

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY
CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON (Pre-K&K)

Lesson #50

Date:

SUBJECT: The birth of the Lord Jesus-The Announcement of the Savior's birth, Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem, the Shepherds rejoice at the Savior's birth.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:26-38; Matthew 1:18-21; Luke 2:1-7, 8-14, 15-20.

AIM: To tell the children about the wonderful birth of a special baby, God's only Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: **Luke 2:11 "Because today a Savior has been born to you in David's city, who is Christ the Lord."**

CONTENT:

Mary and Joseph await the Savior's birth (Luke 1:26-38; Matt. 1:18-21)

Last week, we learned that the Angel Gabriel told Zacharias some good news-he and Elizabeth were going to have a baby. Zacharias and Elizabeth were very happy about that good news.

While Zacharias and Elizabeth were waiting for their baby to be born, the Angel Gabriel brought good news to a young girl named Mary. Mary was going to have a Baby. Her Baby would be the Savior. How do you think she felt about that news?

An angel also appeared in a dream to Joseph. Joseph was the man whom Mary was going to marry. The angel told Joseph the good news that Mary was going to have a Baby, and her Baby was Jesus, the Savior. How do you think he felt about the news?

Mary and Joseph travel to Bethlehem (Luke 2:1-7)

Months went by. It was almost time for Mary's Baby to be born when Mary and Joseph found out they must make a long trip to the town of Bethlehem.

The new emperor, Caesar Augustus, ordered all the people of Israel to return to the cities where their grandfathers had lived. The emperor wanted to count all the people who lived in his kingdom.

Everyone had to obey the emperor's order! That is why Mary and Joseph had to travel many miles from their town to the town of Bethlehem. Mary and Joseph belonged to King David's family, and he had lived long ago in Bethlehem.

This would be a long trip. Mary knew she would be very uncomfortable riding for hours on a donkey, but she also knew that they had to go.

Mile after mile, Joseph walked along, probably leading the donkey that carried Mary down the crowded road to Bethlehem. Other travelers hurried past them – everyone was anxious to get to the town and find a place to sleep.

Mary and Joseph probably were very glad when they saw the houses of the town. They needed a place to rest, but when they got there, they saw that many, many other people had arrived in the town ahead of them. These people had taken all the places where travelers could sleep.

Joseph wanted to find a room for Mary in the inn, but all the rooms were full. We can imagine Joseph telling the inn-keeper, “Mary is very tired and she needs to rest. Her Baby may be born soon. Don’t you have any place for us tonight?”

The innkeeper thought for a moment. Then he told Joseph about the only place he knew about – a stable, which was in a cave behind the inn, where the animals stayed.

Joseph was glad even for a cave. He took Mary there and made a bed for her. He probably spread straw on the floor of the cave, and covered it with blankets. Mary lay down on the straw bed to rest.

But she didn’t rest very long, because the Baby was ready to be born. After a while, Baby Jesus, the Savior, was born.

Carefully Mary wrapped long strips of soft cloth, called swaddling clothes, round and round Baby Jesus. Then she placed Him on a bed of straw in the manger, the place where the animals usually ate their food. Baby Jesus was safe and warm in that little bed.

The shepherds listen to the angels (Luke 2:8-14)

While all this was happening in the cave at Bethlehem, there were shepherds out in the fields outside the town. These shepherds were watching their sheep and keeping them safe. In the dark, quiet night, some shepherds slept while others sat around the fire, keeping it burning bright so the wild animals wouldn’t attack the sheep.

The shepherds probably were talking together as they sat together under the peaceful, starry sky.

Suddenly, a bright, shining angel of the Lord appeared in the dark. Dark night was now as bright as day. *Show Bible Picture 2a.* The light was so bright; the shepherds may have closed their eyes. But they also fell on their knees, and they were trembling. They didn’t know what was happening.

Suddenly, the sky was filled with lots of angels who praised God. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

Then suddenly, the night was dark again. The angels had returned to heaven, and the shepherds were alone with their sheep again.

The shepherds rejoiced in the Savior’s birth (Luke 2:15-20)

Can you imagine the shepherd’s voices as they talked about this good news? “Let’s go to Bethlehem, to see what has happened. We want to see what the Lord has told us.”

They hurried across the fields to the city. Perhaps they asked some people if they knew where the Savior was born. They may even have asked the innkeeper if he knew where a newborn Baby had been laid in a manger, and he would tell them about the two people staying in the cave. They may have expected many people to be crowding in the entrance of the cave, but they found no one else. They only found a young woman and a man bending over a Baby lying in the manger-bed. *Show Bible Picture 2b.*

Kneeling before the Baby, the shepherds worshiped Him. The angel had told them that the Baby in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger is the Savior, Christ the Lord – that's why they worshiped Him.

The men told Mary and Joseph how the angels had appeared to them, and told them the good news, while they were out in the fields.

When the shepherds left the cave, they could not keep the *good news* to themselves. They told everyone they saw about the angels, and Baby Jesus. The Savior. People were amazed that such a wonderful thing had happened that night.

Mary was glad that the angels had told the shepherds about her Baby; she wanted to remember this night the rest of her life.

And the shepherds, what do you think they did? They returned to watch the sheep, but they were like different men. They were now happy and glad because the angels had told them the good news. They praised God because He had told them about the Savior, and they had seen this wonderful Baby.