

LESSON 4

JESUS' BIRTH

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites People to Meet Jesus

SCRIPTURE: [Luke 2](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: Jesus—the everlasting King—is born in Bethlehem! An angel announces His birth to nearby shepherds, who hurry to meet the baby and then tell everyone about the child.

MEMORY VERSE: For 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.
—Isaiah 9:6

CURIOSITY Large Group or Small Group

An object lesson, experiment, or activity that sparks curiosity, encourages exploration, and gets kids thinking about the wonder of God.

- Welcome Question: If you could meet anyone in the world, who would it be? What would you say to this person?
- Free Play
- Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder



BELIEF Large Group

A deep and interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

- Prayer of Invitation
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Memory Verse: [Isaiah 9:6](#)

FAITH Small Group

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own, emboldening their faith and fostering a deeper understanding of their place in God's kingdom.

- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Blessing Your Kids

CLOSING Large Group or Small Group

An interactive activity to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

- Option 1: Meet My Friend, _____
- Option 2: Puzzling Search

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

When our daughter was born, we couldn't wait to share the news, to send out the first pictures, to let friends and family know her name. Her birth was important to us. A new life had arrived, and our world was changed.

Read [Luke 2:1–20](#). When Jesus was born, God didn't wait long to let people know. He sent a host of angels to a group of shepherds. The Savior had come. The Messiah. The Lord. A real flesh and blood person who could know people and be known by them. Immanuel. God with us.

“Let's go to Bethlehem. Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about” ([Luke 2:15](#)). That's how the shepherds responded. How will you respond?

God invites people to meet Jesus—to know Him and be known by Him. Jesus isn't hiding from us. He isn't distant. He's available. He has time for us. How will you meet Him this week? Through prayer? Through His Word? Through worship and participation in the life of the church?

Jesus has come, and the world is changed. He isn't far off. God invites you to meet Him, day by day, and to know the depths of His love and power.

DID YOU KNOW?**FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS****WHO?**

An angel announced Jesus' birth to a group of shepherds. Shepherds were part of the lower class in Israel, sometimes despised by others. They lived outside during much of the year, sleeping among their flocks in order to protect their sheep from thieves or predators.

WHAT?

Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem because of the Roman census. After Jesus was born, an angel announced Jesus' birth to a group of shepherds, who came to meet Jesus. The shepherds spread the news of Jesus' birth and identity to everyone they met.

WHERE?

Mary and Joseph traveled from Nazareth in the northern region of Galilee to Bethlehem in the southern region of Judea. Bethlehem is about five miles south of Jerusalem. The shepherds were tending their flocks in the fields near Bethlehem.

WHEN?

Caesar Augustus reigned between 31 BC and 14 AD. Jesus was born shortly before the death of Herod, king of Judea in 4 BC, which means the census must have taken place toward the end of Herod's life.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

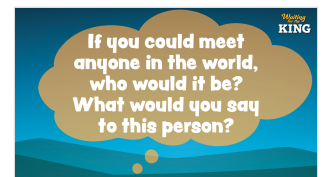
Jesus' birth fulfilled expectations that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and would be a descendant of David. These prophecies point to the fact that the Messiah is royalty. Jesus, the everlasting King, would go on to proclaim God's kingdom, establishing it through power greater than death itself.

Large Group or Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Welcome Question

Before kids arrive, display the [Jesus' Birth Welcome Question Slide](#) or point out the following questions on a whiteboard: "If you could meet anyone in the world, who would it be? What would you say to this person?"



As kids arrive ...

Warmly greet kids by name and let them know you are happy to see them. Show them the [Welcome Question](#), and if you have younger kids, read the question for them. Encourage kids to draw a picture of the person they would most want to meet and to tell a friend about that person.

Free Play

The tables will be set with toys, games, and activities for kids to enjoy until the lesson begins. This is a great opportunity to play alongside them and get to know the kids in your class.

PRO TIP: This is also a great time for a bathroom reminder!

Countdown Video

Play the [countdown video](#) provided and then show it every week before your official start time to signal time to clean up.

Curiosity Questions

At your start time ...

Welcome the group with an enthusiastic “Merry Christmas!” and encourage kids to turn and welcome three neighbors with the same greeting. Then call on several kids to share their answers to the Welcome Question: **If you could meet anyone in the world, who would it be? What would you say to this person?** Consider sharing your own answer to the question as well.

Wow, those would be very interesting people to meet and conversations to have! Today in God’s big story, we will hear about an incredibly special person who some pretty unlikely people got to meet. But, first, it’s time to be curious.

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious ...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

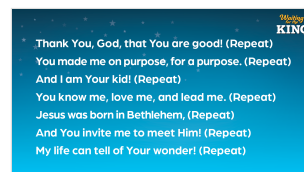
I’m curious ...

- **How do you think most people would answer this question: What makes someone important?**
- **How would you answer the question? How do you think God would answer it?**

Declaring God’s Wonder

SUPPLIES: Jesus’ Birth Declaration Slide

Display the [Jesus’ Birth Declaration Slide](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.



Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, (Kids repeat.)

And You invite me to meet Him! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder (Kids repeat.)

Large Group

Guide kids into knowing God, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Invites People to Meet Jesus

SCRIPTURE: Luke 2

MEMORY VERSE: Isaiah 9:6

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we are excited to be here with each other and with You! Help us to hear what Your Holy Spirit has to teach us today. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus—the everlasting King—to Bethlehem long ago. And thank You for inviting us to meet Him. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story—each one reinforces the others! **HEAR** it read directly from the Bible. **WATCH** it in a video. **EXPERIENCE** it through the live script.



SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid), [Jesus' Birth Title Slide](#), [Jesus' Birth God's Big Story Video](#)

Display the [Jesus' Birth Title Slide](#). Tell kids that today's part of God's big story is one of the most well-known passages in the Bible. It's in the book of Luke, one of the four Gospels telling the story of Jesus' life and ministry. Then do one or both of the following:

- View [Jesus' Birth God's Big Story Video](#)
- Use the following Jesus' Birth Experience It! Script

For Older Kids: Invite kids to open their Bibles to [Luke chapter 2](#), making yourself available to help kids find it.

Let's start by reading part of God's big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!

Read [Luke 2:4–20](#) slowly and with expression. Alternatively, split the reading between yourself and another adult leader. Encourage the kids to follow along in their Bibles. Then do one or both of the following:

- View [Jesus' Birth God's Big Story Video](#)
- Use the following Jesus' Birth Experience It! Script

Watch God's Big Story

Watch the [Jesus' Birth God's Big Story!](#)



LESSON 4 JESUS' BIRTH

EXPERIENCE IT! SCRIPT

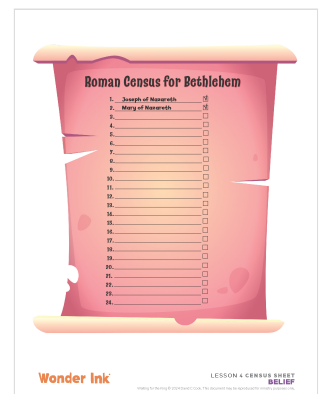
SUPPLIES: [Bethlehem Journey Sheets](#), [Census Sheet](#)

Supplies at each of the 3 stations: tactile items: strips of cloth, soft baby blanket, toy farm animal figure(s), manger or stones and wood, baby doll wrapped in a blanket, crown, cotton balls, staff or shepherd's crook, toy sheep figure(s)

For this Experience It! storytelling, kids will travel to three spots in the room that represent physical places in the story of Jesus' birth: the city of Bethlehem, the manger in Bethlehem, and the shepherds' field where angels told of Jesus' birth. Ahead of time, choose three places in the room where kids can gather. Print the [Bethlehem Journey Sheets](#) and tape each of the three pages to the wall in the appropriate places. Print the Census Sheet. Roll it up like a scroll and tie string or yarn around it. Also place corresponding tactile items for kids to interact with at each location. (If your group is large, consider having multiples of each item.)

Here are some suggestions:

- City of Bethlehem—[Census Sheet](#) rolled and tied like a scroll
- Bethlehem Manger (first visit)—strips of cloth, soft baby blanket, toy farm animal figure(s), a baby doll wrapped in a blanket, a manger or stones and wood to represent the manger
- Shepherds' Field—cotton balls for sheep's wool, staff or shepherd's crook, toy sheep figure(s)
- Bethlehem Manger (second visit)—strips of cloth, soft baby blanket, toy farm animal figure(s), a baby doll wrapped in a blanket, crown



Hi, everyone! It's wonderful to see all of you! Today, we're hearing all about one of the most amazing moments in history—the birth of Jesus, our Savior! And to help us get familiar with the story, we're going to pretend to go back in time and travel to the locations mentioned in God's big story and experience some of the wonders of this incredible moment. We've set up some stations in our teaching space to represent the important places in the story that you'll be visiting. I'll let you know when to move to each station.



Through all the twists and turns of God's big story, God was preparing to send an everlasting King. Now the time had come! The wait was over! A young woman named Mary was going to have a baby. An angel had told her that this baby would be the Son of God and rule on the throne of King David. He was coming to make a way for all people to know God and be part of His forever kingdom.

During this time, the land of Israel was ruled by the big, powerful Roman Empire, and Caesar Augustus was the empire's big, powerful leader. He ordered that everyone in the Roman world had to be counted and listed. This was part of his big plan. But God had an even bigger plan, one that involved a baby being born in the town of Bethlehem, King David's hometown. And guess what? That's exactly where Mary was headed. Everyone had to go to their town to be listed, so

Mary went to Bethlehem with Joseph, who she was engaged to marry, because Joseph was from David's family line. So let's go to Bethlehem!

Have kids walk a lap around the room to make it feel like they are traveling, then travel to the place marked as the "City of Bethlehem." Pass around the Census Sheet, allowing kids to unroll and look at it.

Leader Tip: Encourage kids to imagine what it would have been like for Mary and Joseph as they traveled from Nazareth to Bethlehem for the census. The journey was almost 100 miles (160 kilometers)! Challenge them to move as though they are tired from all that walking (or donkey riding).

While they were in Bethlehem, the time came for Mary's baby to be born. He was the one God's people had waited for! He was Jesus! Jesus had come at last!

Though He is the Son of God, Jesus wasn't born in a grand palace. He wasn't laid in the most expensive crib or dressed in the fanciest clothes. Bethlehem was so crowded that there wasn't even a guest room available. So Mary, Joseph, and Jesus stayed with the animals. Mary lovingly wrapped her baby in strips of cloth and laid Him in a manger. That night, an animal's feeding trough became the bed for the Son of God. Let's go to the manger!

Have kids travel to the place marked as the "Bethlehem Manger." Let the kids touch and look at the item(s) you've chosen for this station.

God had done something amazing, and it was time to let people know. Who would God invite to meet Jesus?

As night fell, shepherds were taking care of their sheep in a nearby field. In those days, some people looked down on shepherds because caring for sheep was a dirty, stinky job. But God loved them. Everyone is important to God. He sent an angel to the shepherds to announce Jesus' birth. God's glory was shining around them—in the middle of a field of sheep! "They were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord' " (Luke 2:9–11). The angel also told them they would find the baby lying in a manger, wrapped in strips of cloth.

Suddenly there were more angels. So many angels! Angels everywhere! It was like a bunch of people hiding at a party who jumped out to surprise the birthday kid. Encourage the kids to yell, "Surprise!" with you on the count of three. (If some kids are sensitive to loud noises, invite everyone to whisper, "Surprise!" rather than shout it.) **The angels praised God. They said, " 'May glory be given to God in the highest heaven! And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!' " (Luke 2:14). Jesus had come! He would bring lasting peace to God's creation, and even the angels were excited.**

Have kids travel to the place in your teaching space marked as the "Shepherds' Field." Let the kids touch and look at the item(s) you've chosen for this station.

The shepherds were excited too. They hurried off to Bethlehem to meet Jesus. The Savior. The Messiah. The everlasting King. They found Him lying in a manger with Mary and Joseph by His side. God had kept His promises. The Lord was right there in front of them!

Have kids travel back to the place marked the "Bethlehem Manger." Let the kids touch and look at the item(s) you've chosen for this second trip to the manger. (Consider making the item(s) on the second visit to the "Bethlehem Manger" different than the one(s) the kids saw on the first manger visit. Perhaps use a crown for this visit to signify Jesus' eternal kingship!)

Invite kids to return to their seats.

After that, the shepherds told everyone about the child and what the angel had said. The arrival of Jesus was good news for the whole world. Jesus came for everyone, and now everyone is invited to come to Him, including us! God invites people to meet Jesus!

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SUPPLIES: Jesus' Birth Wonder Truth Slide

Display the [Jesus' Birth Wonder Truth Slide](#).



Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO MEET JESUS.**

Prophets share messages from God. In the Old Testament, the prophet Micah shared that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2). Jesus' birth fulfilled these words. The Messiah, Savior, and everlasting King—Jesus—was born in Bethlehem!

Memory Verse

SUPPLIES: Memory Verse Slide [NIV](#)

All month we've been working together to memorize Isaiah 9:6. This verse was written hundreds of years before Jesus was born, and in it, Isaiah describes the promised Savior as "Mighty God." We know that this Mighty God came as a baby named Jesus, and God invites us to meet Him!



Display the Memory Verse [Slide](#) on the screen. Draw an imaginary line, dividing the group in half. Encourage the kids on one side to read the first line of the verse. Then have the kids on the other side read the second line. Invite them to continue, alternating back and forth, with each half reading every other line. (Point to one side at a time like an orchestra conductor to help kids know when it's their turn to read.)

For an optional discussion, gather kids to talk about these questions:

- **Are there any descriptions of Jesus in this verse that seem strange or confusing?**
- **What description of Jesus gets you most excited to know Him?**

Small Group

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Divide your group into smaller groups based on age. If your group is already small, stay together for this time.

MEMORY VERSE

For 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.

—Isaiah 9:6 (NIV)

Questions: Younger Kids

- **Where was Jesus born?**
- **Who did angels appear to when Jesus was born? What did the angel say to them?**
- **What was the job of a shepherd? How did some people at that time feel about shepherds?**
- **What did the shepherds see when they got to Bethlehem?**
- **The shepherds got to meet Jesus! How do you think they felt when they saw Jesus?**
- **God invites you to meet Jesus too! How does that make you feel?**

The angel appeared to the shepherds and said, “I bring you good news. It will bring great joy for all the people” (Luke 2:10). The shepherds took care of stinky, dirty sheep every day and night, yet they were the first ones who got to meet the everlasting King! The arrival of Jesus really was good news for all the people! Let’s spend time now thanking God for sending Jesus.

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to gather in a circle. Give them a chance to share prayer requests and praises, and pray for each child by name. Then invite kids to kneel like the shepherds might have done when they saw Jesus in the manger. (Kneel alongside the kids if you’re physically able.) While in a kneeling position, invite kids to thank God for inviting them to meet Jesus. They might take turns saying, “Thank You” out loud or quietly in their hearts.

Questions: Older Kids

- **Why were Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem when the time came for Jesus to be born?**
- **Where do you think most people would expect the everlasting King to be born? Now describe the place Jesus was born.**
- **Who did angels appear to when Jesus was born? Do you find this surprising? Why or why not?**
- **The angel announced good news that would bring great joy. Who was the good news for?**
- **Put yourself in the shepherds' shoes (or sandals!). How would you feel as you approached Jesus in the manger? What would you do or say?**
- **God invites all people to meet Jesus. What do you think it means to meet Jesus today?**

Most people might expect the everlasting King to be born in a palace surrounded by powerful, important people. But Jesus' birth was very different. He was born among farm animals and placed in a feeding trough, and the first people to visit Him were simple shepherds. Like the angel told the shepherd, Jesus' arrival really is "good news ... for all the people" (Luke 2:10, NIV). We are included in this—we are all people. Let's spend some time now thanking God for Jesus, the everlasting King!

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises. They might share first with a neighbor and then with the group. Pray for each kid by name or invite them to take turns praying for each other. Then invite kids to spread out. Those who would like can kneel like the shepherds might have done when they saw Jesus in the manger. Encourage them to say a prayer thanking God for inviting them to meet Jesus. It can be as simple as saying thank you, or it can include more details—God simply loves listening to His kids pray!

Blessing Your Kids

Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: May you see the wonder of God's joyful invitation to meet our Savior, Jesus. He is the everlasting King, the good news for all people. May you meet Jesus in new and special ways this season and remember that He is the everlasting King.



Large Group or Small Group

Use the following activity to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

The closing activities can be done in small groups or together as a class.

Option 1: Meet My Friend, _____

SUPPLIES: Meet My Friend Questions Sheets

Ahead of time, print the [Meet My Friend Questions Sheets](#). Cut each page in half along the dotted line and tape the six questions to the wall throughout your room.

Invite kids to pair up with someone they don't know very well.

Invite kids to sit down next to their partners. **Meeting someone new can be exciting and a little scary! We might not know anything about them at first, but when we take time to talk and listen to them, we get to know one another. Before long, we go from strangers to friends! Let's take time now to get to know our partners! Around the room are questions that will help us get to know our partners better.** Point to the Meet My Friend Questions around the room. **When I say, "Go," you and your partner will stand up, go to the question closest to you, read it, and take turns answering it. Then you will go to another question and share your answers with your partner. You'll continue until you and your partner have answered all six questions. Try your best to remember your partner's answers because at the end, some of you will get to introduce your partners to the group! Are you ready? Now, go!** Allow pairs to circulate, discussing each question.

Here are the questions that are on the [Meet My Friend Questions Sheets](#):

What is your full name?

How old are you, and when is your birthday?

If you could have any animal as a pet, what animal would you choose?

What is your favorite food to eat at Christmastime?

What is your favorite holiday?

What is one of your favorite things to do?

What is your full name?



How old are you, and when is your birthday?



Wonder Ink LESSON 4 MEET MY FRIEND QUESTIONS SHEETS CURIOSITY

Meet My Friend, _____

Wonder Ink

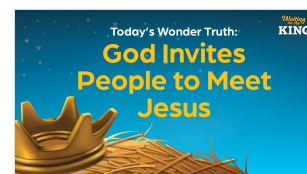
Consider adding more movement to this activity by asking kids to move from question to question in a certain way, such as on their tiptoes, with giant steps, or walking in slow motion. After every minute or so, announce a new way to move.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids who are neurodivergent might struggle when engaging in conversation with a peer partner. Consider pairing them with adult volunteers who can ask them simple yes/no questions, such as “Do you have a pet?” and “Are you eight years old?” Kids who are nonspeaking will also have a difficult time with this activity. Prepare pictures they can point to as a way of communicating their answers.

When pairs have discussed all six questions, gather everyone and invite them to sit. **Now that you have gotten to know your partners better, we would all love to meet them!** Call on several kids who would like to introduce their partners to the group. Pairs can stand up as they introduce one another, starting with the words, “Meet my friend, _____.” They can share their partner’s names and one or two things about them.

When we meet people, we get to see them, hear them, and learn something about them. The word *meet* actually means to come into the presence of someone new. Meeting someone means being with them! Today in God’s big story, we’ll hear about some shepherds who were the first people to meet Jesus—the everlasting King. The shepherds had a stinky, dirty job, and most people would not have considered them important. Yet they were the first ones God invited to come into the presence of His newborn Son, Jesus. As today’s Wonder Truth says, **GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO MEET JESUS.**



OPTION 2: PUZZLING SEARCH

SUPPLIES: Jesus' Birth Bible Story Picture Sheet (1 per team)

In this game, kids will find their team's puzzle pieces from around the room and assemble their puzzle.

This game works great with the Jesus' Birth lesson!

Ahead of time, print a copy of the [Jesus' Birth Bible Story Picture Sheet](#) for each team. Glue each copy onto a different colored sheet of construction paper. Once dry, cut up the pictures into several puzzle pieces. Make sure there is the same number of pieces for each color. Hide the puzzle pieces around the room.



Gather kids and help them form teams of no more than 10. For groups smaller than 10, have kids work in pairs. Assign each team a color that matches one of the construction paper colors.

I've hidden several puzzle pieces around the room. When I say, "Go," you and your team will race around the room looking for puzzle pieces with your team's color on the back. Leave pieces that belong to other teams where you find them.

Once you have all of your pieces, put together your puzzle. The first team to complete their puzzle wins! Ready, set, go!

Allow kids to find their puzzle pieces and assemble their puzzles. Once you have a winner, encourage other teams to finish their puzzles as well. Then bring the group's attention back to you.

What do you see in the picture? Allow answers. **How does it relate to our Bible passage today?** Allow answers. **Think about how the picture relates to our Wonder Truth—GOD INVITES PEOPLE TO MEET JESUS.** Any ideas? Allow answers. **Great thinking! I am so glad that God invited people—including us— to meet Jesus through Christmas!**