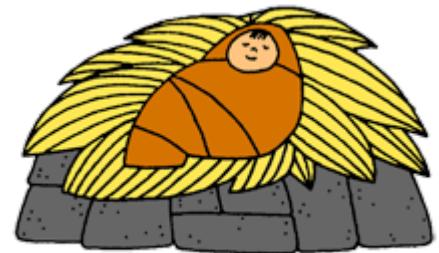


Birth of Jesus_Family Bible Time



Joseph and Mary travelled from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register for the census. While they were in Bethlehem, Jesus was born. The angel of the Lord told shepherds of Jesus' birth. The shepherds went and worshipped Jesus.



Scripture Reference: [Luke 1:39-45; 2:1-21](#)

Suggested Emphasis: God sent Jesus from heaven to earth in the form of a little baby. We should thank God for His gift to the world.

Group Share Time

Discuss gifts that you have received or given. Children like to hear about the kinds of gifts adults received for birthdays or Christmas when they were younger.

Story from the Bible

An adult or young reader can read the words below as the slides are shown.

1. Cover: The Birth of Jesus ([Luke 1:39-45; 2:1-21](#))
2. Joseph and Mary were married and lived in the town of Nazareth. God had chosen Mary to be the mother of a very special baby who was the son of God. Joseph was a good man and took care of Mary and her baby.
3. While Mary was pregnant she went to visit her much older cousin, Elizabeth. When Elizabeth saw Mary she felt the baby inside of her tummy move around. This was a happy day. In the future Mary's baby and Elizabeth's baby would be cousins. They would be Jesus and John the Baptist.
4. Joseph and Mary lived in a town called Nazareth. The Romans were in charge of the country. One day, the ruler of the country, called Caesar Augustus, sent a letter to Nazareth saying that all the people had to go to the city where their families came from. Every person in the family had to be counted. This was called a census. He wanted to know exactly how many people there were because he wanted everyone to pay taxes.
5. Joseph and his family had come from a little town called Bethlehem. Bethlehem was a long way from Nazareth. Of course there were no planes or cars back then. People had to walk or ride animals. Because Joseph and Mary wanted to do what the King commanded, they packed up their things. Mary rode a donkey, while Joseph walked beside her. They began their trip to Bethlehem.
6. When they arrived, they found the roads very crowded with people. They looked and looked for a place to stay, but all the inns were full. It was growing very late. Mary was tired. It was almost time for her baby to be born. Joseph was also tired and needed a place to rest.
7. God had not forgotten Mary and Joseph. Joseph saw a place kind of like a shed or barn where the animals were kept. He led Mary where it was warm and safe. They were glad to find a quiet place to rest from their long journey. During the night a wonderful thing happened. Mary had her baby. Mary was so happy. It was a son just as God had promised.

He was the Son of God. Joseph and Mary gave him the name of "Jesus".

- Joseph looked for a place to put the newborn baby. He found a box full of straw. This was the kind of box that farmers put hay in so the animals could eat from it. It was called a manger. Mary fixed the straw and put a piece of cloth on it. Then she wrapped the baby up tightly and placed Him in the warm straw.
- Outside the city, some shepherds were watching over their flocks of sheep in the quiet night. Suddenly, a great light filled all of the sky. They had never seen anything like it before. In the middle of the light they saw an angel. The angel spoke to them. He said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

All of a sudden, there was not just one angel but also many other angels and they were praising God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favour rests!"

- When the angels went away, the shepherds left their sheep and hurried into the town of Bethlehem. The angel had said that the baby would be in the town of David. Everyone knew that another name for the town of David was Bethlehem! The shepherds found Joseph and Mary and the baby just as the angels had said. They told Mary and Joseph all about the wonderful sight of the angels in the middle of the great light and the wonderful words they said. The shepherds were glad they found this special baby whose birth made even the angels happy.

Of all the gifts that anyone could ever give, the shepherds knew that God's gift was the best. God had given this little baby to the world.

Verse(s) to Think About

"For God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son. God gave his Son so that whoever believes in him may not be lost, but have eternal life."
John 3:16

"Every good action and every perfect gift is from God. These good gifts come down from the Creator of the sun, moon, and stars. God does not change like their shifting shadows." James 1:17

"Remember this: The person who plants a little will have a small harvest. But the person who plants a lot will have a big harvest. Each one should give, then, what he has decided in his heart to give. He should not give if it makes him sad. And he should not give if he thinks he is forced to give. God loves the person who gives happily. And God can give you more blessings than you need. Then you will always have plenty of everything. You will have enough to give to every good work." 2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Choose Activities and Learn Together

Select activities that suit your family or group. Consider ages and abilities and how to involve everyone present in at least one of the activities.

- AT HOME** Count how many items in your house are related to babies. No baby in the house? Use your imagination to find items that COULD be used for a baby if you had to make do like Joseph and Mary.
- EXPLORE:** Go online and use Google Maps to locate Nazareth and Bethlehem. Calculate how long it would take to walk between the two places. Consider conditions of the roads in the time of Jesus compared to now.
- IN THE WORD:** Pair up with someone (older person with younger) and memorise [John 3:16](#). Already have the verse memorised? Try memorising [James 1:17](#) or [2 Corinthians 9:6-8](#). Children love to memorise verses with adults because they then realise you are willing to put the work in too. [Fun ways to memorise Bible verses](#).
- GAME/ACTIVITY:** To emphasise the idea that Jesus was God's gift play the game "[Pass the Parcel](#)". This game is fun for all ages. You will need to prepare in advance.
- LIFE APPLICATION:** Choose an individual and allow everyone to say what a perfect gift for them would be (if money were no object). Do the same for each person in the room. Alternatively, you could write the gifts down and have the person read them out loud. Complete the activity by reading [Matthew 7:11](#). The best gifts we could give could not compare with what God gives us.

Now read [James 1:17](#) Talk about the "good and perfect gifts" that God has given each of us.

- CREATIVE:** Make your own wrapping paper by decorating paper with pictures depicting the birth of Jesus. Take home to use for future Christmas gifts or use it to wrap actual gifts to give to neighbours or friends after Family Bible Time.
- LIFE APPLICATION:** Provide gifts and cards for someone (children in the hospital, those in the military, who might need to have their day brightened) and spend time wrapping the gifts and making or writing cards.

- **LITTLE ONES:** This is a great time to play with a baby doll. Provide blankets, a box for a manger etc. so that they can pretend to take care of Baby Jesus.
- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Provide a variety of items so that participants can create manger scenes. Suggested items might be crackers, pretzel sticks, star cookies, animal crackers, desicated coconut or dried ramon noodles for hay, "gummy baby: candy, icing or cream cheese to "glue" things together.

Song Suggestions:

Singing does not have to be a performance. Don't take yourself too seriously. In the privacy of your own home or within a small group allow yourself to just be genuine and enjoy the experience together.

Singing songs yourself is more reliable than viewing them online. If you are viewing published videos online on forums such as YouTube be sure and preview them first to make sure there are not unhelpful advertisements. To avoid long pauses due to internet speed issues play the song through once before you begin and then hold it paused and ready to go at the beginning of the song.

- [Joy to the World \(with sheet music and lyrics\)](#)
- [What Child is This? \(with sheet music and lyrics\)](#)
- [Silent Night \(with sheet music and lyrics\)](#)
- [How Deep the Father's Love for Us \(link to David Wesley YouTube video\)](#)
- [How Deep the Father's Love for Us \(link to Milestone Church YouTube video\)](#)
- [More songs to choose from](#)

Additional Mission Bible Class Resources

- [Instructions for Family Bible Time and Intergenerational Groups here.](#)
- [More teacher information and additional ideas for today's lesson here.](#)
- [How to Plan a Bible Class for Children](#)
- [How to Teach Children at Various Ages](#)
- [Ideas for Teachers](#)
- [Songs for Bible Class](#)
- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Movement and Dance](#)



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