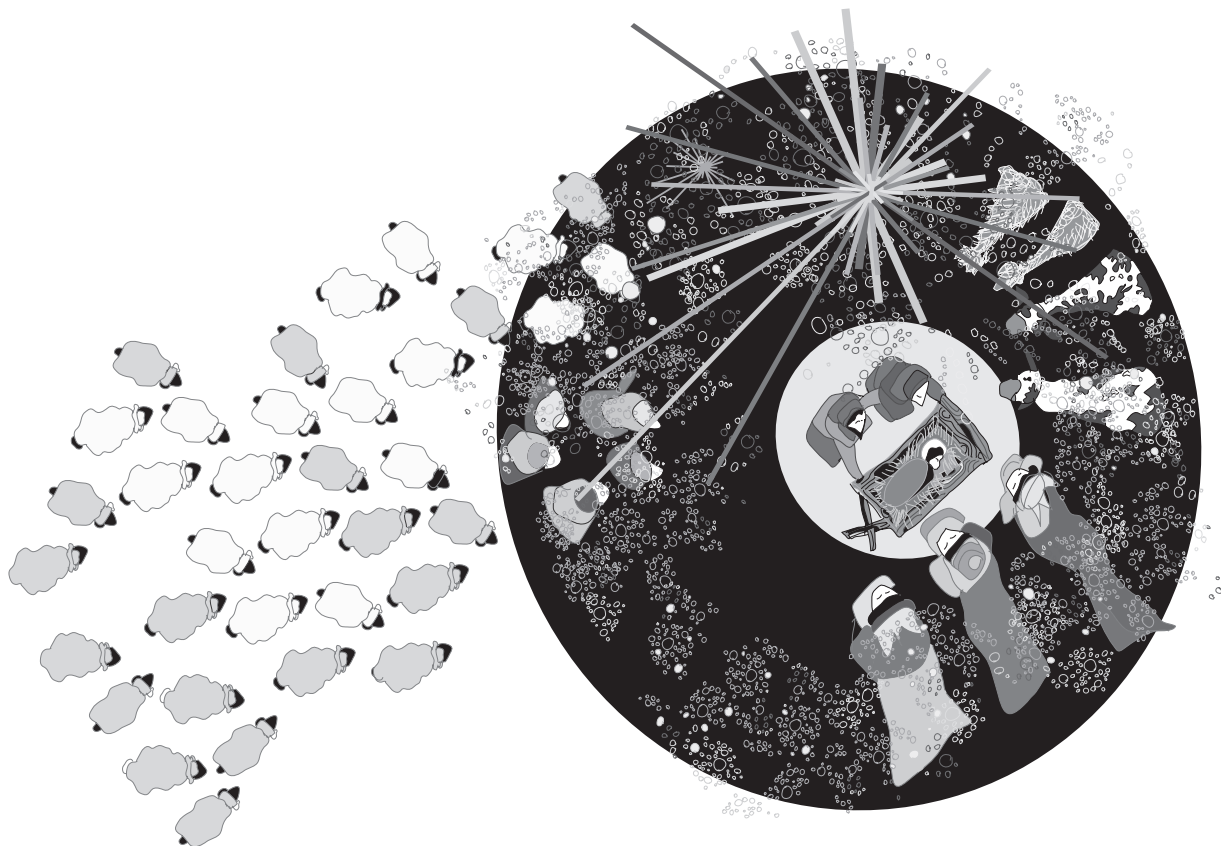


LESSON 2

# The Birth of Jesus

LUKE 2:1-20



**BIBLE TRUTH**

IN THE FULLNESS OF TIME, GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** . . . . . **5 MIN**  
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Read Luke 2:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 80, “The Birth of Jesus,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
**Set the Clock**  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ several cell phones or watches with alarms
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
**Find It on a map**  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ map of the Middle East showing Israel and Egypt (If Bethlehem is not listed place a dot just south of Jerusalem.)
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** . . . . . **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** . . . . . **10 MIN**  
**Color a Picture**  
✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 2—one copy for each child  
✓ markers or crayons
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** . . . . . **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** . . . . . **15 MIN**  
**A Christmas Pageant in July**  
**SUPPLIES:**  
✓ simple costumes for the children such as a shepherd’s staff and old sheets or towels for robes and cloaks

**TOTAL 80 MIN**

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

**Mary and Joseph return to Bethlehem**—God ordained the census to bring Mary to Bethlehem, where the Savior was to be born. At first glance it may appear to happen by chance. But that is not the case. Matthew recalls the words of the prophet Micah: “And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel” (Matthew 2:6). Paul tells us that Jesus was born at just the exact moment according to a predetermined plan. In Galatians 4:4 we read, “When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law.”

**The angels appear to the shepherds**—The angels announced the birth of Jesus to the shepherds. There were a lot of shepherds in Israel. Not only were sheep used for food and clothing, but also for sacrifices. It is interesting to note that the perfect sacrifice, Jesus the Lamb of God, would be first publicly announced to shepherds.

After hearing the heavenly choir of angels, the shepherds traveled to see the baby Jesus. When they arrived, the shepherds told those gathered there about what they had seen and heard. Mary treasured these things in her heart. Though she knew from her encounter with the angel Gabriel that this was going to be a special birth, Mary didn’t know exactly how it would unfold. How wonderfully blessed she must have felt as the shepherds recounted their story.

**God’s plan is unstoppable**—It was not long after Jesus was born that King Herod sought to destroy him (Matthew 2:13). Herod determined to eliminate the threat to his kingship, and he tried to discover where Jesus was so that he could kill the baby king. God’s plan to bring a savior to his people could not be stopped even by the actions of a powerful king. God warned the wise men to travel home by a different route and told Joseph to take his family to Egypt until Herod was dead.

Herod was so determined to destroy Jesus that he had all the baby boys two years old and younger killed. After a time, Herod died, and then an angel directed Joseph to bring Jesus back to Israel. In Hosea 11:1, the prophet foretold this: “Out of Egypt I called my son.” God was not surprised by Herod’s threats. Even those threats were a part of God’s predetermined, unstoppable plan.

## Where Is the Gospel? \_\_\_\_\_

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Though Jesus was King, he did not come in a full display of his glory, might, and power. Instead he came in humility that he might become a servant of all, dying on the cross for our sins. This humility was evident from his birth, where he was born in a stable and placed in a manger. Jesus gave up his glory to come to earth because he loved us. Later, he would die for our sins so we could be saved from the penalty of sin. Isn't it amazing that God himself came as a baby?

It was this baby that the wise men announced as the answer to the Old Testament prophecies (Matthew 2:5–6). The shepherds heard directly from heaven through the angels that the baby "wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger," was the Savior (Luke 2:12).

### THE LESSON

#### OPENING REVIEW . . . . . 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

#### BIBLE STORY . . . . . 10 MIN

Read Luke 2:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 80, "The Birth of Jesus," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

#### OBJECT LESSON 1 . . . . . 10 MIN

##### Set the Clock

###### SUPPLIES:

- ✓ several cell phones or watches with alarms

This exercise is designed to allow you to talk to the children about Jesus' birth being planned by God. Synchronize four or five clock alarms to go off at the same time about five minutes into

your teaching time. Disperse the alarms around the room. Engage the children in reviewing the Bible story or Bible memory verses while you wait for the alarms to go off. When the alarms sound, explain to the children that the alarms went off just as you had planned in the fullness of time.

Turn to Galatians 4:4 and explain to the children how God planned to send Jesus at a certain time. God was working out many details for the advance of the gospel. Jesus was born during Roman rule and the era known as the Pax Romana or Roman peace. There were common roads throughout the known world and a common language, Greek. God arranged roads for the gospel to travel on, peace in the land for its advance, and a common language so that everyone could understand the gospel message. All this happened in the fullness of time according to God's wonderful plan.

■ **Did Jesus come by chance?**

*(No, Jesus came according to God's plan and sovereign purpose.)*

■ **What was the most significant part of God's plan in sending Jesus?**

*(The most significant part of God's plan was that Jesus would die on the cross. Jesus would die for our sins so that we could be forgiven.)*

**TEACHING/DISCUSSION . . . . . 10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

**OBJECT LESON 2 . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Find It on a Map**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ map of the Middle East showing Israel and Egypt (If Bethlehem is not listed place a dot just south of Jerusalem.)

This activity is designed to help the children visualize the journey from Bethlehem to Egypt, and to help them see that these places are real. Jesus was born into our history. He was a real baby born into a real town, Bethlehem. His family fled to a real country, Egypt.

Place the map on a table and gather the children around.

**SWORD BIBLE MEMORY . . . . . 5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

**ACTIVITY TIME . . . . . 10 MIN**

**Color a Picture**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ coloring page for NT Lesson 2—one copy for each child
- ✓ markers or crayons

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- **Who came to visit the baby Jesus?**  
*(Shepherds and later wise men came to visit the baby Jesus.)*
  
- **What do you think the shepherds thought when they found the manger just as the angels had said?**  
*(Luke 2:20 says that the “shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.” They were amazed and they worshiped God.)*
  
- **What did Mary do when the shepherds told her about the angels they had seen?**  
*(She treasured what they told her in her heart. Mary knew her son was special and the shepherds’ vision of the multitude of angels confirmed this.)*

**CLOSING PRAYER . . . . . 5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day’s Scripture passages.

**BONUS OBJECT LESSON . . . . . 5 MIN**

**A Christmas Pageant in July**

**SUPPLIES:**

- ✓ simple costumes for the children such as a shepherd’s staff and old sheets or towels for robes and cloaks

## ■ LOWER ELEMENTARY LESSON 2

Assign parts for the whole Christmas pageant as follows: Mary; Joseph; an innkeeper; three wise men; Herod; and angels and shepherds (at least two of each depending on how many students are in your class).

Read Luke 2:1–20 and Matthew 2 having the children act out their assigned parts. Feed them key lines to repeat. Don't be concerned that you are interrupting the play to give them the lines. In the end sing a well-known Christmas song like "Joy to the World."

LESSON 2 - THE BIRTH OF JESUS

