

UNIT 1

# JESUS WAS BORN



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# JESUS WAS BORN

**LIFE POINT:** GOD SENT JESUS TO THE EARTH TO BE THE SAVIOR.



## LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING

God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.

## BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 2:1-20

## WEEKLY BIBLE VERSE

Today a Savior, who is Messiah the Lord, was born for you in the city of David.  
*Luke 2:11*

## UNIT VERSE

A child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.  
*Isaiah 9:6*

## SUGGESTED DATE

week of December 18

## LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Around 6 B.C. the Roman Emperor, Caesar Augustus, ordered a census be taken of everyone in his empire. The census was to determine how much he could make in taxes. For that reason, Joseph and Mary left Nazareth to travel to his familial home in Bethlehem. While there, Mary gave birth to Jesus. Since they were not staying at a regular inn, they used a feeding trough as Jesus' bed.

The scene shifts to the Judean hills where shepherds tended their flocks. Suddenly, an angel appeared and terrified them. The angel comforted them and heralded the good news of the birth of the Messiah. Have you ever wondered why God chose to announce the Savior's birth *first* to lowly shepherds? Why didn't He initially inform the high priests, kings, or philosophers? Those would be the most natural audiences to address, wouldn't they?

Perhaps God told the shepherds first because of the type of king Jesus was going to become. Jesus did not come to be a political or military ruler. Possibly, because of the type of people the shepherds represented, the shepherds were the first to hear. The shepherds were common people for whom Jesus came to give His life. Shepherds were despised as morally and ritually unclean. Despite their social standing, Jesus' birth and kingdom was not only for them but for *all* people.

The shepherds visited Jesus after multitudes of angels announced, "Glory to God in the highest!"

What does Mary's being in Bethlehem at Jesus' birth teach about the providence of God? \_\_\_\_\_

What did the shepherds do after they returned from seeing Jesus? Why? \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** Downloadable versions of items identified as *CD* are available in the Music and Print Extras Bundle. Items identified as *DVD* are available in the Digital Video Bundle.

Additional training for Bible Studies for Life: Kids available at [ministrygrid.com/web/biblestudiesforlife](http://ministrygrid.com/web/biblestudiesforlife).

# PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

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## ► Circle Toss

1. Lead preteens to form a circle around the prepared sheet of paper, allowing for at least three feet of free space.
2. Hand the coin to a preteen, and guide her to toss the coin onto the paper. When the coin lands on or near a letter, the player should name a book in the Bible that starts with that letter (if there is one).
3. Continue play around the circle. Challenge preteens to throw over their shoulders, with their eyes shut, between their legs, and so forth. Acknowledge that not every letter starts a book of the Bible. Tell preteens that they may not use a book name that has already been used. If all books for a particular letter have been given or there is no book that begins with a letter selected, the preteen may have another turn by declaring, "There is no (other) book that begins with that letter."
4. Raise the skill level of this activity by encouraging preteens to name not only a book of the Bible that starts with that letter, but the division that book belongs to as well.

► coin

► marker, large sheet of paper—Write on the paper, in random order, the letters of the alphabet.

**Option:** "Random Letters" (CD)

# INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

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## ► When You Were Born

► DVD

1. Group preteens into two teams. Explain that they will be playing a game based on information from 2005, the year some of them were most likely born.
2. Explain that as you ask questions, teams will take turns giving answers. Allow teams to go back and forth as they make guesses. If not answered correctly, provide the answers after teams have made several attempts.
3. Congratulate the team that correctly answers the most questions correctly. Ask each question that follows:
  - Who was the President of the United States? (*George Bush*)
  - What team won the World Series? (*Chicago White Sox*)
  - What was the top toy for preteen boys? (*Lego® bricks*)
  - What famous hurricane hit New Orleans? (*Katrina*)
  - What popular video-sharing website was launched? (*YouTube™*)
  - What shuttle was sent into space on its 31st mission? (*Discovery*)
4. Acknowledge that no one knows all the things that were happening when they were born. Point out that there are things preteens can still learn about when Jesus was born, too, even though the story may be very familiar.
5. Play the "Jesus Was Born: Introduction" video.



# STUDY THE BIBLE



- Pack Items 1, 2, 7, 8
- Teaching Picture 3
- DVD
- “Missions: Mahafaly Hut Photo”—Print 1 copy of the photo (CD).
- 3 towels, safety pins
- Prior to the session, enlist 3 willing volunteers to serve as actors.

## GETTING TO THE POINT

### ► “Jesus Was Born Title Banner” (Pack Item 1)

- Call attention to the title banner.
- Explain that preteens will learn more about why God sent Jesus to the earth.
- Share that today’s Bible story is from a passage in the Book of Luke that is often read at Christmas.

## LOOK IN THE BOOK

### ► “Who’s the Real Shepherd? Scripts,” “Who’s the Real Shepherd? Labels” (Pack Items 7, 8)

- Listen as a volunteer reads Luke 2:1-2 aloud. Question preteens about the datable information contained in these verses. Point out that God inspired Luke’s writing in such a way that we have an idea of when Christ was born. Ask: “Why do you think it is important that the Bible be historically accurate?” (*Placing Jesus’ birth in the context of history emphasizes its truthfulness.*)
- Continue by reading Luke 2:3-7 together. Allow preteens to suggest reasons why Jesus was placed in a feeding trough. Comment that some translations use the term *manger*, but both terms mean the same thing. Luke showed that Jesus was born into poor circumstances, yet Jesus would be the Savior for all people, regardless of education, social status, wealth, or reputation.
- Direct the enlisted actors to exit the room and put towels or something similar on their heads to appear like shepherds. Label them as shepherds 1, 2, and 3 with the appropriate Pack Item pieces. Instruct the shepherds to follow their scripted answers and make the following claim as they reenter the room: “I was one of the shepherds in Bethlehem on the night Jesus was born.”
- Guide remaining preteens to refer to Luke 2:1-20 in order to determine which actor is the “real” shepherd. Ask the shepherds the “Questions for Shepherds” on the Pack Item.
- Encourage the group to announce their decision, then say: “Will the real Bethlehem shepherd please stand?” (The script notifies shepherd 2 that he is the “real” shepherd.)

## REVIEW CHALLENGE

### ► Teaching Picture 3

- Display the Teaching Picture. Invite a preteen to describe what is happening.
- Use the review questions on page 90 to ensure preteens’ understanding of

today's passage.

- Remind preteens that Scripture says the shepherds praised God for all the things they saw and heard that night. Ask: "Why is Jesus' birth a cause for rejoicing?"
- Acknowledge that the greatest reason we have for rejoicing is that God was at work to bring about our salvation.

## UNIT VERSE CHALLENGE

### ► "Isaiah 9:6 Unit Verse" (Pack Item 2)

- Encourage anyone who is able to recite the Unit Verse from memory to do so.
- Display the poster, and direct preteens to read it aloud.
- Share that Luke 2:11 is the weekly verse. Read it aloud, encouraging preteens to listen closely for three different titles the angels used to identify Jesus. (*Savior, Christ or Messiah, Lord*)
- Explain that these titles would have been familiar to the shepherds. Ask:
  - Which of the titles ascribed to Jesus in Luke 2:11 means "deliverer?" (*Savior*)
  - Which of the three titles ascribed to Jesus in Luke 2:11 means "Promised One?" (*Christ or Messiah*)
  - Which of the three titles ascribed to Jesus in Luke 2:11 indicated supreme authority and that Jesus was and is God? (*Lord*)
- Remind preteens of the first session in this unit about the prophecies related to Jesus' birth. Point out that Luke 2:11 is the fulfillment of the prophecy contained in Isaiah 9:6.

**OPTION:** Memorize the Weekly Bible Verse: Luke 2:11.

## MISSIONS EMPHASIS

- Show the "Mahafaly Hut Photo" and explain that Mahafaly homes are made from hardened mud and sticks.
- Comment that there is no printed Bible in the language of the Mahafaly people.
- Lead kids to count the number of Bibles they can find in the classroom today.
- Pray that the Mahafaly people will understand the stories and come to love God.

## APPLY THE BIBLE AND PRAY

- Show the "Jesus Was Born: Life Action" video.
- Pray, asking God to help preteens understand that He sent Jesus to be the Savior for all people.
- Describe the Live It Out activities, and dismiss preteens to their groups.

# LIVE IT OUT

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## CHOICE 1

➤ Activity Pages

➤ Christmas-shaped cookie cutters, copy paper, cardstock, hole punch, string, scissors, fine-point markers, glue, stopwatch or timer

➤ Christmas fabric—Cut pieces into 8½-by-11-inch pieces. Provide 1 piece for each girl.

## CHOICE 1 (GIRLS)

### ► Gift Tags, “Other Outcasts,” “Follow the Trail” (Activity Page)

1. Work as a group to complete “Other Outcasts” on the Activity Page. Guide girls to discuss why the news of Christ’s birth was cause for rejoicing for all people.
2. Guide girls to form pairs, and give each pair a sheet of copy paper. Challenge each pair to come up with ways they can focus on the true meaning of Jesus’ birth this week. After sharing the following starter ideas, set a timer for five minutes: lead the blessing at your family meal, sing praise choruses while traveling, place written prayers in family members’ stockings, read Luke 2 at a party, take food plates to a lonely neighbor, leave a tract at a gift returns counter.
3. Allow pairs to share their ideas with the group. Encourage girls to commit to follow at least one of the suggestions presented, as well as the one you will work on during class.
4. Inform girls that they are going to make gift tags that proclaim the true meaning of Jesus’ birth. Provide the materials and instruct girls to glue the fabric to the cardstock. Use the cookie cutters to trace Christmas shapes onto the cardstock. Cut out the shapes, then write the words from Luke 2:11 on the side without the fabric. Punch a hole into the card and tie a string through it.
5. Urge preteens to place their gift tags where the verse can be read by someone who needs to know why Jesus’ birth is important. Encourage them to be prepared to explain the meaning of the verse’s words by completing “Follow the Trail” on the Activity Page.

## CHOICE 2

➤ Activity Pages

➤ index cards—Write the following words on separate cards: *census, Bethlehem, firstborn, inn, flocks, angel, peace, and shepherds.*

**Option:** “Name It Cards” (CD)

## CHOICE 2 (BOYS)

### ► Name It, “Follow the Trail” (Activity Page)

1. Group boys into two teams. Explain that they will play a game in which they guess something being described from today’s Bible story.
2. Tell boys that teams will take turns giving one-word clues to help *It* guess what they are describing. Call for a team to come forward. Select a volunteer to serve as *It* during the round. Show the other team members the card which contains the word *It* must guess. (Example: If the term is *feeding trough* or *manger*, the following clues could be given: hay, animals, food, holder, laid.)
3. State that teams will earn three points if *It* guesses the word on card on the first guess, two points for the answering on the second guess, and one point if *It* requires three guesses. Continue rounds as time permits. Congratulate the team that scores the most points.

4. Guide boys to complete “Follow the Trail” on the Activity Page. Clarify that the message is “God sent His Son to be the Savior.”
5. Encourage boys to spend time this week considering how they can share that message with others.

### CHOICE 3 (BOYS AND GIRLS)

#### ► By the Numbers Game, “Other Outcasts,” “Follow the Trail” (Activity Page)

1. Ask: “Why do you think God chose the shepherds to hear the important announcement about Christ’s birth?”
2. Explain that the shepherds were considered a low-class group by the Jews because their work didn’t allow them to keep ceremonial hand washing rules and regulations—they were “unclean” by Jewish law. Emphasize that the shepherds represented the outcasts and sinners for whom Christ came.
3. Play the following game to illustrate how it feels to be an outcast. Preteens should group together when you call out a number, being careful to include only the number of people in the group that was announced. For example, if you call out the number 3, preteens should form groups of 3.
4. Start the game by calling out low numbers, then announce large numbers. Question those who were left out of a group about how it felt to be excluded.
5. Remind preteens that God’s love for all people was evident in His decision to announce Jesus’ birth to shepherds, a group considered to be outcasts.
6. Lead preteens to complete “Other Outcasts” and “Follow the Trail” on the Activity Page as time allows.

### WRAP UP

- Encourage preteens to look for ways to truly celebrate Jesus’ birth this Christmas.
- Emphasize to preteens that God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.
- Play the “Jesus Was Born: Wrap Up” video.
- Inform preteens that one of the “Bible Activity” Take-Home Cards has a word wheel game. Challenge them to find that card and complete the challenge with friends.
- Dismiss with prayer. Remind kids to give their One Conversation™ pages to their parents.

### CHOICE 3

► Activity Pages

### WRAP UP

► DVD

# REVIEW QUESTIONS

## UNIT 1

### SESSION 1

- In the Old Testament, whose job was it to bring messages to God's people? (*prophets*)
- Isaiah was a \_\_\_\_\_ prophet. (*major*)
- Isaiah said this would be a sign: a \_\_\_\_\_ would have a son. (*virgin*)
- What does *Immanuel* mean? (*God with us*)
- How long had God been planning for Jesus to come as our Savior? (*since the beginning of time*)
- True or False: God always keeps His promises. (*true*)

### SESSION 2

- What was the angel's name who visited Mary? (*Gabriel*)
- To whom was Mary betrothed? (*Joseph*)
- Why was Jesus' birth miraculous? (*no human father*)
- For what did Elizabeth commend Mary? (*believing*)
- How did the angel speak to Joseph? (*in a dream*)

- What was Joseph told to do? (*to marry Mary*)

### SESSION 3

- Who sent out a decree that required Joseph to travel to Bethlehem? (*Caesar Augustus*)
- What was the first response of the shepherds to the appearance of the angels? (*fear*)
- What uncommon sign were the shepherds told to look for? (*a baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger*)
- When did the shepherds go to see the baby in the manger? (*immediately*)
- True or False: The shepherds kept the news about Jesus' birth a secret. (*false; They told as many as they could.*)
- What was Mary's response to the shepherds' words? (*pondered them in her heart*)

### SESSION 4

- The wise men were seeking the King of the \_\_\_\_\_. (*Jews*)
- Why was Herod so concerned about

the news of a newborn Jewish king? (*worried about a challenge to his authority*)

- True or False: The Jewish leaders made an effort to see the newborn King themselves. (*false; They asked the wise men where the baby would be born.*)
- Which of these did the wise men not bring as gifts: diamonds, frankincense, and myrrh? (*diamonds*)
- How were the wise men warned not to return to Herod? (*in a dream*)
- Worship is: a. giving God our best; b. not merely an outward act; or c. a conscious effort. (*All of the above.*)



A child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on His shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

—ISAIAH 9:6

## OTHER OUTCASTS

The shepherds—the first ones to hear about Jesus' birth—were considered outcasts in the society to which Jesus was born. The Book of Luke also mentions other outcasts to whom Jesus paid special attention. Who were they?

LUKE 8:43-48

LUKE 19:1-10

LUKE 17:11-19

LUKE 23:39-43

## FOLLOW THE TRAIL

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| G | E | L | L | A | D | S | Z | K | H |
| O | B | Y | A | K | W | F | Q | E | S |
| D | S | T | O | D | V | Z | H | B | A |
| Z | E | U | S | B | E | T | B | W | V |
| B | N | C | E | F | O | A | R | Q | I |
| J | T | E | S | O | N | T | Z | I | O |
| Z | H | I | S | A | V | N | W | C | R |
| T | V | O | P | Z | B | J | U | S | W |
| X | K | C | M | H | R | D | K | E | A |

FINISH

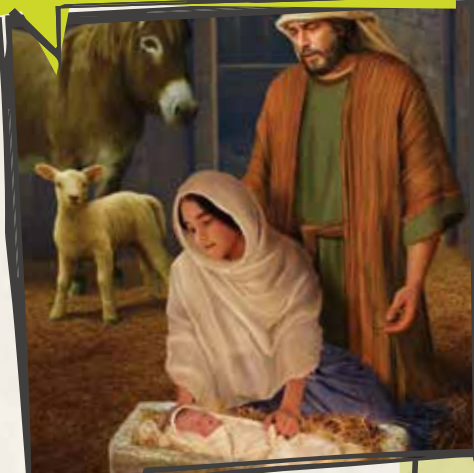
Decode this message by connecting the words, across and diagonally, from beginning to end. It answers the question: Why did God send Jesus?





**LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING**  
God sent Jesus to fulfill His promise of redemption.

### PRETEENS



## JESUS WAS BORN

**LUKE 2:1-20**

**BIBLE VERSE:** Luke 2:11

**LIFE POINT:** God sent Jesus to the earth to be the Savior.

Caesar Augustus declared that everyone had to return to the town of their families and be counted. This meant that Mary and Joseph had to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem, since Joseph was a descendant of King David. While they were in Bethlehem, Mary had her baby. She wrapped him in cloth and laid him in a feeding trough.

Out in the fields, there were shepherds guarding their sheep. An angel appeared to them and told them not to be afraid. "There is good news that will cause great joy for all people. Today the Messiah has been born in Bethlehem. You will find the baby lying in a feeding trough."

Suddenly, a large number of angels joined the angel. They were all praising God and saying, "Glory to God!" and "Peace on earth!"

After the angels left, the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see what the angels had told them about. They saw Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the trough. After seeing them, they went and told everyone what had happened. Everyone was amazed at their story. But Mary kept thinking about all that had happened, and held the thoughts in her heart.

The shepherds returned to their fields, praising God for all they had seen and heard.

### LIVE IT OUT

Help your preteen memorize Luke 2:11, the memory verse for this week. Discuss the meaning of the verse. Talk about who spoke it and to whom it was spoken. Pray with your tween, thanking God for sending Jesus.

### DAILY BIBLE READING

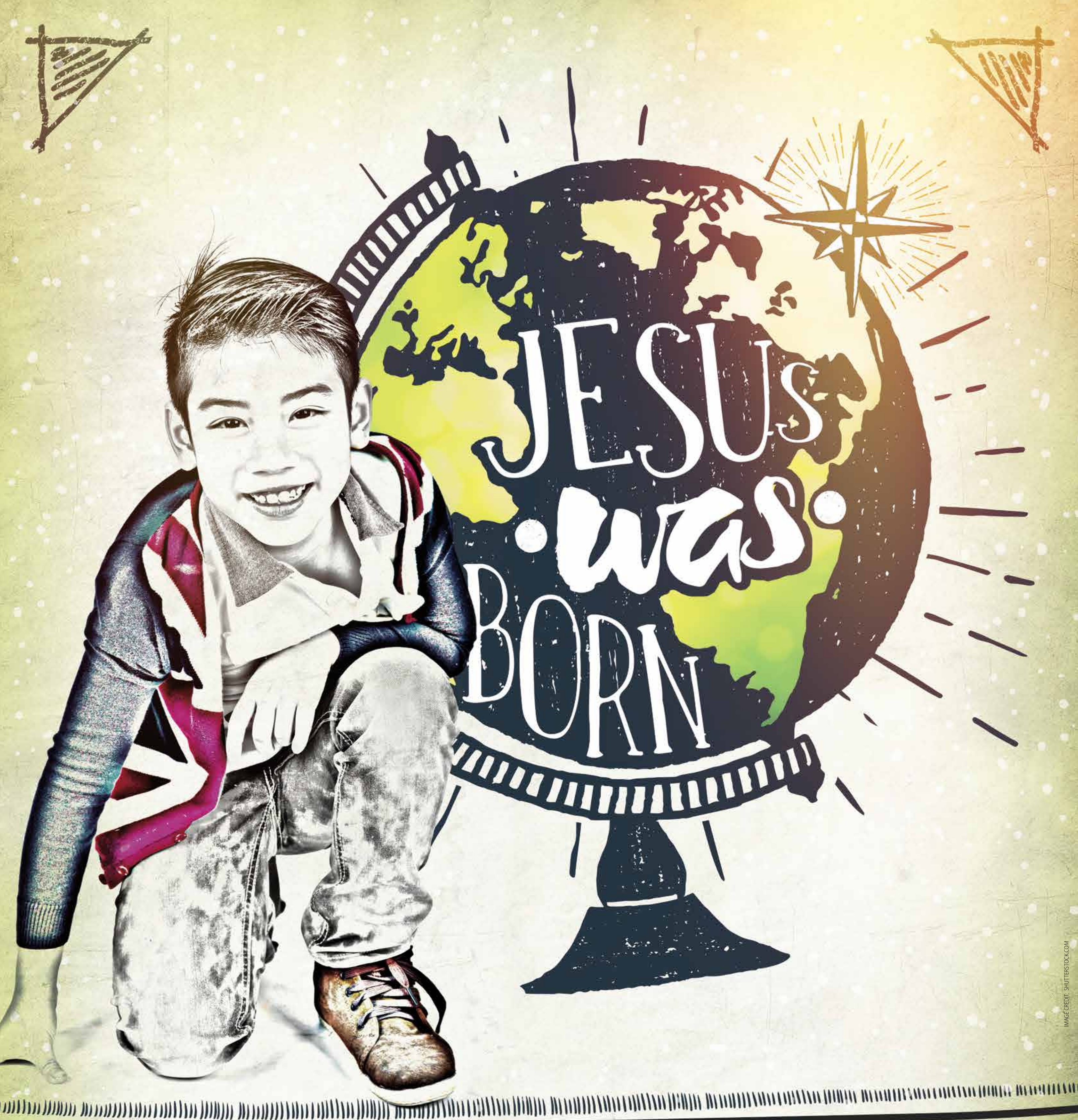
Sunday: Luke 2:11  
Monday: Joshua 1:7  
Tuesday: Luke 1:50  
Wednesday: Galatians 4:4  
Thursday: Matthew 21:9  
Friday: Luke 2:7  
Saturday: Isaiah 7:14

### TAKE IT FURTHER

Check out the "Jesus Was Born" section of the Bible Studies For Life: Kids Family App.











TO US A CHILD  
IS BORN, TO  
US A SON IS  
GIVEN; AND  
THE GOVERNMENT  
SHALL BE UPON  
HIS SHOULDER, AND HIS NAME  
SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL  
COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD,  
EVERLASTING FATHER, PRINCE  
OF PEACE.

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A CHILD WILL  
BE BORN  
FOR US, A  
SON WILL BE  
GIVEN TO US, AND  
THE GOVERNMENT  
WILL BE ON HIS SHOULDERS. HE  
WILL BE NAMED WONDERFUL  
COUNSELOR, MIGHTY GOD, ETERNAL  
FATHER, PRINCE OF PEACE.



TO US A CHILD  
IS BORN, TO  
US A SON IS  
GIVEN, AND THE  
GOVERNMENT WILL  
BE ON HIS SHOULDERS.

AND HE WILL BE CALLED  
WONDERFUL COUNSELOR, MIGHTY  
GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER,  
PRINCE OF PEACE.



UNTO US A  
CHILD IS  
BORN, UNTO  
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IS GIVEN; AND  
THE GOVERNMENT  
WILL BE UPON HIS SHOULDER.  
AND HIS NAME WILL BE CALLED  
WONDERFUL, COUNSELOR, MIGHTY  
GOD, EVERLASTING FATHER,  
PRINCE OF PEACE.





## QUESTIONS FOR SHEPHERDS

- + Who was the Roman ruler on the night Jesus was born?
- + Where were citizens required to go to fulfill the decree from Caesar Augustus?
- + What were you doing the night Jesus was born?
- + Why were you terrified?
- + What did the angel tell you?
- + For whom was the good news?
- + What sign was given to you?
- + What did the angels begin doing?
- + What did you do next?
- + What did you do after you saw the baby?

## SHEPHERD 1

- + I think his name was Larry or something.
- + They went to the state capital.
- + I'm a shepherd. What do you think I was doing?
- + I'm afraid of the dark.
- + The angel told me about some baby that had been born.
- + The angel said the good news was for everybody.
- + I saw a star.
- + The angels started singing.
- + I took off for Nazareth, where the baby was supposed to be.
- + I brought him some gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

DO NOT STAND.  
YOU ARE NOT THE  
REAL SHEPHERD.

## SHEPHERD 2

- + Caesar Augustus was the ruler.
- + They went to their own city.
- + I was watching my flock of sheep.
- + An angel was standing before us.
- + The angel told me that our Savior had been born.
- + The good news was for all people.
- + I know this sounds crazy, but
- the baby would be wrapped in cloth and lying in a manger.
- + The angels began praising God.
- + I went to Bethlehem right away.
- + I praised God for what I had seen and told everyone about it.

STAND. YOU  
ARE THE REAL  
SHEPHERD.

## SHEPHERD 3

- + I agree with him- Caesar Augustus.
- + They went to Bethlehem.
- + I was building a fence, I think.
- + I didn't understand what was happening.
- + The angel told me that one of our sheep was missing.
- + A missing sheep is not good news, my friend.
- + I don't remember anything about any sign.
- + I think the angels just left all of a sudden.
- + I followed those other guys to Bethlehem.
- + I had to start looking for that missing sheep again.

DO NOT STAND.  
YOU ARE NOT THE  
REAL SHEPHERD.



SHEPHERD 1<sup>++</sup>

SHEPHERD 2<sup>++</sup>

SHEPHERD 3<sup>++</sup>



**JESUS WAS BORN**  
LUKE 2:1-20 • TEACHING PICTURE 3

## JESUS WAS BORN

Caesar Augustus decided that he wanted to know how many people were in his empire. He declared that everyone had to return to the town of their families and be counted. This meant that Mary and Joseph had to go from Nazareth to Bethlehem, since Joseph was a descendant of King David, and Bethlehem was David's city. Mary went with Joseph, even though she was nearing the end of her pregnancy.

While they were in Bethlehem, Mary had her baby. There was no room for them in the inn, so when Jesus was born, she wrapped him in cloth and laid him in a feeding trough.

Out in the fields, there were shepherds guarding their sheep. An angel appeared to them and told them, "Don't be afraid. I have good news that will cause great joy for all people. Today the Savior and Messiah was born in Bethlehem. You can find the baby wrapped in cloth and lying in a feeding trough."

Suddenly, a large number of heavenly beings joined the angel. They were all praising God and saying, "Glory to God in heaven and peace on earth to the people He favors!"

After the angels left, the shepherds hurried to Bethlehem to see what the angels had told them about. They saw Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the trough. After seeing them, they went and told everyone what had happened. Everyone was amazed at their story. But Mary kept thinking about all that had happened, and held the thoughts in her heart.

The shepherds returned to their fields, praising God for all they had seen and heard.

— BASED ON LUKE 2:1-20

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#### RANDOM LETTERS

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**Instructions:** Print and use during Practice Bible Skills, Unit 1, Session 3.

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CENSUS

BETHLEHEM

FIRSTBORN

INN

FLOCKS

ANGEL

PEACE

SHEPHERDS

**NAME IT CARDS**

*Bible Studies For Life: Preteens CD, Fall 2016-17*

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**Instructions:** Print and use during Live It Out, Choice 2 (for boys), Unit 1, Session 3. This item may be reproduced for church use only.