlehem, Mary gave birth to Jesus in a stable because there was no room for her and Joseph to stay at the inn. No one would expect a king to be born in a stable—but Jesus was not a normal king. After Mary gave birth to Jesus, she and Joseph left the stable and eventually found a house to live in.

When Jesus was very young, less than two years old, wise men from the east came searching for Him. They had seen a bright star when He was born, and they knew this meant that the King of the Jews had been born. They traveled a very long way to the city of Jerusalem, and they asked where the new king was because they wanted to worship Him. They found Jewish leaders, who told them that the King of the Jews would be in Bethlehem. That is where the Bible said Jesus would be born.

Herod the Great heard about the wise men and their questions, and he became very upset. He was king, and the news that a Jewish king had been born made him very jealous. He did not want any competition. So Herod decided to trick the magi. He told them to go look for the King of the Jews, and when they found Him, to come back and tell him so that he could go and worship the king, too. But Herod was lying. He did not want to worship Jesus; he wanted to kill Him!

The wise men did as Herod requested and went looking for Jesus. God directed them to Jesus with a bright star. They followed the star, and it led them to the house where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus were. When the magi finally found Jesus, they were very excited. They bowed down and worshiped Him, and they gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They brought Him gold because gold is very valuable, and they knew that Jesus was of great value. They brought Him frankincense, which is like a candle, because it was very expensive and used only for very special occasions. They also brought Him myrrh, a valuable perfume, which was known to represent humanity. They were showing that they knew Jesus was not only God, but also human. After the wise men worshiped Jesus, God warned them in a dream that they should not return to Herod. The wise men obeyed and went back to their own country.

The wise men responded the right way in knowing that Jesus had been born and that He was God’s Son. The only right way to respond to Jesus is to worship Him. How did Herod respond to knowing that Jesus had been born? Herod pretended that he wanted to worship Jesus, but he was lying and really hated Jesus. How did the Jewish leaders respond to knowing that the King of the Jews, the Son of God, had been born? They could have gone to worship Him, but they did not. They did

not seem to care that He had been born, and that is just as bad as hating Jesus. What can we learn from the wise men? We learn that the only right way to respond to Jesus is to worship Him.



Lesson Questions

Who came looking for Jesus?
Wise men from the east.

How did they find Him?
They followed a bright star in the sky.

What did the wise men do when they saw Jesus?
They worshiped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

What did Herod do when he heard that Jesus had been born?
He was jealous and wanted to kill Jesus.

How should we respond to Jesus, knowing that He is the Son of God?
We should worship Him.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.



The Gifts

Bring in objects resembling gold, frankincense, and myrrh for the students to see, hold, and smell. Talk about what each was used for and what each symbolized.

Praise and Worship

Come, Let Us Worship and Bow Down

God Is So Good

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

The Little Drummer Boy

Trust and Obey



Jesus' Star

(Sing to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star.")

Twinkle, twinkle, Jesus' star;
(Hold one hand up and open and close fingers.)

Show the wise men where you are.
(Slowly move hand downward while continuing to open and close fingers.)

Precious gifts the wise men bring
(Bow low and pretend to offer a gift.)

All for Christ, the newborn king.
(Pretend to rock baby in arms.)

This year when you see a star,
(Hold hand up and open and close fingers.)

Worship Christ right where you are.
(Place palms together and bow head.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



4
5

Star of Wonder, Version 1

Give each student several gold pipe cleaners to create a star. He can twist several pipe cleaners together to make a spiky star, or he can make a traditional star shape. Use one pipe cleaner to make a hook for the star.



Star of Wonder, Version 2

Materials: copies of the star craft pages, scissors, glitter, glue, crayons

Directions: Give the students each a copy of the craft page, and have them cut out the stars and decorate them on both sides. Then they should cut the stars along the slit and slip them together, creating a three-dimensional star. Review the lesson with the students while they work on their craft.



Arrival of the Magi

Invite three or four adults to come to class, pretending to be the wise men. Have them enter the classroom and tell the students the news of what they found in Bethlehem. Their excitement and reverence over what they saw, who was there, and how God spoke to them in a dream should be obvious. They could talk about how they met with King Herod in Jerusalem before traveling to Bethlehem, and how they decided not to return there after God spoke to them.



Ways to Worship Jesus

The wise men sought the new King, and when they found Him, they worshiped Him with gifts. We can worship King Jesus in many ways. We worship Him when we read the Bible, pray to God, obey Him, praise Him, and serve and share with others. Lead the students to various centers in the classroom, showing them how they can worship Jesus in a variety of ways. Here are some examples:

Books: Gather the students on a blanket (outside, if you want) and read a storybook about the Bible passages covered today. Talk about worshiping God by listening to stories from the Bible.

Prayer: Pray with the students, praising the Lord for the things He provides each day—family, love, food, friends, clothes, etc.

Obedience: Show the students pictures of children being obedient. When we are obedient to our parents, we are worshiping God because this is what He tells us to do.

Praise and Singing: Gather the students on a blanket (again, outside, if desired), and ask them each to name something they want to thank God for. This could be something they see around them. Stop and sing “God Is So Good” while praising Him.

Sharing: We can worship God by being kind to others and sharing with them. Cut a star from poster board, punch a hole near the edge, and thread a ribbon through for hanging. Decorate the stars with glitter. Share the star with someone as you tell the students about Jesus, the newborn King.



What’s It Worth?

Bring to class a variety of items with differing values. Place them on a table where the students can see them, and discuss the value of each one. Choose items that are age-appropriate. You could use photos or magazine pictures. Include several items that are difficult to assign a dollar value to—for instance, someone’s life, the earth, or memories. Discuss with the students the priceless nature of God’s gift.

Coloring Pages

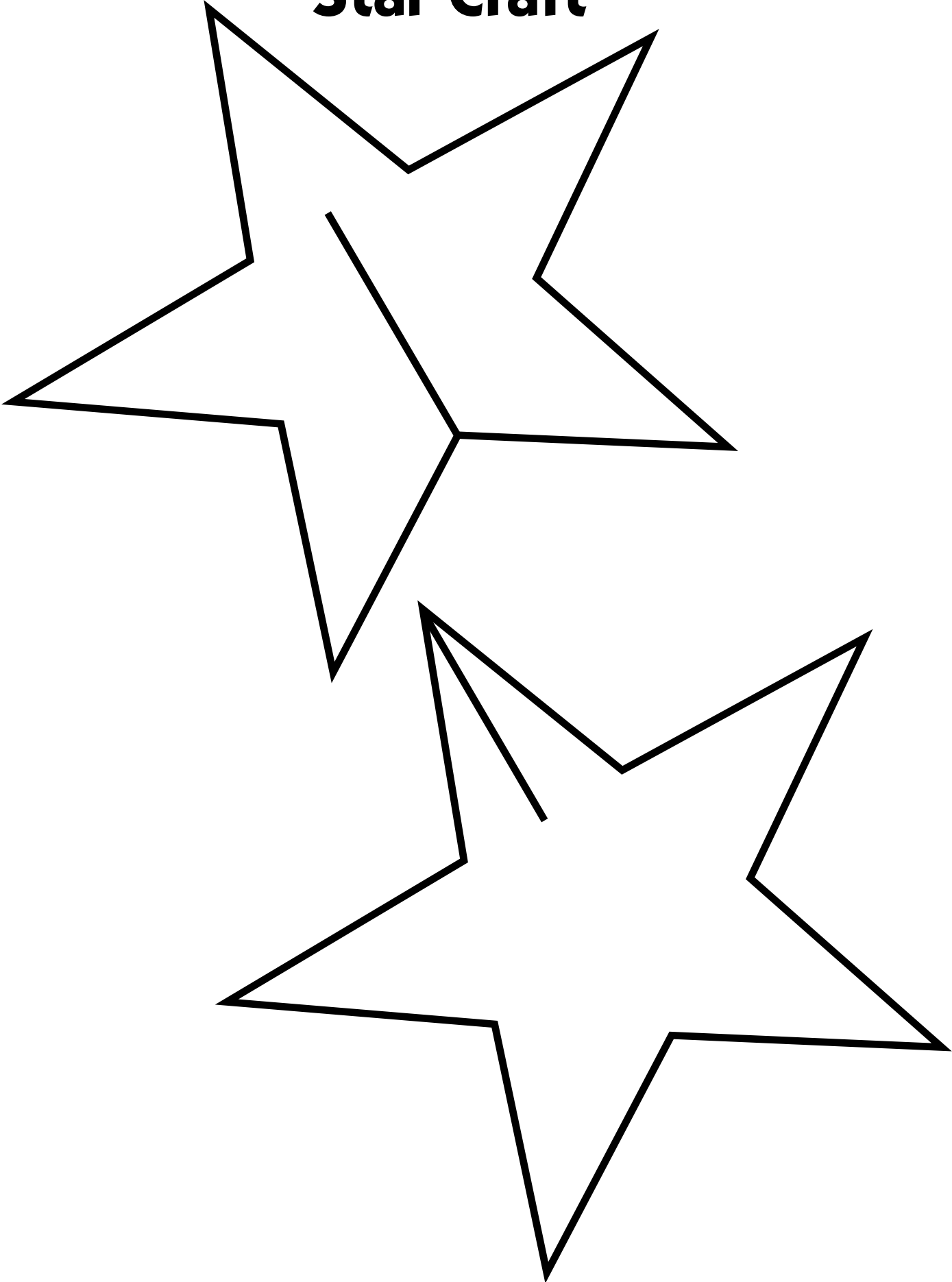
Give each student the coloring sheets from the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:2).

Star Craft





“Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared” (Matthew 2:7).



“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him” (Matthew 2:11a).



The King Is Preserved

Matthew 2:13–23



LESSON GOAL

Students will see God’s sovereignty, protection, and providence in directing and preserving the Son of God and fulfilling Scripture.

BIBLE TRUTHS

- God protected Jesus from Herod.
- Herod tried to kill Jesus.
- Joseph obeyed God without delay.
- Jesus was raised in Nazareth.

KEY VERSE

“But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ‘Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel!’” (Matthew 2:19–20a).

APPLICATION

- Trust that God is all-powerful and will take care of you.
- See whether selfishness is in your heart.
- Praise God for sending Jesus to pay for sin.
- Obey God’s Word and your authorities.

Symbol Key



Craft



Finger Play



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Center



Activity



Q & A



Age Group

4

Teacher Planning Sheet

PREPARE

Objectives/Truths to cover this week

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Personal Application

As a result of my study in this passage, God wants me to

- _____
- _____
- _____

Three ways students need to apply this passage are

- _____
- _____
- _____

Materials Needed

POINT

Choose from various ideas to point students to the coming Bible lesson.

- _____
- _____

PROCLAIM

Choose from various ideas to proclaim the Bible lesson.

Presentation Ideas

- _____
- _____

Praise/Music Ideas

- _____
- _____
- _____

PRACTICE

Choose ideas to help review and apply today's lesson.

- _____
- _____

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

Dreams and Angels (Matt. 1:20; 2:12–13, 19, 22)

For hundreds of years there had been no new revelation from God. But with the birth of Christ came a sudden flurry of revelation and supernatural events. Messages from angels through dreams were uncommon in both the Old and New testaments, but Matthew records five supernatural visits in the brief time surrounding Christ’s birth. Luke records additional angelic visitations in these days: Gabriel to Zacharias (Luke 1:11–19), Gabriel to Mary (1:26–38), and the host to the shepherds (2:9–15). The spiritual darkness and silence was broken, and the light and revelation going forth shows that this was a birth of unprecedented significance. God in human flesh was here, being heralded and announced as King!

Another pattern emerging from Matthew’s account is the unhesitating obedience and submission of everyone who received divine guidance (with the exception of Zacharias, who doubted). When God revealed a message to them, they obeyed immediately, whether they fully understood or not. To disobey, delay, or question would have been disastrous. This is an important lesson for both children and adults. God requires that believers submissively follow His Word and the earthly authorities He has ordained.

Why Egypt? (Matt. 2:13–15)

During the intertestamental period, Alexander the Great had established a sanctuary for Jews in Alexandria, an Egyptian city he had named after himself. Jews in the area had translated the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek, and this translation was known as the Septuagint (or LXX). It was used by the Greek-speaking early church and was the translation used for many Old Testament quotes by New Testament writers.

Egypt was at least 75–100 miles from Bethlehem—far enough from Herod’s wicked reach. Of course, God could have sent Joseph, Mary, and Jesus elsewhere, or He could have protected Jesus in some other way. But the journey is in keeping with Matthew’s purpose to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish Scriptures. From the genealogy to the Sermon on the Mount (chapter 5), Matthew builds almost every paragraph around a text from the Old Testament and shows how it applies to Christ, and 2:15 is yet another example.

Hosea 11:1, in its original context, was a reference to the nation of Israel. Hosea tells of the prophet’s relationship to his unfaithful wife, Gomer, and is a picture of God’s love to unfaithful and undeserving Israel, particularly in bringing them out of Egypt. Moses used this imagery of Israel as God’s son when he told Pharaoh: “Thus says the LORD: ‘Israel is My son, My firstborn. So I say to you, let My son go, that he may serve Me. But if you refuse to let him go, indeed, I will kill your son, your firstborn’” (Ex. 4:22–23). Like Moses, Jesus escaped the fate of other male

Additional Reference Materials

God in a Manger by John MacArthur

Matthew: MacArthur New Testament Commentary

babies who were to be killed (Ex. 1:22–2:10). Jesus' return from Egypt might have evoked Jewish readers' memories of the original Exodus under Moses. Some Jews were expecting the coming of a prophet "like Moses" (Deut. 18:15, 18). The subsequent command by the angel to travel from Egypt to the Promised Land, Israel (Matt. 2:19–20), may similarly have been reminiscent of the Pentateuch days.

Hosea 11:1 was referring to the past rather than the future. The passage was "fulfilled" by Christ in the sense that the historical exodus of the Jews pictured the Messiah coming out of Egypt as their representative and deliverer. Technically, this might be best called a pictorial prophecy or a type (nonverbal prediction), in which the inspired New Testament writers interpret an Old Testament person or event as illustrating a truth about Christ not explicitly described in the original text. Of course, the rich symbolism of the original Passover escape (Ex. 12) also looks forward to Christ, our Passover lamb, who lived among the people and whose blood covering was the only way believers can escape judgment.

Herod Tries to Kill Jesus

In Herod's mind, there could be only one "king of the Jews"—himself—and any competitor must be killed. Infuriated by the perceived deception by the wise men (who were simply obeying the angel), he unleashed his fury through infanticide. Satan himself wanted to kill Christ (Matt. 4:5–6; Rev. 12:1–5), and Herod's rage was devilish. Population estimates indicate there were perhaps 15 or 20 children less than two years old in Bethlehem at that time. This devastating mass murder was not recorded by contemporary historians (including Josephus), probably because murder to protect the throne was such a common practice. History records that Herod had killed a young high priest, relatives, and friends. He had a favorite wife strangled and even killed some of his own children! Emperor Augustus reportedly joked it would be better to be Herod's pig (Greek huos) than his son (Greek huos), for a pig had a better chance of surviving in a Jewish community.

Herod's massacre was even more heinous because he knew that the child he sought to destroy was the Messiah. Herod questioned the chief priests and scribes specifically about "where the Christ was to be born" (Matt. 2:4) and arrogantly set himself up against God's Anointed. The chief priests and the scribes, along with the many other Jews in Jerusalem who must have heard or known about the magi's message, were not innocent simply because their hands did not cause the bloodshed. They showed no interest in finding this child, much less in worshipping Him, and these leaders eventually would want to kill Jesus themselves.

Matthew 2:17–18 shows that even Herod's evil atrocity was used by God to fulfill (literally "fill up" or complete) Jeremiah 31:15. Like Hosea, Jeremiah's original passage was historical rather than an explicit Messianic prediction, but the New Testament interprets it as a type of Christ. Rachel was the wife of Israel (also known as Jacob; Gen. 30–37) and the mother of sons whose tribes would form the Northern and Southern kingdoms of Israel. "Rachel weeping for her children" in Jeremiah's day represented the lamentation of all Jewish mothers who wept over Israel's great tragedy in the days of its captivity. More than this, they typified and prefigured the mothers of Bethlehem weeping bitterly over the massacre of their children. Men's desire to kill rather than worship Christ would later cause even the King of the Jews Himself to weep over Jerusalem because of His people's rejection of Him, which would bring judgment (Luke 19:41–44).

It should not be overlooked that Jeremiah 31, quoted here by Matthew, is not all negative. For many Jews who knew their Scriptures, it would bring to mind the familiar promises of hope after mourning (Jer. 31:16–17), mercy (31:20),

repentance (31:21–22), the new covenant (31:31–34), and God’s promised future for Israel (31:35–37).

Jesus Returns to Nazareth

History tells us Herod died in the spring of 4 B.C., which is why scholars place Christ’s birth at least a year or two earlier. Herod’s son Archelaus ruled over Judea and was known for his cruelty. He executed two popular rabbis whom he saw as troublemakers and once sent his army into a rowdy Passover crowd, where about 3,000 Jewish pilgrims were killed when things got out of hand. He was so bad that Augustus himself feared a revolution from the people and eventually deposed Archelaus and banished him from the area in A.D. 6. This explains Joseph’s fear and redirection to Nazareth in Galilee (55 miles north), but, again, the ultimate reason Matthew gives has to do with fulfillment of a divine plan.

No Old Testament text directly matches Matthew’s quote “He shall be called a Nazarene” (Matt. 2:23). But ancient authors sometimes blended texts, and since both Jews and Greeks played on words to make a point, some suggest this text could be a play on the Hebrew word *netser*, “branch,” a title for the Messiah (Jer. 23:5; Zech. 3:8; 6:12; cf. Isa. 11:1; 53:2). Others suggest that by changing the letters slightly, it could refer to the Nazirites, a class of people dedicated to God (cf. Num. 6:1–21). These views have problems, however, and it may be best to understand this simply as a known saying of the prophets not recorded in the Old Testament. Jude 14–15 similarly quotes a prophecy from Enoch not in the Old Testament, and the New Testament gives sayings of Jesus that were not recorded in the Gospels (Acts 20:35, for example). However one understands the reference, one fact is clear: Nazareth was a lowly, reproachful place in which to grow up (John 1:46), and the insulting name “Nazarene” and other reproaches on Christ fulfilled many prophecies that the Messiah would be “despised and forsaken of men” (Isa. 53:3; 49:7; Psalm 22:6–8; 69:20–21). It was in this lowly and despised place that the royal Son of God would live humbly for most of His earthly life.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth” (Psalm 78:1).

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

Why did Matthew write his Gospel?

Matthew wrote to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah and King, the fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures.

Who appeared to Joseph in a dream?

An angel of the Lord.

Did Joseph obey God and take Mary as his wife?

Yes.

What was unique about Jesus' birth?

Jesus was born of Mary, so He was fully man, but God was His father, so He was fully God.

What was special about Jesus' name?

The name Jesus means "the Lord saves."



Walk As Fast As You Can

Have the students stand on one side of the room, or behind a line outside. Demonstrate the difference between a fast walk and a run. Then have the students with a particular characteristic—those with long hair, or wearing the color red, for example—walk as fast as they can to the other side of the room or to a finish line. Then have the students with some other characteristic go. Continue until all the students have gone. Repeat if time allows. Ask the students, "Who can walk fast. Do long legs help?" Tell the students that in today's lesson, Joseph and Mary take Jesus to Egypt. They leave at night and walk as fast as they can.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included that you can use to proclaim your worship to God. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

In today's lesson, we are going to learn how God protected baby Jesus from a wicked man. The man's name was Herod, and he ruled over all the people in and around Jerusalem. We learned before that Herod was very jealous when he heard from the wise men that Jesus, the King of the Jews, had been born. Herod thought Jesus would try to take away his power and become the ruler. This made him very angry and jealous. Earlier Herod had tried to trick the magi into telling him where the baby Jesus was so that he could find Jesus and kill Him. But the wise men never returned from their trip. They had been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod. They obeyed because they knew the warning was from God.

When Herod realized that the wise men were not coming back, he was furious. He gave an order to his soldiers to kill all the male children in Bethlehem two years of age and younger. He wanted to make sure that Jesus would die and not become the King. But God knows everything, and He knew what Herod was up to. He already had made sure that Jesus was safe from Herod because it was not God's timing for Jesus to die. God had already sent an angel to Joseph. The angel said to Joseph, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him" (Matt. 2:13). Do you think that Joseph obeyed? Yes. He took Jesus and Mary and left at once. They went to Egypt, where they would be safe from Herod. Joseph obeyed because he knew that the angel was giving him a message from God, and he wanted to obey.

Back in Bethlehem, King Herod had killed all the male children in the village and the surrounding region. It was very sad. The mothers cried and cried for their babies. But God used this for good, because it fulfilled a prophecy. A prophecy is when someone tells what is going to happen a long time before it actually happens. It had been prophesied a long time ago that the Jewish mothers would be crying and very sad because their children had died. This was a way for God to show that He knows everything. He knows about things that have not happened yet. It also showed that Jesus was God's Son, the Messiah.

After Herod eventually died, an angel again appeared to Joseph while he was in Egypt. The angel told him that it was safe to go back to Israel because Herod was dead. Joseph obeyed and took Jesus and Mary, and they left Egypt to go to Israel. This was like when Moses took the Israelites and left Egypt to go to the Promised Land. The land of Israel was in the Promised Land. Joseph and Mary needed to find a new home and a safe place to live. They decided to settle down in a city called Nazareth, and that is where Jesus grew up.



Lesson Questions

Who wanted to kill Jesus?

King Herod.

What order did Herod give?

Herod ordered that all the male children two years old and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding region should be killed.

How did Joseph know to flee to Egypt?

An angel of God warned him in a dream.

Did Joseph obey God?

Yes.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces with the lesson.

Praise and Worship

God Is So Good

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands

Joy to the World!

O Come, Let Us Adore Him

Trust and Obey



Flight to Egypt

Herod wanted Jesus dead.

(Hold hands at head to indicate crown; pretend to rock baby.)

Joseph and his family fled,
(Run in place.)

Went to Egypt as God said,
(Form pyramid shape with hands.)

Escaped the enemy.
(Wipe brow in relief.)

We can read and understand
(Hold hands like book; point to temple.)

This was all God's perfect plan,
(Point upward.)

Saving Christ from Herod's hand,
(Pretend to snatch something and hold it close.)

Fulfilling prophecy.
(Hold hands like book; nod head.)

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

"That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments" (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Dreams and Angels

Discuss the angel's visits to Joseph and all the revelation and supernatural events surrounding Jesus' birth. Explain that for 400 years before Jesus was born, men heard nothing from God. Also discuss angels in today's world. Explain the importance of checking all things against the Bible, the Word of God, to know whether they are true.



"Trip to Egypt"

Materials: copies of the "Trip to Egypt" craft page, glue, crayons, other decorations
Directions: To help the students understand the geography of where Joseph, Mary, and Jesus traveled when fleeing Herod, have them decorate this map of Israel and Egypt. Younger students can trace the path that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus took. The students could glue small paper pyramids, a manger, and a house on the spots where they were located in the story.



Egypt Craft

Materials: copies of the pyramid patterns (at back of lesson), scissors, blank sheets of paper, strips of paper with Matthew 2:13b printed on them, crayons
Directions: Give the students each a blank page and a page of pyramid patterns. Instruct them to cut the pyramids out along the solid lines and then fold along the dotted lines. Then they can color their pyramids. On their blank sheets of paper,

they should place the pyramids and color other things Mary, Joseph, and Jesus may have encountered on their trip. Tape the verse strip at the bottom of the page.



Follow the Leader

Play the game "Follow the Leader." Discuss with the students what it means to be a leader and guide. Ask them what makes a good leader and what makes a bad leader. God was Joseph's perfect Leader and Guide.

Coloring Pages

Give each student copies of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. Students can color the pages in class or at home.

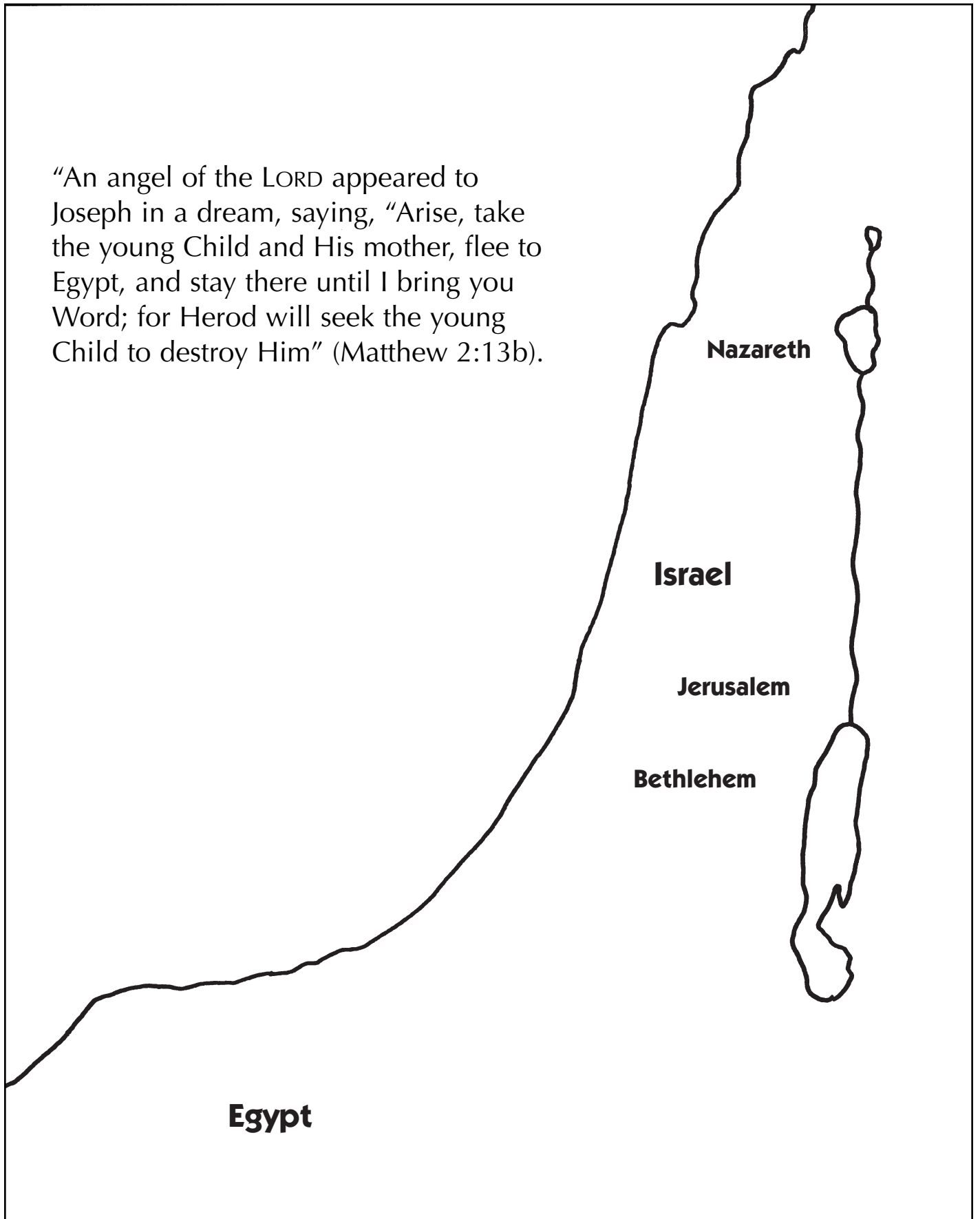


MEMORY VERSE

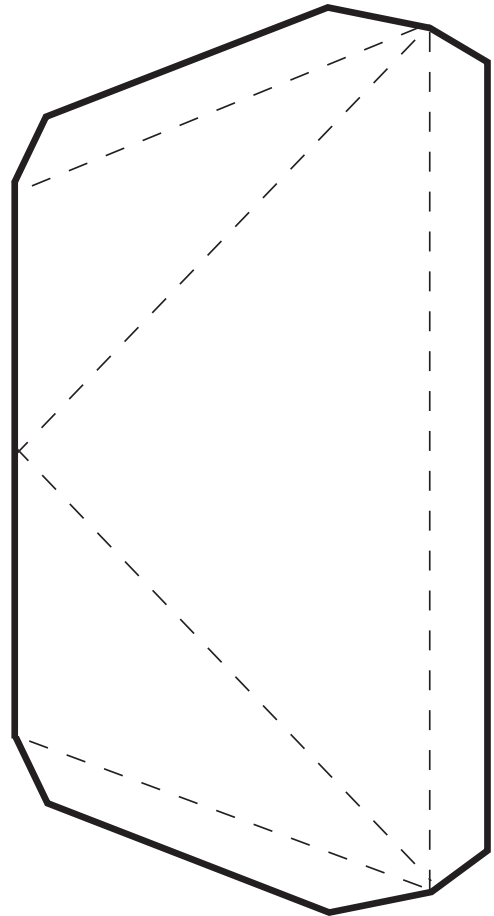
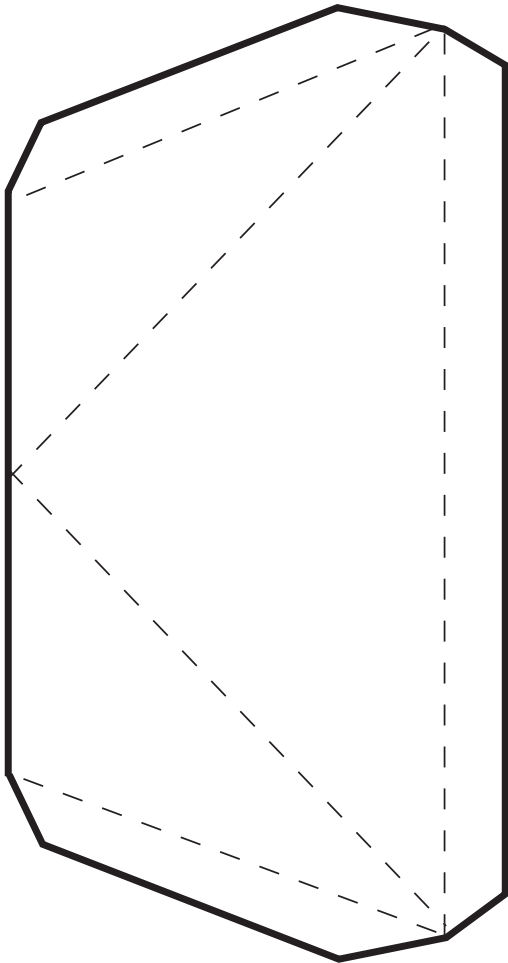
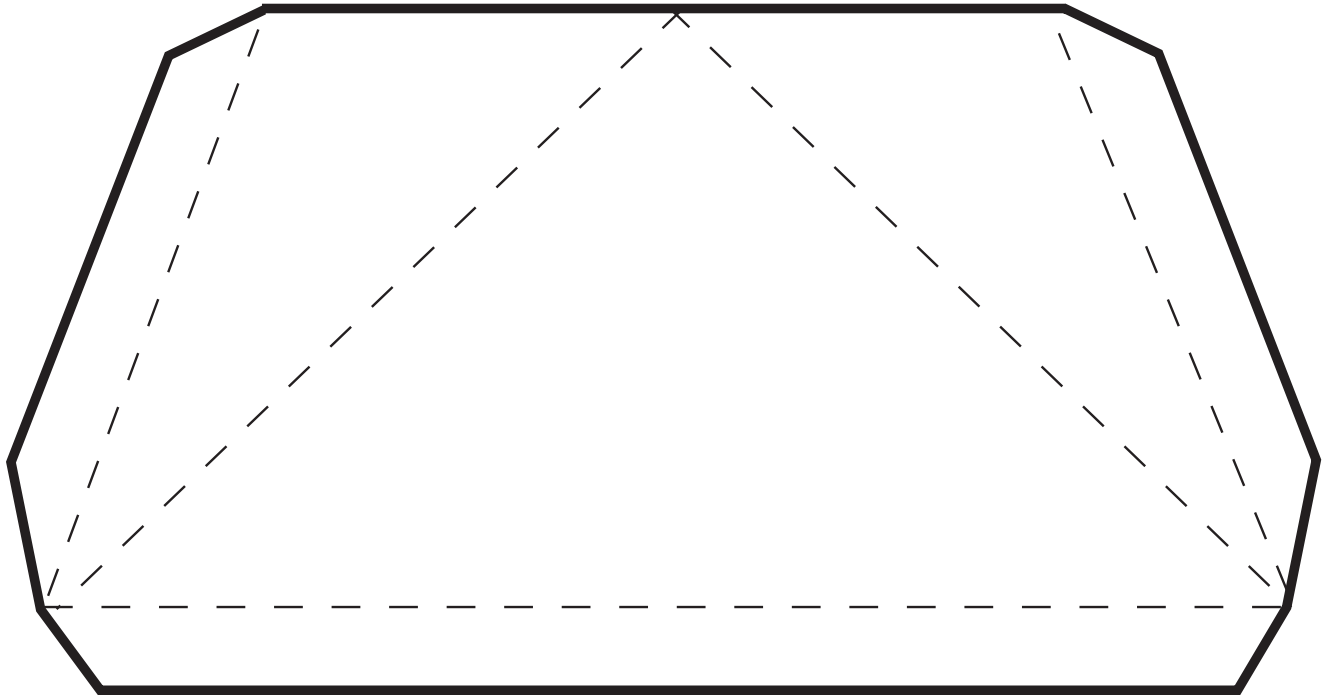
"Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, 'Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel'" (Matthew 2:19–20a).

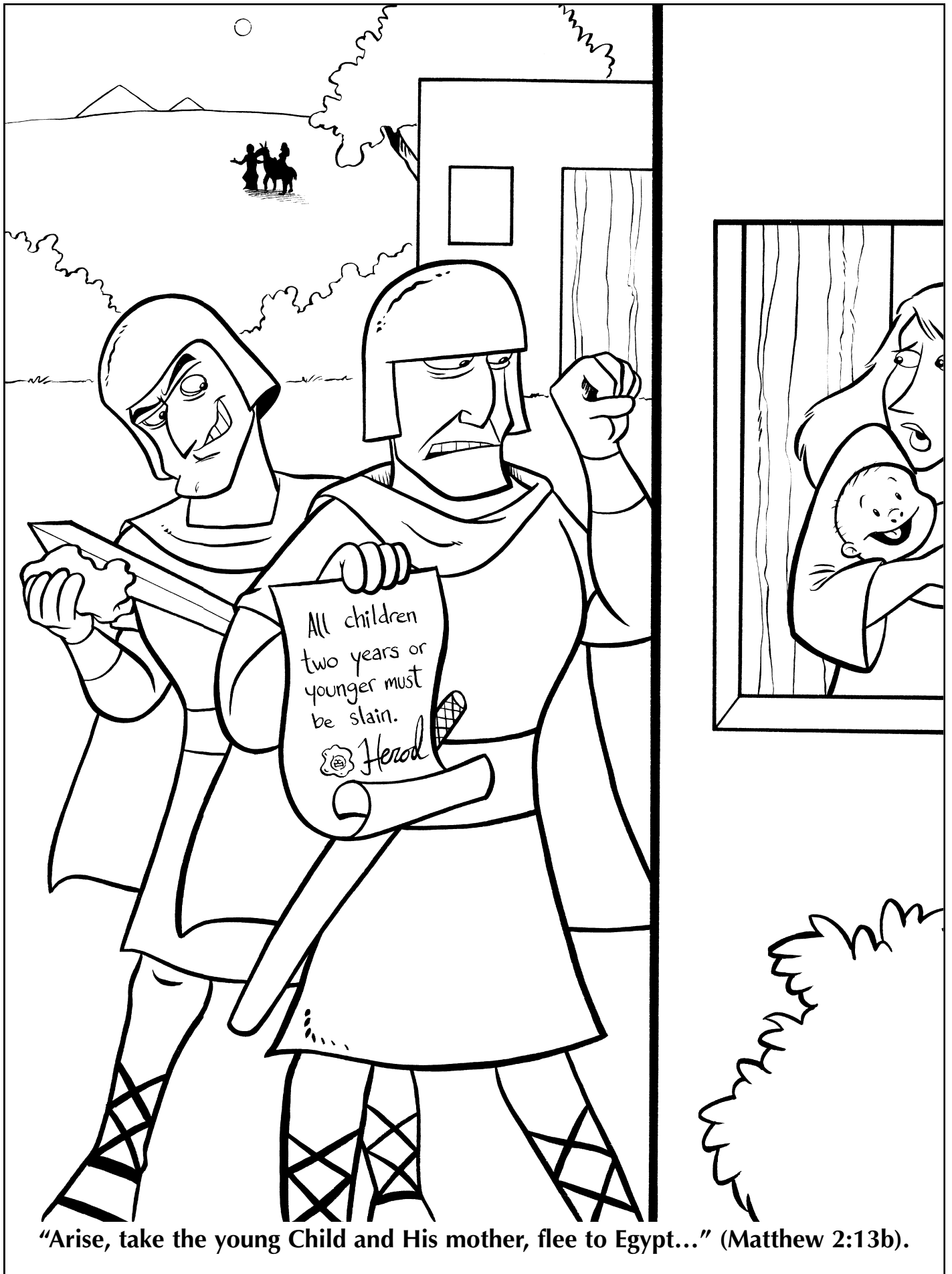
Flight to Egypt

“An angel of the LORD appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you Word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him” (Matthew 2:13b).



Pyramid Patterns







**“Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, ‘Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead’”
(Matthew 2:19–20).**

