## Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

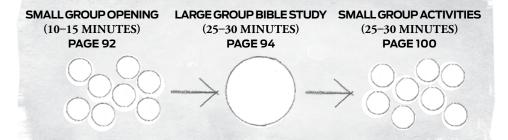
BIBLE PASSAGE: Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

MAIN POINT: God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

**KEY PASSAGE:** Galatians 4:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us

from sin.



#### **Leader BIBLE STUDY**

People had been waiting a long time for Jesus. God hinted at His coming in the garden of Eden when He promised a seed to conquer the serpent. (Gen. 3:15) The prophets told of His coming hundreds of years before His birth. God was working out His plan to bring His people back to Himself.

In the Bible, God sometimes used angels to communicate His message to people. Angels spoke to Abraham in Genesis 18. The Angel of the Lord spoke to Balaam in Numbers 22. Now Mary and Joseph, the earthly parents of Jesus, each received a special visit from an angel to announce the birth of God's promised Messiah.

The angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary surprised her. By His grace, God chose Mary to be the mother of Jesus. The angel's message revealed much about this promised child.

First, He would be great in both being and nature. He would be the Son of the Most High. Jesus is the Son of God, and the Lord God promised to give Him the throne of His father David. These words fulfilled the prophecy given to David in 2 Samuel 7:12-16. He would reign over the house of Jacob forever. His kingdom would have no end.

The good news that Jesus was coming into the world was good news because of why He was coming. An angel revealed Jesus' purpose to Joseph in Matthew 1:21, "He will save His people from their sins." The gospel is the good news of what God has done for us through Christ.

The announcement of Jesus' birth is not the beginning of the gospel; God had been planning for this moment since before the beginning of time. (See Eph. 1:3-10.) Help the kids you teach understand that God's plan has always been to save sinners and bring them back to Himself. Jesus, whose name means "Yahweh saves," is the culmination of that plan.



Additional resources for each session are available at *gospelproject.com*. For free training and session-by-session help, visit *www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject*.

#### The BIBLE STORY

#### Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

One day, God sent an angel named Gabriel to a town called Nazareth. The angel went to visit a young virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to Joseph, a descendant of King David.

The angel said to Mary, "Rejoice! You have found favor with God. He is with you." Mary was very afraid and puzzled. Why would God find favor with her? She had done nothing special.

"Do not be afraid," the angel said. Then he told Mary that she was going to have a very special and unique baby, and they would call the baby Jesus, which means "the Lord saves." The angel explained that the baby would be great—He would be God's Son! He would even be a king—the king God had promised would come.

Mary asked the angel, "How can that happen? I am not married yet."

The angel replied, "God will be the father of the baby. The baby will be God's Son."

Then the angel told Mary, "Nothing will be impossible with God!" He said that Mary's relative Elizabeth was pregnant, even though she was old and did not have any children.

"May everything happen just as you said," Mary replied. Then the angel left her.

Mary hurried to her relative Elizabeth's house. When she arrived, the baby inside Elizabeth leaped for joy! The Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth and she said, "What an honor, Mary! Your baby will be blessed too!"

Mary was so happy. She praised God with a song

about how great God is. Mary knew every family in the future would say she was blessed because God was going to do great things for her through Jesus. God was keeping His promise to bless the whole world through Jesus.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. Then she went home.

Now Joseph found out Mary was going to have a baby, but Joseph knew it was not his baby—Mary and Joseph were not married yet! Joseph decided to quietly break his engagement with Mary so she would not be publicly disgraced.

Soon after Joseph thought these things, an angel appeared to him in a dream.

"Joseph!" the angel said. "Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the baby she is carrying was put there by the Holy Spirit. Mary is going to have a son; name Him Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins!"

This happened just like the prophet said it would: "See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name Him Immanuel," which is translated "God with us."

When Joseph woke up, he did exactly as the angel commanded. He married Mary, and when she had a son, Joseph named Him Jesus.

Christ Connection: The baby Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, as well as other Old Testament prophecies, about the coming Savior. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God's plan of redemption that God planned from the beginning of the world.



WANT TO DISCOVER GOD'S WORD? GET BIBLE EXPRESS!

Invite kids to check out this week's devotionals to discover that the angel told Mary and Joseph to name the baby Jesus. (Luke 2:21) Jesus, whose name means "the Lord saves," was born to rescue us from sin. Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information. check out www.lifeway.com/ devotionals

## **Small Group OPENING**

**SESSION TITLE:** Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph **BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

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KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us

from sin.

#### Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, prompt them to think about Jesus' parents.

**SAY** • What kind of parents would you have picked for Jesus? Would they have been rich or had a big house? Today, we will hear about the earthly parents God chose for His Son, Jesus.

#### Activity page (5 minutes)

•"The Angel's Code" Invite kids to complete the "The Angel's Code" on the activity page, 1 per kid activity page to discover a special message.

**SAY** • Today we are going to hear about a special message that an angel delivered to Mary. (*Nothing will be impossible with God.*)



paper circles, 5 per kidcolored pencils

#### Session starter (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Which face would you make?

Give each kid five paper circles and colored pencils. Instruct kids to draw on the circles faces to represent the following emotions: *happy*, *sad*, *angry*, *surprised*, and *scared*.

Explain that you will describe a situation. Kids should hold up the circle showing how the situation might make them feel. Invite volunteers to explain their choices.

- 1. You trip into a big mud puddle walking into school. Your new shoes are ruined!
- 2. You've been selected to be class president!
- 3. You're looking forward to a fun evening at the park. Right before you leave, a thunderstorm rolls in.
- 4. Your family throws you a big birthday party!
- 5. You put money into a vending machine for a snack, and instead of one snack, two fall out!
- **SAY** During the Bible story, listen carefully to the things that happened in the lives of Mary, Joseph, and Elizabeth. Think about how they might have felt and which face they might have made.

#### **OPTION 2:** Choose a gift

Lead boys and girls to sit in a circle. Place the crumpled bag and nicely-wrapped gift in the middle of the circle.

**SAY** • Imagine you find both of these gifts under the Christmas tree. If you are allowed to open only one gift, which gift would you choose? Why?

Invite two volunteers to open the gifts. Are they surprised?

**SAY** • Sometimes we look at the appearance of things and think we know which one is the best. God chose two people who didn't look very special on the outside to be the parents of Jesus. God chose Mary, an ordinary girl, to be Jesus' mother. God chose Joseph, a poor carpenter, to be Jesus' earthly father.

- crumpled brown paper bag containing a candy bar
- nicely-wrapped gift box containing facial tissue

#### Transition to large group

## Large Group LEADER

**SESSION TITLE:** Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph **BIBLE PASSAGE:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us

from sin.

room decorations

 Theme Background Side (optional) Suggested Theme Decorating Ideas: Use simple

decorations over the existing theme. Draw square and rectangular stone buildings on gray paper to represent Nazareth and Bethlehem. Consider projecting the theme

background slide.

#### Countdown

countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

#### Introduce the session (3 minutes)

leader attireplastic sword and shield

[Large Group Leader enters dressed in warrior attire, wearing a helmet and breastplate and carrying a sword and a shield.]

What types of stories do you like to hear? Do you like stories about battles? [Pause for response from kids.] What about kings and queens? [Pause.] Or a hunt for a treasure? [Pause.] Do you get excited when you read a story about heroes fighting villains?

Today we are going to read an exciting passage from the Bible. The hero, the One whom we needed to come to fight the greatest battle that has ever been, was finally coming. All the stories that we have heard up until now have shown us that all the heroes who came before weren't the One. All the stories of heroes in the Old Testament get us ready for the One hero we truly need.

#### Giant timeline (1 minute)

story comes from the beginning of the New
Testament. At the end of the Old Testament, God's
people were waiting for their Rescuer to come.

 Giant Timeline or Big Story Circle

God had first mentioned His promised Rescuer back in the garden, right after Adam and Eve had sinned. For thousands of years, God's people had been waiting. They had looked at judges and kings and prophets and wondered, *Is this the One we have been waiting for?* But it never was!

The last book of the Old Testament is Malachi, and after this prophet, God was quiet for 400 years! Can you imagine? The people did not hear from God for 400 years! Did they wonder if He had forgotten them? While the people waited, the Lord still remembered His promise.

Then suddenly, the New Testament began. God not only sent another prophet, He sent angels to deliver messages about His coming Son! Jesus was going to be born! The Rescuer was coming!

#### Big picture question (1 minute)

**LEADER** • Now the question we have to ask ourselves is, *Why did Jesus have to be born?* Why did we need

a rescuer to come? What did we need to be rescued from? [*Allow kids to respond.*] Let's listen to the story to find out!

#### Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

"Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph" video

Bibles

- Big Picture Question
   Poster
- Bible Story Picture
   Poster

Open your Bible to Luke 1:26-56 and Matthew 1:18-24. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video "Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph."

# LEADER • Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.

Since Adam and Eve first ate the fruit in the garden of Eden, sin came into the world and broke everything! It broke us. Our hearts, which were made to worship God, were full of sin instead. Every person since Adam and Eve has been born a sinner. We needed Jesus to come to save us from our sin. Let's see if you can answer these questions.

Ask the following review questions:

- 1. Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.
- 2. Where did Mary and Joseph live when they found out they would be the parents of Jesus? (*Nazareth, Luke 1:26*)
- 3. What was the name of the angel sent to talk to Mary? (*Gabriel, Luke 1:26*)
- 4. According to Gabriel, why should Mary not be afraid? (She had found favor with God, Luke 1:30)
- 5. Besides Mary, who else was having a baby? (her cousin Elizabeth, Luke 1:36)
- 6. What did Elizabeth's baby do when Mary arrived at the house? (*The baby leaped in her womb, Luke 1:41*)
- 7. Why did Joseph not break his engagement with

- Mary? (An angel told him in a dream that the baby was from God, Matt. 1:20-24)
- 8. Why did the angel say the baby should be named Jesus? (because He would save His people from their sins, Matt. 1:21)
- 9. What is another name for Jesus and what does it mean? (He is also called Immanuel, which means "God is with us"; Matt. 1:23)

#### The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

Tip: Provide I'm a Christian Now for new Christians to take home and complete with their families

#### Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read Galatians 4:4-5 together.

**LEADER** • We needed a Rescuer to save us from our sins. At the perfect time, God sent His Son into the world. Jesus was the Rescuer whom God had promised to send.

Demonstrate hand motions for key words to help them memorize the first part of the verse. Examples:

- **the time**—Point to your wrist (where a watch would be worn).
- **completion**—Place the palms of your hands together in front of you.
- sent—Extend arm and point index finger.
- •born of a woman—Curve arm out from belly (as if

Key Passage Poster"Adoption as Sons" song

pregnant).

**LEADER •** Great! We will work on the rest of our key passage next week. As we sing our key passage song, try to do the motions when you hear these words. Guide kids to sing "Adoption as Sons."

#### Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

 "Unit 5, Session 1" discussion starter video which would you choose? Check this out.

Show the "Unit 5, Session 1" discussion starter video.

Guide kids to discuss how God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

**LEADER •** How do you think Mary and Joseph felt about being chosen? Why do you think God chose them? If God were to choose you to do something difficult, how would you respond?

#### Sing (4 minutes)

• "Joy to the World" song

**LEADER** • After Mary found out she was going to be Jesus' mother, she sang a song of praise. Let's sing. Sing together "Joy to the World."

#### Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups. **LEADER •** Father, we thank You that You always had a plan to save us from our sin. From the beginning, You promised to send a rescuer. Thank You for Your Son, Jesus. Thank You that You always keep Your promises. We love You, Lord! In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

#### Dismiss to small groups

#### The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

## **Small Group LEADER**

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**BIG PICTURE QUESTION:** Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us

from sin.

#### Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
   foam balls or paper wards
- marker
- Write the words of the key passage on foam balls or large paper wads. Display the key passage poster. Recite the key passage together two times.
- **SAY** We are going to have a snowball fight! When I say "go," you will throw your snowballs into the air. Then pick up one and throw it again. When I say "stop," everyone will pick up one snowball.

Say "Go!" to start the snowball fight. After two minutes, say, "Stop!" and direct each kid to pick up one snowball.

**SAY** • Read your snowball and line up to put our key passage together in the right order.

Give kids time to line up and then recite the key passage together again as a group.

#### Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

- Bibles, 1 per kidMain Point Poster
- Distribute Bibles and instruct kids to open them to Luke 1 and also Matthew 1.
- **SAY** The birth of Jesus is recorded in two of the Gospels, so we will use both the Book of Luke and the Book of Matthew to learn about Jesus' birth. Who wants to volunteer to be Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, and Elizabeth?

Instruct volunteers to move to the front of the room where they will act out the Bible story. Choose one kid to read Luke 1:26-33 and guide the volunteers to act out the story as it is read aloud.

Then choose another kid to read Luke 1:34-38 while volunteers continue to act out. Continue this pattern with the rest of the story: Luke 1:39-45; Matthew 1:18-24.

SAY • In the Bible story today, we saw that God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

#### Activity choice (10 minutes)

**OPTION 1:** Family tree game

Post a large poster of the family tree of Jesus on a focal wall with several key people left blank.

Instruct one kid to come to the front of the room and read a clue card (included with the printable). Other kids will raise their hands to offer guesses to who the person might be. When kids guess correctly, write the name of the person on the family tree. Options for names are:

- Eve
- Abraham
- Iacob
- David
- Mary
- Joseph

**SAY** • From Adam and Eve, God created a special family tree that would include many different kinds of people, leading to His Son, Jesus. The tree would grow all the branches out to include Mary and Joseph. God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.



"Jesus'FamilyTree" printablemarker

Option: Review the gospel with boys and girls. Explain that kids are welcome to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions.

"Bible Story Masks" printablebaskets, 2

#### **OPTION 2:** Who said that?

Prepare two baskets with masks to represent each person from the Bible story: Mary, Joseph, Gabriel, and Elizabeth.

Form two teams. Invite one player from each team to stand at the front of the room facing each other. Place a prepared basket next to each player. Read one of the following statements. The first player to correctly identify who might have spoken those words by placing the correct mask over his face wins that round for his team.

Those two players return to their seats and the next players from each team come to the front for the next round. The team with the most points wins.

- "Don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the baby she is carrying was put there by the Holy Spirit." (*Gabriel*)
- "What an honor, Mary! Your baby will be blessed too!" (*Elizabeth*)
- "Nothing will be impossible with God!" (Gabriel)
- "How can that happen? I am not married yet." (*Mary*)
- "The baby will be God's Son." (Gabriel)
- "I belong to God. May everything happen just as you said." (*Mary*)
- "I will marry Mary." (Joseph)
- "Mary is going to have a son; name Him Jesus because He is going to save His people from their sins!" (*Gabriel*)
- "I will go stay with my relative Elizabeth for three months." (*Mary*)
- "Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son." (*Gabriel*)
- SAY God sent His special messenger, Gabriel, to deliver

amazing news to Mary and Joseph. God chose Mary and Joseph to be the earthly parents of Jesus.

#### Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Give each kid his journal page and a pencil. Review the big picture question and answer.

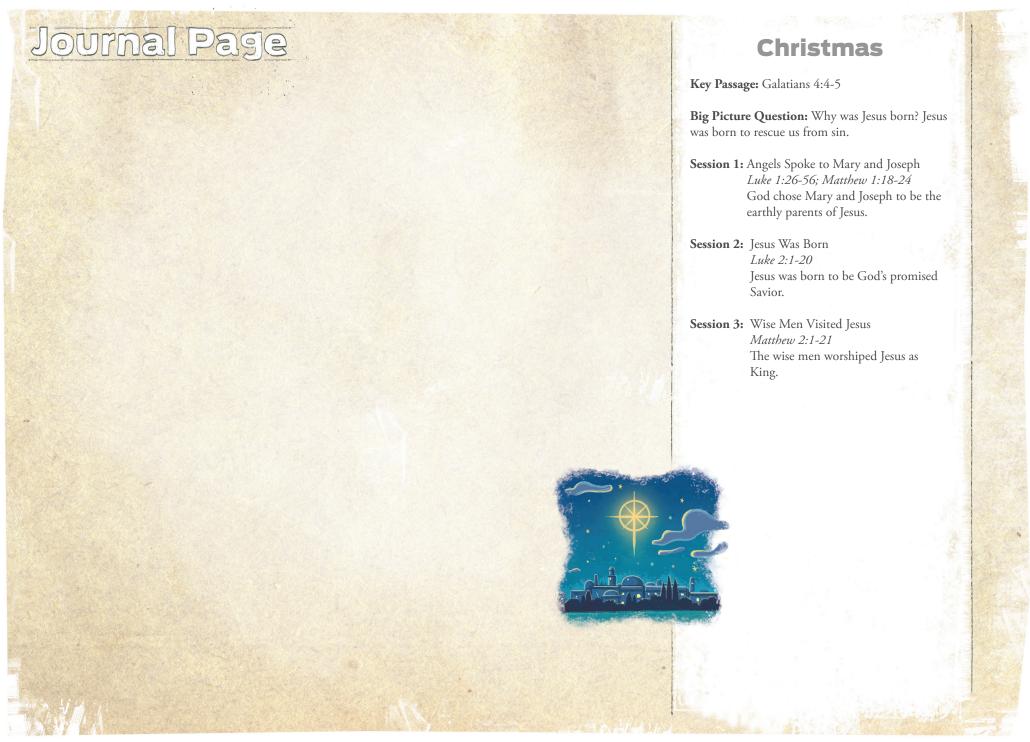
**SAY** • Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us from sin. Think about a way that you have sinned against God in the past few days. [Allow time for kids to think.]

The Bible tells us that before God even created this world, He planned to send Jesus to rescue us from sin. The Bible describes sin as being a master over us. Before Jesus sets us free, we are slaves to sin.

Guide kids to write on their journal page about the most exciting news they have ever heard. How did it make them feel? As time allows, lead kids to complete "The Other Half" on the activity page.

Give each kid the big picture card for today's Bible story so families can interact with the Bible content at home this week.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- "The Other Half" activity page, 1 per kid
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Kids





When the time came to completion, God sent His son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.





But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.





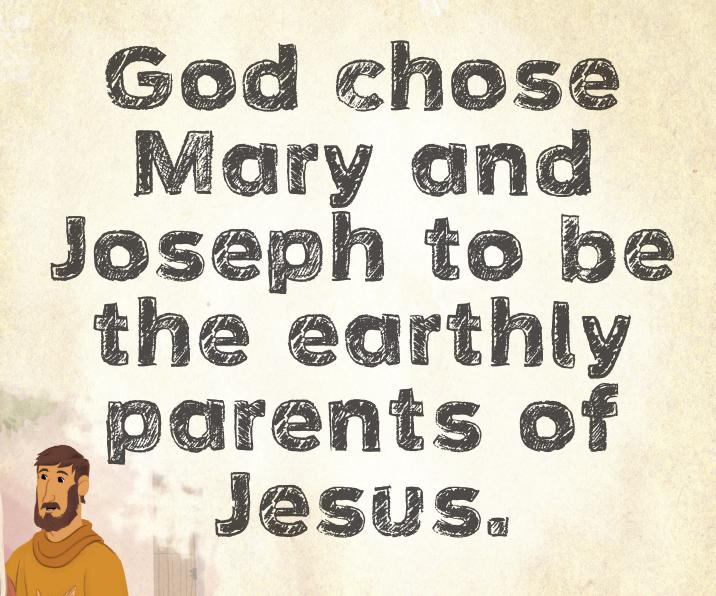
But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.





But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.







 $\textbf{Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph (Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24)} \bullet \text{Unit 5, Session 1} \bullet \textcircled{0} \text{ 2015 LifeWay OK to Print}$ 

# Journal Page

What is the most surprising news you have ever heard? How did it make you feel?



#### FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- How do you think Mary and Joseph felt when they heard they would be Jesus' parents?
- Who told Mary and Joseph about God's plan? (an angel)
- Who could you tell about Jesus' birth?



## Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24

#### MAIN POINT: GOD CHOSE MARY AND JOSEPH TO BE THE EARTHLY PARENTS OF JESUS.

One day, God sent an angel named Gabriel to visit Mary. She was engaged to be married to Joseph. The angel said to Mary, "Rejoice! You have found favor with God." Mary was very afraid and puzzled.

"Do not be afraid," the angel said. Then he told Mary that she was going to have a very special and unique baby, and they would call the baby Jesus, which means "the Lord saves."

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When Joseph woke up, he did exactly as the angel commanded. He married Mary, and when she had a son, Joseph named Him Jesus.

Christ Connection: The baby Jesus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, as well as other Old Testament prophecies, about the coming Savior. Through His life, death, and resurrection, Jesus fulfilled God's plan of redemption that God planned from the beginning of the world.

The Angel's Code Use the code to decipher the message from the angel.







BE





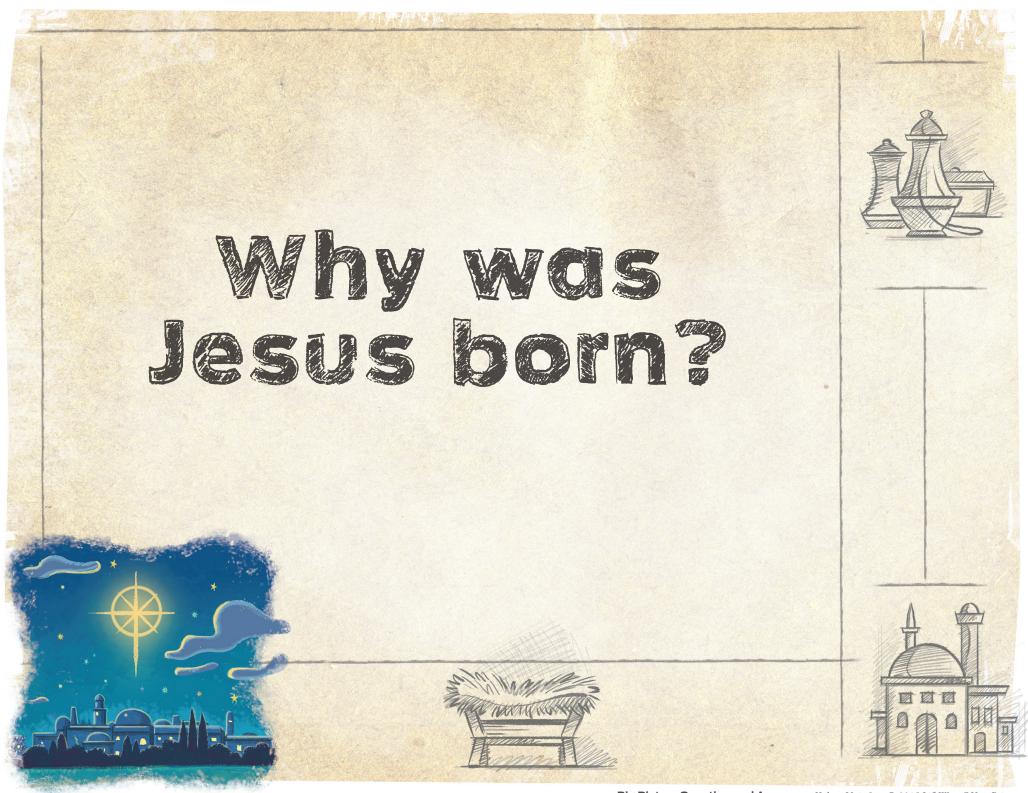




# The Other Half

Finish the picture by drawing in the other half. Whom did the angel say was going to be the mother of God's Son?





# Why was Jesus born?

Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.











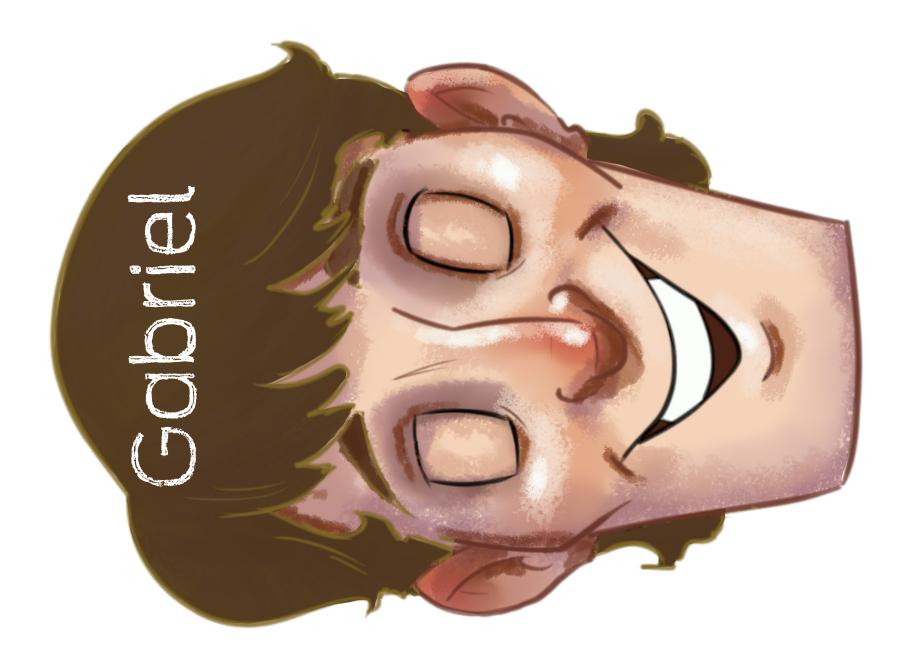




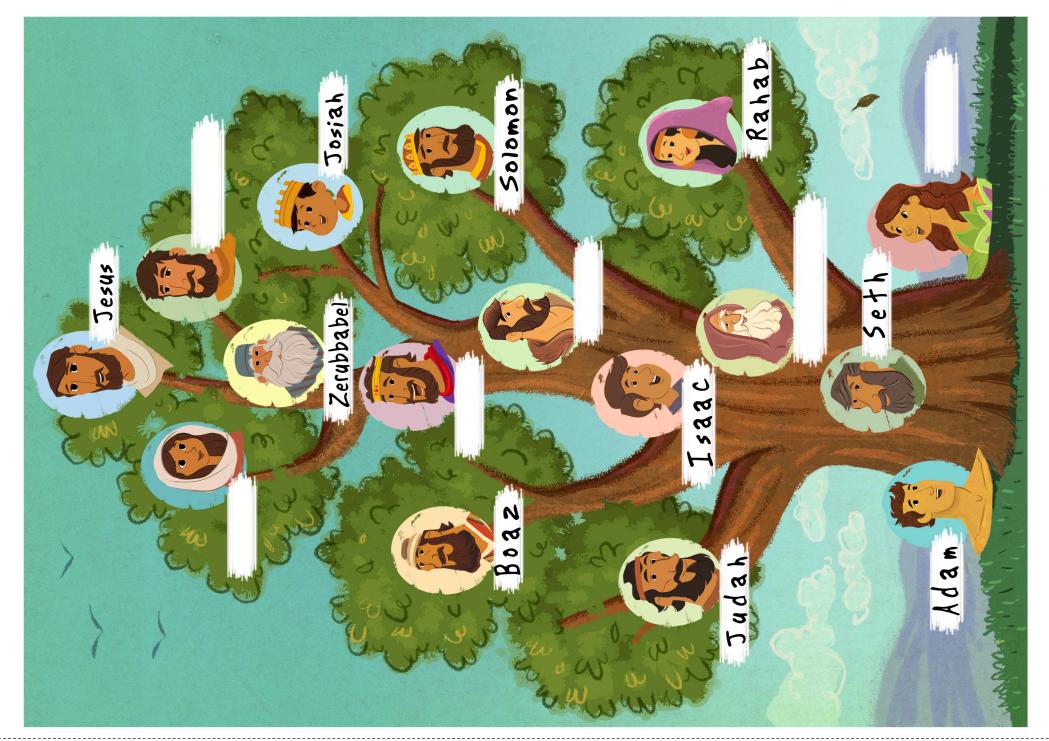














# Abraham

- God told me that I would have more descendants than the stars in the sky.
- My wife Sarah and I were very old when we had our son, Isaac.
- God told me to sacrifice my son Isaac to him, but then provided a ram instead.

# Jacob

- I stole something from my twin brother, Esau.
- I became the father of 12 sons.
- God changed my name to Israel.

## Eve

- I was the second person to ever walk on this earth.
- I used to live in a beautiful Garden with my husband, Adam.
- I ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

# David

- My first job was tending sheep.
- I killed a lion, a bear, and a giant.
- I was a king, and God promised me that someone from my family would always be on the throne of Israel.

# Mary

- I lived in the city of Nazareth.
- I had a relative named Elizabeth.
- An angel named Gabriel came and told me that I would be the mother of God's Son.

# Joseph

- I lived in the city of Nazareth.
- I was a carpenter.
- An angel gave me some surprising news in a dream.

