

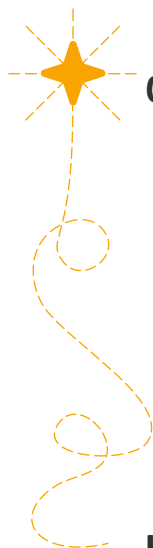
THE KING *is Coming!*



How to Use

THE KING IS COMING: FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

This resource is designed to help your family engage with the story of Jesus' birth in a meaningful and interactive way. Each Sunday includes a Scripture reading, a short devotional and a hands-on activity for the entire family that will help your children connect with the message.



GETTING STARTED:

Listen to Scripture and a Devotional

- Listen to a Scripture passage and short devotional for an engaging audio experience.
- Encourage your kids to listen carefully and imagine the scene as they hear the words.
- Look at the Wonder Questions and talk through them together.

Engage with the Activity

- Plan for time (as a family) to participate in the Sunday activity. Each activity will tell you what supplies are needed and any prep work that can be done ahead of time.
- Finish your time together with prayer.

HELPFUL TIPS

- Encourage open-ended questions to spark curiosity and understanding.
- If you miss a day, don't worry! Simply pick up where you left off.
- Most importantly, enjoy this time together as a family, growing in your faith and celebrating the hope that arrived in the form of a baby many years ago in Bethlehem.



WANT MORE EASY RESOURCES LIKE THIS ONE?

We have lots of free family discipleship tools, like our Family Discipleship Guide — perfect for jumping into a rhythm after the holidays. childdiscipleship.com/family-discipleship-guide/

May this Christmas season be a time of meaningful discipleship and joyful connection for your family!

P.S. We are a donor-fueled ministry, and free discipleship resources like this are made possible because of generous families who give to help children know, love, and serve Jesus. Learn more and give today. donate.awana.org



WEEK 1

THE FOREVER KING



Devotion

Today's story comes from the book of Micah, chapter five, verses 1-5. These verses say:

Scripture Reading

MICAH 5:1-5

Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops;
siege is laid against us;
with a rod they strike the judge of Israel
on the cheek.

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days.

Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;
then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.

And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

And he shall be their peace.

GLOSSARY:

Prophet: a person who gives God's messages to His people

Messiah: the promised Savior

Advent: The coming of Christ to earth, also signifies a period of four weeks in December when Christians pray and remember when Christ came to earth and anticipate Him coming again



WEEK 1 THE FOREVER KING

Micah is the 33rd book of the Bible and it is found in the Old Testament. It falls in the “Times of Trouble” period of the Bible and contains true stories that tell us what happened when the Israelites were not following God.

While Micah is the name of a book of the Bible, Micah is also the name of a person in the Bible — a prophet of the one true God. A prophet is a messenger sent by God. God gave Micah some very important messages to share with God’s people. One of those messages was that someday, **God would send a special King — a forever King.**

Sadly, God’s people, the Israelites, had a long history of doing the opposite of what God wanted them to do. Over and over again, the Israelites chose to live life their way instead of God’s way. Things had gotten so bad that the nation of Israel split into two kingdoms — the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

Even though the Israelites constantly disobeyed God, He did not abandon them. Instead, God sent many prophets to warn His people and to call them back to following Him. Micah was one of these prophets.

Micah warned the leaders that they were disobeying God by mistreating the poor and helpless. He warned that God was going to send judgment. He said that one day soon, their enemies, the Assyrians, would take over Israel. After that, the Babylonians, another enemy, would take them into captivity.

It was during this exile that the family of Esther, a Jewish woman who became queen of Persia, was taken to foreign lands. Micah prophesied that Jerusalem would be taken over and the temple would be totally destroyed.

However, Micah didn’t only share bad news! He also told the people about good things God had for them. You see, Micah wanted the Israelites to change their ways to follow God again. God’s ways are best and teach us how to live our lives to honor God and others.

God told the people that one day He would send a Ruler for Israel who would rule forever. **God would send a special King — a forever King.** This promised Messiah would be the One who would rescue the people and save them from their sins!

Micah told the people that this forever King would be

born in the small town of Bethlehem. Bethlehem wasn’t an important city like Jerusalem. However, some important things in the Old Testament happened there. David, the shepherd who killed the giant Goliath, lived there in his father Jesse’s house before he became king. David was a good king, but he was not the forever King that God had promised.

Ruth, a famous follower of God from the Old Testament, met her husband, Boaz, in Bethlehem. And now, Bethlehem was promised to one day be the birthplace of a King who would rule God’s people forever! Bethlehem may have been small, but God did big things there!

But what kind of King can rule forever? Israel and Judah had separate kings. Some kings were okay, but many were bad and really hurt Israel. Kings changed all the time either because they died or someone else took over.

Still, God was promising His people a Ruler who would never die and never go away. Micah shared that this

King would shepherd His flock in the strength of the Lord. He would keep God’s people secure and He would be their peace. **God would send a special King — a forever King.**

The people at the time did not know it, but this King would be Jesus, the promised Messiah! Jesus rules forever and makes a way for everyone, including you and me, to be forgiven of their sins if they trust Him as their Savior.

Only a King who is God can save us from our sins forever. Every single one of us is separated from God because of our sins. Just like the Israelites, we do things our way instead of His way. He is perfect and holy. He can’t be around sin. We need someone to rescue us from our sins, not just for a little bit but forever.

Jesus is the King of kings forever! Jesus has always existed and always will. When we believe in Jesus, our sins are forgiven. He can be the King of our lives, and we will live with Him forever.

Jesus is the **forever King** to anyone who trusts Him as their Savior.



WEEK 1 THE FOREVER KING

? Wonder Questions:

- Who is the forever King?
- Who sent Jesus to be the King?
- Who told the Israelite leaders God was sending a King?
- How long is Jesus going to be King?



Pray

Take a moment to pray together as a family and thank God for sending us a forever King.



Family Activity: Advent Garland

SUPPLIES:

For Garland: Twine; 25 verse cards (supplied on pages 7 - 9 of today's activity); dried orange and/or grapefruit slices; dried cranberries; a needle or similar tool to punch holes in the verse cards and dried fruit; optional items for garland such as wooden beads, dried star anise, rosemary sprigs or cinnamon sticks

For Making Dried Oranges, Grapefruit and Cranberries: Oranges and/or grapefruits (ripe but not too soft); fresh cranberries; a sharp knife; paper towels; a baking sheet; parchment paper or wire rack

Prep: Pre-cut the 25 verse cards (one for each day leading up to Christmas) included as part of today's family activity, cut a piece of twine the length you would like your Advent garland to be, purchase or create dried orange and/or grapefruit slices and dried cranberries to use as part of your garland.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR DRYING FRUIT:

How to Dry Orange and Grapefruit Slices

1. Preheat the oven to 200°F (90°C) or set it to the lowest temperature.
2. Slice fruit into 1/4-inch thick rounds. Pat dry with paper towels to remove excess juice.
3. Place the slices on a parchment-lined baking sheet or wire rack. Make sure they don't overlap.
4. Bake for three to four hours, flipping once halfway through. They're done when they feel dry but slightly flexible. (Check every 30 minutes after hour two.)
5. Let cool completely. They'll harden a little more as they cool.



Pro Tip:

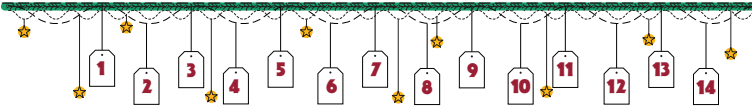
You can dry just about any fruit! Grapefruit and cranberries make a fun combo with oranges. If you have a dehydrator, you can utilize it for this project. If you don't, your oven works just as well!



WEEK 1 THE FOREVER KING

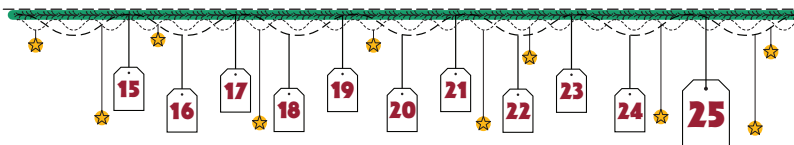
How to Dry Cranberries

1. Bring water to a boil and drop in the cranberries for one to two minutes until you hear a few pop. (This helps them dry faster.)
2. Drain and blot them dry with paper towels.
3. Spread out the cranberries on a parchment-lined baking sheet.
4. Bake at 200°F (90°C) for 5–6 hours, stirring every hour until they're shriveled and dry.
5. Cool the cranberries completely before stringing.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR GARLAND:

1. First, on the floor or a large table, lay out the pieces of dried fruit and verse cards in the order you want to string them on the twine. Don't forget to lay out the verse cards in numerical order.
2. Next, use the needle or a similar tool to carefully punch holes in each item you plan to string on your garland. Plan to punch one hole in each cranberry and two holes in each of the orange and grapefruit slices and verse cards.
3. Bonus: You can also add wooden beads, dried star anise, rosemary sprigs or cinnamon sticks to your garland.
4. Tie a loop at the far end of your twine for easy hanging and to keep the fruit in place.
5. Once the holes are complete, begin stringing your materials onto your garland. Begin with one to two pieces of dried fruit, and then add the verse card for day 25. Continue stringing dried fruit and verse cards on your piece of twine, counting down from day 25 to day one.
6. Once you are finished stringing your dried fruit and cards, tie a final loop for easy hanging and to prevent your fruit and cards from falling off.
7. Put the garland somewhere the family will regularly see it during the month of December to remind them that we celebrate the birth of our forever King, Jesus, during Christmas! These garlands are beautiful on mantels, stair rails, windows, or trees — and they smell amazing!





Cut out each tag & punch a hole in the top!

December



The _____ family is celebrating God's gift of Jesus this Christmas season!

December



In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. (Luke 2:1)

December



This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. (Luke 2:2)

December



And all went to be registered, each to his own town. (Luke 2:3)

December



And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David. (Luke 2:4)

December



To be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. (Luke 2:5)

December



And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. (Luke 2:6)

December



And she gave birth to her firstborn son. (Luke 2:7a)

December



And wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn. (Luke 2:7b)

December



And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (Luke 2:8)

December



And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (Luke 2:9)

December



And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people." (Luke 2:10)

December

13



"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

December

14



"And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (Luke 2:12)

December

15



And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, (Luke 2:13)

December

16



"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2:14)

December

17



When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, (Luke 2:15a)

December

18



"Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." (Luke 2:15b)

December



And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. (Luke 2:16)

December



And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. (Luke 2:17)

December



And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. (Luke 2:18)

December



But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. (Luke 2:19)

December



And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Luke 2:20)

December



And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb. (Luke 2:21)

December



This Christmas, we remember God's gift to us, **Jesus.**

25 Days of Christmas

WEEK 2

JOSEPH, MARY & THE MESSIAH



♥ Devotion

Today's story comes from the books of Matthew and Luke. Matthew is the 40th book of the Bible and Luke is the 42nd. They are both found in the New Testament. This true story falls in the "arrival of Jesus" period of the Bible. It tells us what happened right before Jesus was born and introduces us to Jesus' earthly parents!

Last week we learned about the prophet Micah and an important message he shared about the forever King, Jesus. God promised His people a Savior who would be King forever. We are learning about how that Savior came to Earth.

Luke 1:26-38 tells us about an angel's visit to the future mother of Jesus, a young girl named Mary. Mary was engaged to be married to a man called Joseph. But in the blink of an eye, her life was about to change forever! **God chose Mary and Joseph to be earthly parents to Jesus — the Messiah!** Let's find out what happened when the angel visited Mary by listening to what God's Word says.

Scripture Reading

LUKE 1:26-38

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy — the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.



When Mary first heard the news, her heart must have raced at Gabriel's words. Why would an angel come see her? She was just a normal person. But God had chosen her for something big! She would have a baby. But not just any baby — the Son of the Most High! The Son of God.

Overwhelmed, she wondered out loud, "But how can this be? I am not yet married."

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you," the angel replied. "The Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God." **God chose Mary and Joseph to be earthly parents to Jesus — the Messiah!**

When Joseph found out Mary was expecting a baby, he knew he wasn't the father because they weren't married yet. He didn't want to embarrass her, but he also didn't feel like he could marry her. In fact, the Bible says Joseph decided he would quietly break up with Mary and call off the engagement; Joseph didn't understand what God was doing yet!

As Joseph was considering what to do with this difficult situation, an angel appeared to him in a dream. Let's remember what the angel said to Joseph by listening to what God's Word says.

Scripture Reading

MATTHEW 1:20-24

But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

*"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,
and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means,
God with us).*

When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him.



GLOSSARY:

Favored: to be chosen for something important

Messiah: the promised Savior

Savior: the only One who can save us from our sins

Imagine an angel of the Lord saying “Joseph, son of David, do not fear.” Whatever anxiety or confusion had been in Joseph’s heart before his dream was replaced with peace brought by the angel of the Lord. Joseph felt so much better, in fact, that when he woke up from his dream, he immediately obeyed. He married Mary and took care of her as they prepared to be parents to Jesus. **God chose Mary and Joseph to be earthly parents to Jesus — the Messiah.**

The angel told both Mary and Joseph important things about who Jesus would be. Jesus would be the Son of God, He would rule forever and He would forgive people of their sins. All of these descriptions pointed toward the Messiah.

The name “Jesus” literally means “God is salvation.” Even Jesus’ name showed that He was the Messiah God had promised His people. God’s people had waited for hope and God was keeping His promise. He would use Joseph and Mary to fulfill His promise to His people. They would be earthly parents to the forever King of the world, Jesus. Jesus is the Messiah — the Savior who would rescue people from sin.

? Wonder Questions:

- Why do you think God sent an angel to deliver news to Mary and Joseph?
- What does Messiah mean?
- How does the promise of Jesus show God’s love for us?



Pray together as a family and thank God for fulfilling His promise to send the Messiah, Jesus.



Family Activity: Assemble a Nativity Scene

SUPPLIES:

For Nativity Activity: A Nativity set (if you don't have one, print the one included here and cut it out for you and your kids to color prior to the activity, or make one from household items), popsicle sticks to attach Nativity figures to (if using the printable Nativity)

For Creating Your Own Nativity: Gather a variety of supplies from around the house to create the figurines below, such as: cardboard and a cardboard box, paper bags, scrap fabric, permanent markers, yarn, clothespins, corks, napkins, construction paper, toothpicks, aluminum foil, pipe cleaners, glitter, used (but clean) soda bottles, cotton balls, googly eyes and plastic spoons.

PREP:

Locate your Nativity, prepare the one included here or create your own with materials from around your home.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR MAKING YOUR OWN NATIVITY:

Step 1: Build the Stable

Choose one of the following:

- Turn a wooden crate or box on its side.
- Cut open a cardboard box like a little barn.
- Use two toilet paper rolls as pillars and put a cardboard triangle on top for a roof.
- Glue popsicle sticks into a house shape.
- Fold and squish a brown paper bag into a tent.
- Add straw using shredded paper, raffia or even yellow yarn!

Step 2: Make Baby Jesus

Choose one of the following:

- Wrap a clothespin or cork in a small scrap of cloth (like a baby blanket).
- Draw a face on a bean, pebble or acorn and wrap it in tissue.
- Put baby Jesus in a manger made from one of the following:
 - » Bottle cap with shredded napkin "hay"
 - » Small box lid with Easter grass
 - » Muffin liner filled with paper strips

Lay the manger (with Him in it) in the center of the stable.



WEEK 2

JOSEPH, MARY & THE MESSIAH



Step 3: Make Mary

- Use a clothespin, cork or spoon for her body.
- Dress her in blue cloth, napkin, or construction paper.
- Draw or glue on eyes and a smile.
- Add yarn for hair or cover her head with a paper scarf.

Place her near the manger.

Step 4: Make Joseph

Use the same method as Mary, but give him:

- » A brown robe
- » A beard made of yarn or drawn with a marker
- » A walking stick made from a toothpick or twig

Place him next to Mary.

Step 5: Make an Angel

- Use a cotton swab, popsicle stick or small spoon as the body.
- Glue a coffee filter, cupcake liner or doily wings to the back.
- Make a halo from foil or pipe cleaner.
- Add a smiling face and sprinkle glitter on the wings.

Place your angel above the stable or on the roof.

Step 6: Make the Wise Men

Make three Magi using:

- Toilet paper rolls, spice jars or empty bottles
- Colorful paper or fabric scraps for robes
- Foil crowns
- Tiny "gifts" like:
 - » Wrapped building bricks
 - » Painted pebbles
 - » Tiny boxes or buttons

Stand them off to the side.

Step 7: Add the Animals



Pro Tip:

Send your kids on a scavenger hunt around the house to find these animal figurines among their toys! If you don't have those figurines, use the ideas below to make your own.

Sheep

- » Cotton balls glued to black paper legs and face
- » Pom-poms with googly eyes

Cow and Donkey

- » Painted rocks or cardboard cutouts
- » Toilet paper rolls with ears and tails
- » Plastic spoons with drawn faces

Camel

- » Draw a camel and cut it out.
- » Glue pipe cleaners and paper humps to a rock or bottle.

Let the animals gather around the stable or sleep nearby.

Step 8: Make the Christmas Star

- Cut a star from aluminum foil.
- Twist toothpicks or twigs into a star shape and paint it gold.
- Use a star-shaped pasta or cookie cutter and decorate it.

Glue the star above the stable or hang it with string.



Pro Tip:

If you want to create a backdrop, you can do so by drawing stars, angels or Bethlehem buildings on cardboard. You can also use fabric or tissue to create hills, hay or sky on the cardboard.





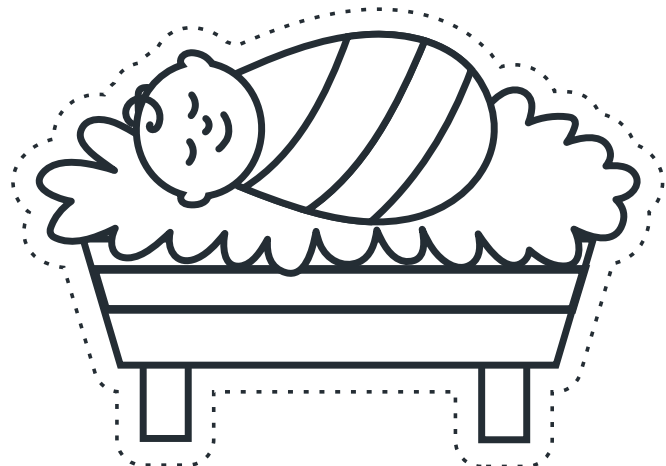
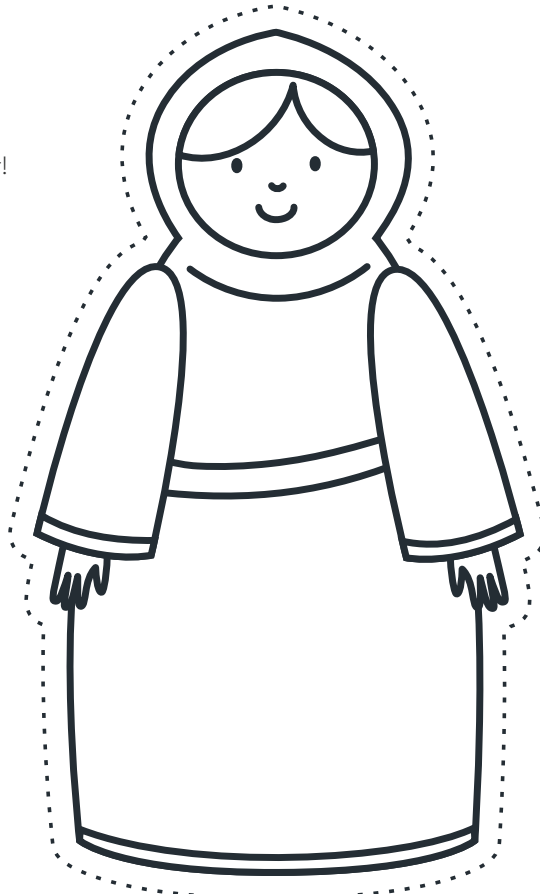
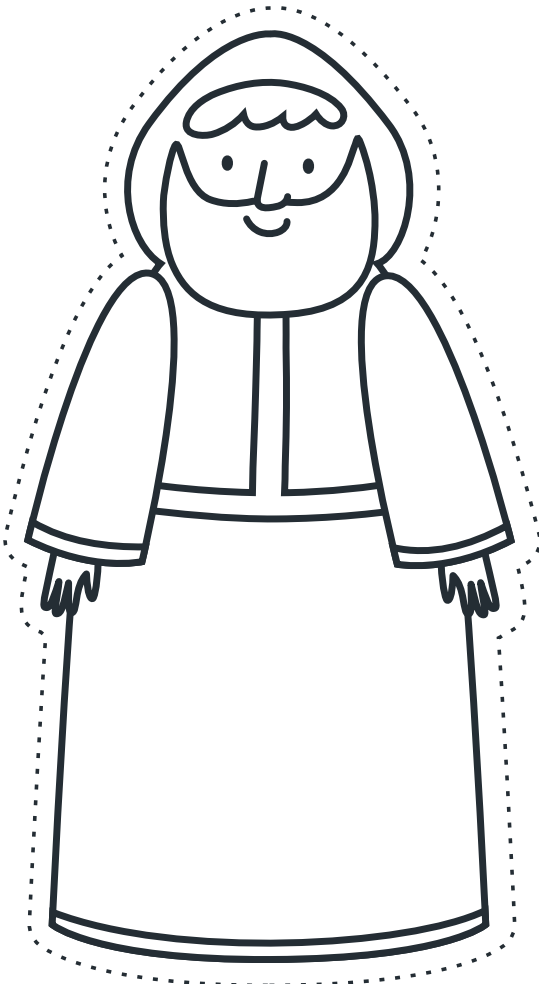
INSTRUCTIONS FOR FAMILY NATIVITY DISCUSSION:

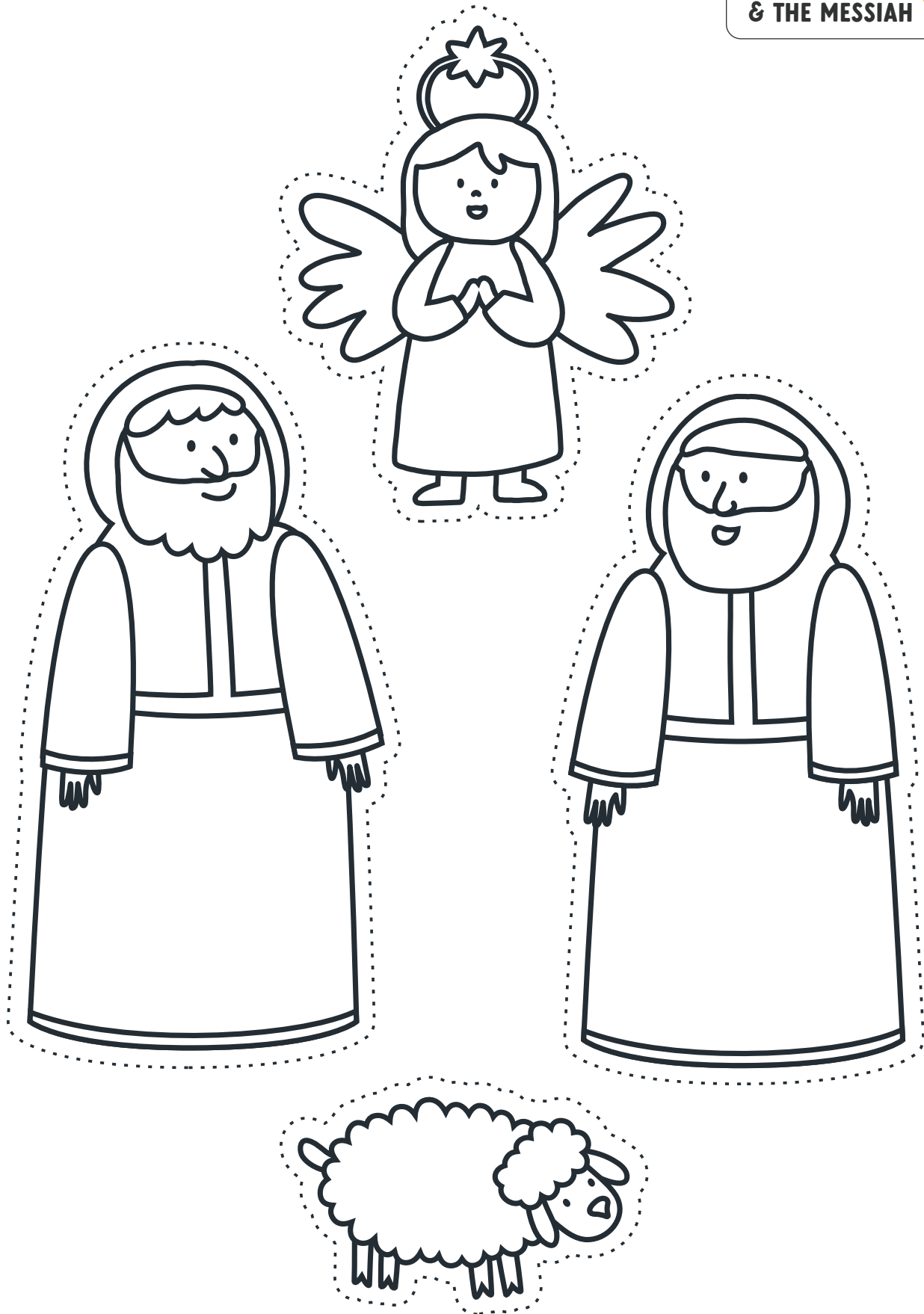
1. As a family, assemble a Nativity scene somewhere in your house where everyone will see it often.
NOTE: If you have already assembled a Nativity in your home, you can skip to step 2, or work as a family to find a new location for it.
2. As you put out each piece, ask your kids who the piece represents and if you have talked about them in this week's lesson or last week's lesson. **NOTE:** You will not have discussed some characters yet, such as shepherds.
3. Challenge your family to pause and thank God for sending us Jesus, the Messiah, each time they see the Nativity this Christmas-season.



Make it!

Make your own Nativity! Cut out the figures and color!







WEEK 3

THE ARRIVAL OF JESUS



Devotion

Today's story comes from the book of Luke, chapter 2, verses 1-21. Luke is the 42nd book of the Bible and found in the New Testament.

Last week we learned about how God chose Mary and Joseph to be earthly parents to Jesus — the Messiah. This week we will find out about the night Jesus was born, and some things that were said about Jesus before He was born! This true story falls in the "arrival of Jesus" period of the Bible. These verses say:

Scripture Reading

LUKE 2:1-21

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. And all went to be registered, each to his own town. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a

Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us." And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

**GLOSSARY:**

Bethlehem:	the city where Jesus was born
Manger:	trough that the animals ate from
Sin:	anything we think, say or do that disobeys God
Protoevangelium:	the first announcement of the Gospel in the Bible ¹
Immanuel:	God with us

Wow! A lot of miraculous things happened when Jesus was born. Mary and Joseph trusted God that He was working a miracle, and Mary gave birth to baby Jesus. Angels filled the night sky when Jesus was born, declaring His arrival. And shepherds heard the angels and then shared the good news of Jesus' birth with other people. What an exciting time! **God sent us a Savior!**

But did you know the New Testament isn't the first place that talks about the coming of Jesus? In the Old Testament, the prophet Micah delivered a special message God gave him about a forever King. But that wasn't the first mention about Jesus' coming either! Way back in the first book of the Bible, a book called Genesis, God gave humans hope for a Savior, His son Jesus.

Genesis 3:15 says:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.*

When Adam and Eve sinned, all hope seemed lost. God told them NOT to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, but they disobeyed Him. Adam and Eve sinned. Remember, sin is anything we think, say or do that disobeys God. But then God said something to the serpent, the creature who had encouraged Adam and Eve to disobey God. He said that someday, someone would be born Who would defeat the serpent! That someone is Jesus! **God sent us a Savior!**

The ESV Study Bible explains that this verse is something called a "protoevangelium." Wow, that's a big word. Let's investigate what it means. Protoevangelium² means

Genesis 3:15 is the first announcement of the Gospel in the Bible!³ The Gospel is the good news. It tells us how Jesus came to Earth to save humans from their sins!

This verse provides a glimmer of hope that God would make a way for people to be saved from their sins. That's good news because all people have sinned, and all people need a Savior. **God sent us a Savior!**

Let's look at another place in the Old Testament where Jesus' coming is mentioned. If we flip over to the Old Testament book of Isaiah, we hear about Jesus again!

Isaiah 7:14 says:

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign.
Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and
shall call his name Immanuel.*

In the book of Isaiah, God shared a special message that said a virgin would have a baby boy and His name would be called Immanuel. *But wait a minute. Mary named her baby Jesus. So who is Immanuel?* Immanuel simply means "God with us." This is super cool because Jesus is God, and when He came to Earth as a baby, He came to be with us! So Jesus is Immanuel! **God sent us a Savior!**

These verses in Genesis and Isaiah are just two of many places in the Bible that talk about Jesus' coming before He came. To this day, the arrival of baby Jesus that we read about in Luke was and is very important.

Jesus' arrival as a baby brought hope — hope that God would make a way for us to be saved from our sin. His arrival is something we continue to celebrate today. Why? Because the arrival of Jesus brings great joy to anyone who trusts Him as their Savior, because we know He redeems us.

¹ T. Desmond Alexander, Notes on Genesis, *The ESV Study Bible*, Large Print ed. (Crossway Bibles, 2016), 58.

² T. Desmond Alexander, Notes on Genesis, *The ESV Study Bible*, Large Print ed. (Crossway Bibles, 2016), 58.

³ T. Desmond Alexander, Notes on Genesis, *The ESV Study Bible*, Large Print ed. (Crossway Bibles, 2016), 58.

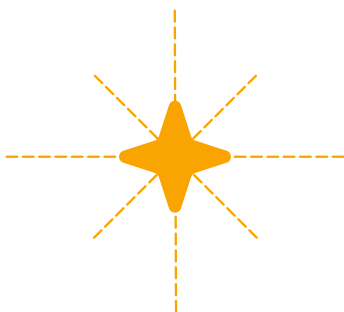


? Wonder Questions:

- Why did Jesus come as a baby?
- Why is the birth of Jesus good news?
- What did you learn about the special messages about Jesus in the Old Testament?



As a family, take time to pray and thank God for all the promises He has fulfilled, especially His gift of Jesus.





Family Activity: Promise Timeline

SUPPLIES:

Bibles, Promise Cards (attached), scissors, twine, Christmas stickers, tape

PREP:

Cut out the Promise Cards on pages 22-24 before starting the activity.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. God made promises to send a Savior to the world! Lay out a piece of twine on the table. The twine represents the time from the beginning of creation to when Jesus was born.
2. Next, as a family, look up the verses below and discuss what God promised His people. Each promise you will look up is represented on one of the Promise Cards.
3. Have your family look up these verses in this order:
 - a. Genesis 3:15
 - b. Genesis 17:4-7
 - c. 2 Samuel 7:15-16
 - d. Isaiah 7:14
 - e. Isaiah 9:6
 - f. Micah 5:2.
4. After you review each verse, tape* the corresponding Promise Card on the timeline. Then, ask a family member to add a Christmas sticker to the card for fun!
5. Once your family has attached all the Promise Cards to the twine, explain that these are just a few of the promises that God made about sending Jesus, the Messiah, over 4,000 years! God loves us and always keeps His promises.
6. Finish the activity by finding a spot in your home to hang your Promise Timeline to remind your family during the Christmas season that Jesus is the promised Messiah.



**Pro Tip:*

Consider using tiny clothespins or a hole punch and string as alternate ways to attach the cards.



GENESIS 3:15

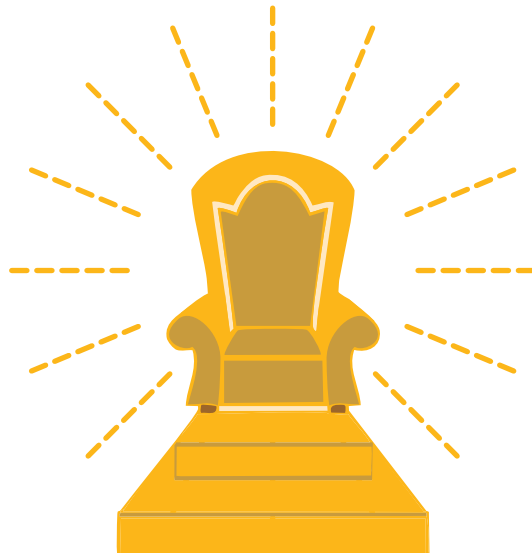


GENESIS 17:4-7





2 SAMUEL 7:15-16



ISAIAH 7:14





ISAIAH 9:6



MICAH 5:2





WEEK 4

SIMEON & ANNA MEET JESUS

♥ Devotion

This week's story comes from the book of Luke. Luke is the 42nd book of the Bible and found in the New Testament. This true story falls in the "arrival of Jesus" period of the Bible and tells us about what happened after Jesus was born!

Last week we talked about the night Jesus was born. We learned how God sent us a Savior and that Savior was Jesus. We also discovered that the Old Testament talks about Jesus before He came to Earth as a baby!

Now, none of us were there the night Jesus came to Earth, but that doesn't make the event any less special. Even though we didn't see the exciting things that happened that night, we can still rejoice in Jesus' arrival. Why? Because **Jesus came to save us from our sins!**

Today we'll learn about two people who weren't there the night Jesus was born (just like us!), but still rejoiced when they met Him. Let's find out more by listening to what God's Word says:

Scripture Reading

LUKE 2:22-38

And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord") and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

*"Lord, now you are letting your servant depart
in peace, according to your word;
for my eyes have seen your salvation"*

*that you have prepared in the
presence of all peoples,
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and for glory to your people Israel."*

And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

GLOSSARY:

Prophet(ess):	a messenger sent by God
Sacrifice:	an offering or gift to God
Temple:	a place to worship God
Law of Moses:	Often, it refers to the five books of Moses.
Consolation of Israel:	This refers to the hope that God would rescue and comfort His people ⁴ .

These verses introduce us to a man named Simeon. After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord and give an offering as it was required in God's law. Little did they know, they would meet Simeon there, too.

Simeon was very committed to following God and he knew about God's promise to send a Savior. He had been waiting for the promise to come true. God led Simeon to the temple while Jesus was there. Simeon took Jesus in his arms and praised God. He knew that meeting Jesus was reason to rejoice. **Jesus came to save us from our sins!**

Mary and Joseph were amazed by what Simeon was saying about their Son. They knew Jesus was the promised Savior, but God had used Simeon to remind them that Jesus had come to save the entire world, not just the people of Israel. **Jesus came to save us from our sins!**

Simeon shared that Jesus would lead many people to be saved, but sadly, many would also reject Him and choose their own way. That's true today, too. Jesus offers everyone a choice. We can trust Him as our Savior and be saved from our sins, or we can reject His offer and be separated from Him forever.

Simeon wasn't the only person who met Jesus during his

visit to the temple. At that same time, a woman named Anna came and saw Jesus. Anna was a prophet, a special messenger of God, just like Micah, the prophet we learned about several weeks ago! She had lived a long time and was now 84 years old. She worshiped at the temple day and night, never leaving. Like Simeon, Anna was committed to God and was waiting to meet God's promised Savior.

When Anna met Jesus, she praised God! Anna told others the good news, saying, "The promised Savior has been born!" After that, Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus left the temple and returned home.

Many years ago, God sent His Son Jesus to Earth as a baby boy to make a way for all people to be saved from sin so that we can have a restored relationship with God. God showed people like Anna and Simeon that Jesus was the Savior God promised to send from the very beginning and He came not to fight, and not just for some, but He came to save all people. **Jesus came to save us from our sins!**

Even though we weren't there for Jesus' birth, we can be like Simeon and Anna and still rejoice that we've been given the opportunity to get to know Him. Because Jesus came, we can be saved from our sins. Let's celebrate that this Christmas!

⁴ Wayne Grudem and Thomas R. Schreiner, Notes on Luke, *The ESV Study Bible*, Large Print ed. (Crossway Bibles, 2016), 2107.

? Wonder Questions:

- Why were Simeon and Anna so excited to meet Jesus?
- Who did Jesus come to save?
- Can we still celebrate Jesus' birth today? Why or why not?



Gather as a family and praise Jesus for coming to Earth as a baby so long ago. Thank Him that He offers us salvation, a way to be saved from our sins.

✂ Family Activity: Make a Cake for Jesus!

SUPPLIES:

A cake recipe (and the ingredients it calls for), candles, frosting, sprinkles and any other decorations you desire

PREP:

Gather all the ingredients your cake recipe calls for before starting the activity. Place them on the counter along with measuring cups and spoons, a mixing bowl, cake pan and anything else you may need to bake a cake. Don't forget to preheat the oven! OR, bake the cake before starting this activity.



Pro Tip:

Does your family celebrate birthdays with a unique tradition? Consider adding your own tradition alongside decorating the cake! For example, some families invite each member to share what the birthday person means to them. You could do this for Jesus as you eat your cake! Whatever your tradition might be, intentionally set aside time as a family to celebrate Jesus in this season.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. First, find a playlist of Christian Christmas songs to play during this activity! As a family, sing along to the ones everyone knows!
2. Follow the recipe's instructions for baking a cake. (If you've chosen to pre-bake your cake, skip to step three.)
3. Once the cake is baked and cooled, have the family gather around to decorate it.
4. Add sprinkles, candies, frosting and anything else you desire! Consider using Christmas-inspired candies (like candy canes) for decorating.
5. Remind your family that even though Jesus was born many years ago, His birth is something we can celebrate today!
6. Once the cake is finished, sing a Christian Christmas song of your choosing in honor of Jesus' birthday!

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