

PROMISES KEPT

Lesson 3



A RULER WILL COME OUT OF BETHLEHEM

Scriptures

Micah 5:2
Luke 2:1-20

Memory Verse

Christ . . . shows us that God will keep the promises He made to the founders of our nation. Romans 15:8b (NirV)

Lesson for use with Bethlehem and Jesus Candles

The Promise: “The Lord says, ‘Bethlehem, you might not be an important town in the nation of Judah. But out of you will come a ruler over Israel for me. His family line goes back to the early years of your nation. It goes all the way back to days of long ago.’” Micah 5:2 (NirV)

The Promise Kept: God’s promise says that a ruler, God’s Son, had a family line that went all the way back to days long ago. Does that remind you of something from last week? What family was Joseph from? He was from King David’s family and King David’s family line went all the way back to Jacob, Isaac, and Abraham. God’s promise also says that a ruler, God’s Son, would come out of Bethlehem, but who remembers where Mary was when the angel Gabriel came to visit her? Mary and Joseph both lived in the town of Nazareth, in the region of Galilee. How do you think Jesus is going to come out of Bethlehem, then? Bethlehem was not an important town. But it was King David’s town. Let’s see how God kept His promise . . .

During the time that Joseph and Mary lived, most of the world was under the control of the Roman Empire. Caesar Augustus was the ruler, or emperor. One day, he decided he wanted to count all of the people in his empire. So, Caesar Augustus made a law. The law said that everyone had to go to the town of their ancestors to be counted. Where was Joseph’s ancestor, David, from? That’s right, Bethlehem! So Joseph went to Bethlehem to be counted. He went from Nazareth, in Galilee, to Bethlehem, in Judea. Mary went with him.

By the time they arrived, Bethlehem was full of people. Everyone who had King David as an ancestor was there. They had all come to be counted. Because there were so many people, Joseph and Mary couldn’t find a place to stay . . . until someone offered their stable. Who usually sleeps in a stable? Animals sleep in stables! So Joseph and Mary settled down among the animals that were being kept there.

While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for their baby to be born. Mary gave birth to her first baby, a boy. They named Him Jesus. Mary wrapped Him up, but she didn’t have a crib for Him. Instead, she placed Him in the manger. Who can tell me what a manger is? (Yes, it’s what the animals eat out of.) Can you believe it? Jesus, God’s Son, being born, not in a palace but in a stable and sleeping, not in a beautiful new crib but in a manger. But, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, just as God had promised!

What do you do when you know someone has had a baby? You want to tell others, don’t you? Well, that is exactly what God did. He announced His Son’s birth, but He didn’t announce it to the king. Just as God had picked the most unlikely city for His Son to be born, He announced His Son’s birth to the most

Lesson Goals

- To understand that God promised to send His Son
- To understand that God promised His Son would be born in Bethlehem
- To understand that God keeps His promises

Life Application

Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem?

The emperor, Caesar, wanted everyone to be counted. God made all of this happen at just the right time. The Bible tells us that God can make even kings do what He wants done. (Proverbs 21:21)

What happened once Joseph and Mary arrived in Bethlehem?

Jesus was born. Our memory verse says that, "Christ . . . shows us that God will keep the promises He made." Do you trust God? If not, will you make that decision today?

Maybe you think that for some reason God couldn't possibly save you and want a relationship with you. Do you remember who God announced Jesus' birth to? The shepherds. Were they very popular? No, but God wants us to know that He sent Jesus for everyone. He has a plan, even for you. You can trust Him to keep His promise.

unlikely group of people. You see, outside of the city of Bethlehem, shepherds were taking care of their sheep. Shepherds weren't very popular people. But God sent an angel to them. The shepherds were terrified when they saw the angel, but the angel announced, "Don't be afraid. I've got good news for you. Actually its good news for everyone. This very day in King David's town, Bethlehem, a Savior has been born to you. You will find Him all wrapped up. You will find Him in a manger." How many other newborn babies do you think were sleeping in mangers in Bethlehem that night? (Probably not very many, if any.)

Then, not only was there one angel, there were now many angels. They praised God and they said, "God in heaven deserves the glory. Those who please Him will have peace." And the angels went back in to heaven.

The shepherds decided to go see for themselves what God had announced to them. They hurried towards Bethlehem and they found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus. When they found them, Jesus was lying in a manger just as the angel had said. They told Joseph and Mary all that they had seen. They returned to their sheep praising God. "Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told." (Luke 2:20 NIV) God kept His promise!

Review

What was God's promise? (A ruler out of Bethlehem)

Did God keep His promise? (Yes.)

How did God keep His promise? (by causing the emperor to count all the people)

Why did Joseph and Mary leave Nazareth and go to Bethlehem? (because Joseph was from King David's family and Bethlehem was King David's town)

What happened while they were in Bethlehem? (Jesus was born. The shepherds came to worship Him.)

Lesson 4 A Son Brought Out of Egypt Hosea 11:1

Preschool Lesson

An Idea

Bring stuffed animals, preferably farm animals. Bring as many as you can to fill your room.

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By the time they arrived, Bethlehem was full of people. Everyone who had King David as an ancestor was there. They had all come to be counted. Because there were so many people, Joseph and Mary couldn't find a place to stay . . . until someone offered their stable. Who usually sleeps in a stable? Animals sleep in stables! So Joseph and Mary settled down among the animals that were being kept there. (Encourage your students to make sounds of the animals that might have been in the stable.)

While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for their baby to be born. Mary gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy and they named Him Jesus. Mary wrapped Him up, but she didn't have a crib for Him. Instead, she placed Him in the manger. A manger is what animals eat out of.

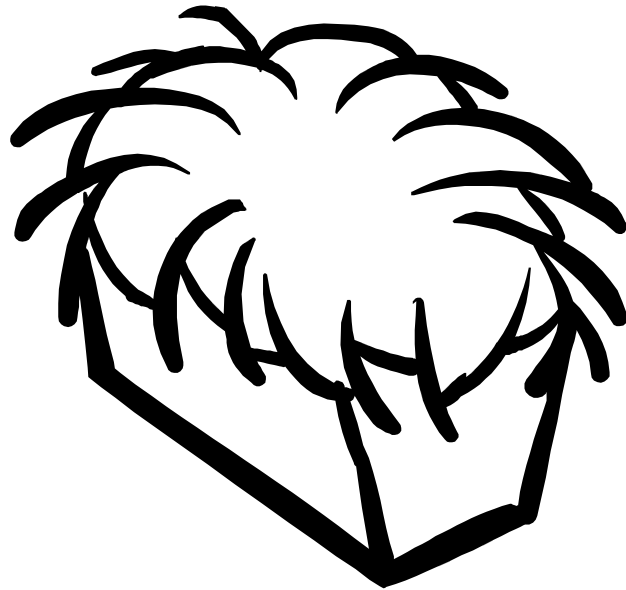
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Activities

- Make Baby Jesus Cookies. Coat chow mein noodles with chocolate and form into a bowl shape. Top with a candy coated nut to represent baby Jesus.
- Make a Bethlehem Mobile. Form a circle from a large strip of construction paper. Decorate the strip with buildings to represent Bethlehem. Attach strings at the top for hanging and strings from the bottom of the strip to display pictures of shepherds, Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus in the manger. Attach a star to the top of the mobile.
- Make Nativity Scenes. These can be made from materials as simple as craft sticks or as advanced as clay. Be creative!
- Make Christmas Cards! Be sure to include the memory verse or a scripture from the story.
- Play a Bethlehem Matching game. Provide pictures from the story along with corresponding verses. Match the picture with its corresponding verse.
- Create a Mural. Use a large sheet of butcher paper or newsprint. Assign each student a part of the mural—Bethlehem, cave and manger, Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus as well as the fields outside of city, shepherds, sheep, and angels.



Christ shows us
that God will keep
the promises He made
to the founders
of our nation.
Romans 15:8

WORD SEARCH

i r n l e a n g d y l o
m e h e l h t e b r f r
h r b r c w s a s a s y
c i t y o f d a v i d a
a p e n u e h t m j r b
e m o a n g e l s n e a
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r a c l a i s s p j e b
j m a n g e r o l r h a
o o o l j s p i r i s p
n r i l p t p o f g n s

Bethlehem

city of David

Caesar

Roman Empire

manger

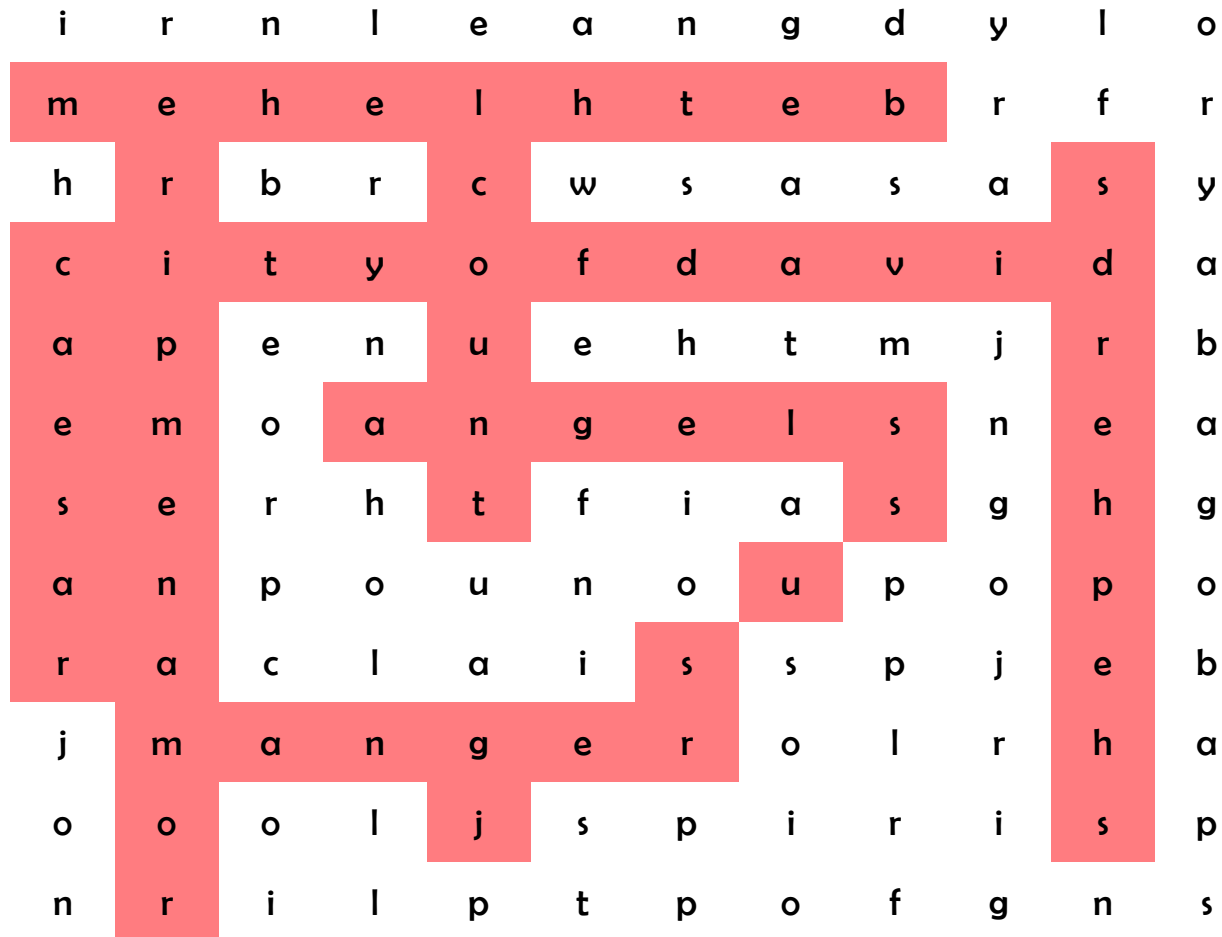
Jesus

count

shepherds

angels

WORD SEARCH



Bethlehem

city of David

Caesar

Roman Empire

manger

Jesus

count

shepherds

angels