

THE CHRISTMAS STORY

Date: 12.13.26 | Jesus And The Shepherds
Scripture: Luke 2:8-21

CENTRAL TRUTHS



PRESCHOOL:

Jesus is our Savior! We can praise God because He sent Jesus to save us.

YOUNGER KIDS (K5-2ND GRADE):

Jesus is the Savior God promised to send. We can trust Him, praise Him, and share the good news about Jesus with others.

OLDER KIDS (3RD-5TH GRADE):

Jesus is the promised Savior, Messiah, and Lord who came to rescue us from sin. Because the Gospel is good news for everyone, we should worship Him and share it with others.

STUDENTS:

Jesus is the promised Savior, Messiah, and Lord who came to rescue sinners and bring us peace with God. The Gospel calls us to respond with faith, worship, joy, and a willingness to make Jesus known.

ADULTS:

In Jesus, God fulfilled His promises by sending the Savior, Messiah, and Lord to redeem sinners and bring us peace with God. Those who receive this good news by faith are called to respond with worship, joy, and faithful proclamation of the Gospel.

MEMORY VERSE

"Don't be afraid! I bring you good news that will be great joy to all people. The Savior- yes, the Messiah, the Lord- has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!" - Luke 2:10-11



BACKGROUND INFO FOR LEADERS



Soon after Jesus' birth, an angel appeared to shepherds in nearby fields, watching over their flocks (*Luke 2:8–9*). Shepherds were often looked down upon as low-class peasants in Jesus' day. God could have announced the birth of His Son to someone like the Jewish high priest or the Roman emperor, but instead He chose humble shepherds. From the very beginning, the announcement of Jesus' birth points toward the wide reach of the Gospel—the Savior had come not merely for the powerful or important, but for ordinary people and ultimately for people everywhere.

The sight of the angel surrounded by the glory of the Lord terrified the shepherds (*Luke 2:9*). Throughout Scripture, the “glory of the Lord” describes the visible manifestation of God's presence, sometimes appearing as a cloud, brilliant light, or fire. But the angel immediately told the frightened shepherds, “Do not be afraid,” because he had come with “good news of great joy that will be for all the people” (*Luke 2:10*). The Greek word translated “good news” is the root of the word Gospel. The birth announcement of Jesus is Gospel news: God has acted to save His people.

The angel declared, “Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (*Luke 2:11*). Bethlehem was King David's ancestral city, connecting Jesus' birth with God's promises concerning David's kingdom. The titles given to Jesus reveal who this child truly is. He is Savior, the One who came to rescue sinners; He is the Messiah (Christ), God's promised and anointed King; and He is Lord, pointing to His divine identity. *Luke 2:11* is one of only two places in the Gospels where Jesus is explicitly called “Savior”; the other occurs in *John 4:42*, when the Samaritans recognize Jesus as the “Savior of the world.”

The shepherds were given an unexpected sign: they would find the promised Savior wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger (*Luke 2:12*). The King and Savior of the world did not enter the world surrounded by earthly wealth or power. The eternal Son of God humbled Himself, taking “the form of a servant” and being born in human likeness (*Philippians 2:7*). At exactly the right moment in God's plan—“the fullness of time”—God “sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law” (*Galatians 4:4–5*). The baby lying in the manger had come on a rescue mission that would ultimately lead Him to the cross and resurrection.

Suddenly the angel was joined by a multitude of the heavenly host praising God: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors!” (*Luke 2:13–14*). Jesus is the promised “Prince of Peace” (*Isaiah 9:6*), but the peace He brings is greater than simply the absence of conflict. Through Jesus, sinners can have peace with God. Jesus later tells His followers that He gives a peace unlike anything the world can offer (*John 14:27*). Through His perfect life, sacrificial death, and resurrection, Jesus makes the peace of salvation possible for everyone who trusts in Him.

When the angels left, the shepherds immediately traveled to Bethlehem to see what God had revealed to them (*Luke 2:15–16*). They found Mary, Joseph, and Jesus just as the angel had said. After seeing Jesus, they did not keep the good news to themselves. They told others what they had been told about this child, and everyone who heard their testimony was amazed (*Luke 2:17–18*). Mary responded differently but just as meaningfully: she “treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart” (*Luke 2:19*).

Finally, the shepherds returned to their fields “glorifying and praising God for all the things they had seen and heard” (*Luke 2:20*). Wonder at Christ is a thread that runs throughout Luke’s Gospel (*Luke 1:21, 63; 2:19, 33, 47–48; 4:22, 36; 5:9; 8:25; 9:43–45; 11:14; 20:26; 24:12, 41*), and Luke repeatedly shows that the proper response to God’s saving work is praise (*Luke 1:64; 2:28; 5:25–26; 7:16; 13:13; 17:15–18; 18:43; 19:37–40; 23:47; 24:52–53*).

Luke then briefly records that when Jesus was eight days old, He was circumcised and officially given the name Jesus, the name the angel had given Him before He was conceived (*Luke 2:21*). Even His name points toward His mission as Savior. The child announced to the shepherds was God’s promised Messiah and Lord, sent into the world to rescue sinners.

The shepherds help us see how to respond to the Gospel. They heard the good news, believed what God had revealed, went to Jesus, told others what they had learned, and returned praising God. The Christmas story is more than a remarkable birth—it announces that the Savior has come. The baby in the manger is the eternal Son of God who came to redeem sinners, bring us peace with God, and make salvation available to all who trust in Him. Like the shepherds, those who have heard and believed this good news are called to glorify God and share the joyful news of Jesus with others.

TELL THE STORY



Luke 2:8-21

The Jesus Storybook Bible - The Light of the Whole World

Hey-O! Stories of the Bible - The Story of Christmas

On the night Jesus was born, shepherds were out in the fields near Bethlehem, watching over their sheep (*Luke 2:8*). Shepherds were ordinary people others often looked down on. God could have announced His Son's birth to a king, a powerful ruler, or an important religious leader. Instead, God chose these humble shepherds as some of the first to hear the wonderful news that the Savior had come.

Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared, and the Lord's glory shone around the shepherds. They were terrified! But the angel told them, "Don't be afraid." He had not come with bad news, but with "good news of great joy" for all people (*Luke 2:9-10*). This "good news" is what we call the Gospel—the wonderful news of what God has done to save His people.

The angel announced, "Today in the city of David a Savior was born for you, who is the Messiah, the Lord" (*Luke 2:11*). Those three titles told the shepherds something incredible about this baby. Jesus is the Savior, who came to rescue sinners. He is the Messiah, the promised King God's people had been waiting for. And He is Lord—the Son of God Himself! Jesus would later be called the "Savior of the world" (*John 4:42*).

The shepherds were given a sign so they would know they had found the right baby: wrapped tightly in cloth and lying in a manger (*Luke 2:12*). God's promised King and Savior had not been born in a palace. The eternal Son of God had humbled Himself and come into the world as a baby. Jesus took "the form of a servant" and became human (*Philippians 2:7*). God had sent His Son at exactly the right time to redeem His people (*Galatians 4:4-5*).

Suddenly, the sky was filled with a huge number of angels praising God! They declared, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to people He favors!" (*Luke 2:13-14*). Long before Jesus was born, Isaiah promised that the coming Savior would be the "Prince of Peace" (*Isaiah 9:6*). Jesus came to give us a peace the world cannot

give (*John 14:27*). Through Jesus, sinners can be forgiven and have peace with God.

When the angels returned to heaven, the shepherds didn't waste any time. They said to one another, "Let's go straight to Bethlehem and see what has happened!" (*Luke 2:15*). They hurried into town and found Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus, exactly as the angel had told them (*Luke 2:16*).

After seeing Jesus, the shepherds couldn't keep the good news to themselves. They began telling others everything the angel had told them about Jesus. Everyone who heard their story was amazed (*Luke 2:17–18*). Mary treasured everything that had happened and thought deeply about these things in her heart (*Luke 2:19*).

Then the shepherds returned to their sheep, but they weren't the same as before. They returned glorifying and praising God because everything they had heard and seen was exactly as God had promised (*Luke 2:20*).

Eight days later, the baby was officially given the name Jesus, the name the angel had given Him before He was born (*Luke 2:21*). Even His name pointed to why He had come. Jesus was the promised Savior who would rescue His people from sin.

Think about what happened with the shepherds. They heard the good news, believed what God said, went to Jesus, told others about Him, and praised God for what He had done. The baby lying in the manger was God's promised Savior, Messiah, and Lord. Jesus had come into the world to rescue sinners and bring us peace with God. Like the shepherds, when we understand who Jesus is and what He has done, we can worship Him and share His good news with others.

REBUILD THE STORY

1. Who was out in the fields near Bethlehem when Jesus was born? (*Luke 2:8*)
2. What happened while the shepherds were watching their sheep, and how did they react? (*Luke 2:9*)
3. What "good news of great joy" did the angel announce to the shepherds? (*Luke 2:10–11*)



4. What three titles did the angel use to describe Jesus? What do these titles tell us about who He is? *(Luke 2:11)*
5. What sign did the angel give the shepherds to help them recognize Jesus? *(Luke 2:12)*
6. What happened after the angel announced Jesus' birth? *(Luke 2:13-14)*
7. What did the shepherds do after the angels left, and what did they do after they found Jesus? *(Luke 2:15-18)*
8. How did the shepherds respond after hearing the good news and seeing Jesus for themselves? How should we respond to the good news about Jesus? *(Luke 2:17-20)*
9. Why do you think God chose ordinary shepherds, rather than kings or important leaders, to hear the good news about Jesus' birth?
10. The angel called Jesus "Savior," "Messiah," and "Lord" *(Luke 2:11)*. How do these three titles help us understand who Jesus is and why He came?
11. The shepherds heard God's message, hurried to see Jesus, and then told others what they had seen and heard *(Luke 2:15-18)*. What can their response teach us about how we should respond to the Gospel?
12. The shepherds returned to their ordinary lives, "glorifying and praising God" *(Luke 2:20)*. How should knowing that Jesus came to save us change how we live, worship, and talk about Him with others?

GOSPEL EMPHASIS



For generations, God had promised He would send a Savior, and now He was fulfilling those promises. The angel told Mary that her Son would be the promised Messiah, and Joseph was told to name Him Jesus—“Yahweh saves”—because He would save His people from their sins (*Matthew 1:21*). Jesus is also Immanuel, “God with us” (*Matthew 1:23*). God’s eternal Son came near to His people by becoming one of us. Then, just as God had promised through the prophet Micah, Jesus was born in Bethlehem (*Micah 5:2*). None of these events were accidental; they were all part of God’s plan to rescue sinners through His Son.

Now, God announced what this birth meant. The angel told the shepherds that this was “good news of great joy” for all people because a Savior, Messiah, and Lord had been born (*Luke 2:10–11*). The baby lying in the manger was the promised Savior, who came to do what we could never do for ourselves. Jesus would live the perfect life we could not live, give Himself as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins, and rise again so that everyone who trusts in Him can be forgiven and have peace with God. The angels responded by praising God, and after seeing Jesus, the shepherds returned “glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen” (*Luke 2:13–14, 20*). They also shared the good news with others (*Luke 2:17–18*). Their response shows us what the Gospel should produce in us: faith, worship, joy, and a desire to tell others. The promised Savior has come; Jesus saves!

WHAT DOES THIS PASSAGE TEACH US ABOUT GOD?

Use the attributes of God list and determine the characteristics of God that we see in today’s story. How can knowing these characteristics of God to be true change the way we live in Christ?

PRAYER PROMPTS

Thank You for being the “Savior of the World”! Thank You for revealing Yourself to all mankind and offering the peace that comes only through salvation in You. We ask that You would help us treasure these thoughts and ponder them in our hearts. We want to glorify and praise You for all that we have seen and heard!



THIS WEEK'S BIBLE READING

Matthew 2:1-12