

LESSON 4 JOSEPH AND JESUS

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Sent Jesus to Save Us

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1

GOD'S BIG STORY: An angel visits Joseph, a descendant of David, telling him Mary will have a son and His name will be Jesus because He will save the people from their sins.

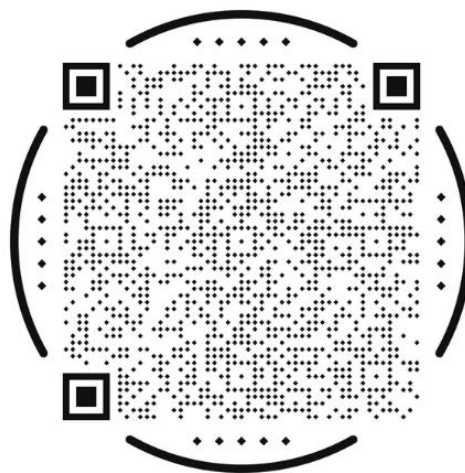
WORD OF WONDER: The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel. —Isaiah 7:14 (NIRV)

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Curiosity Questions
- LARGE GROUP
- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Isaiah 7:14
- Word of Wonder Activity
- Responding in Worship: My Gift to Jesus
- Optional Game: Angel Says



[Kings & Prophets Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Sent Jesus to Save Us

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1

WORD OF WONDER: Isaiah 7:14

Growing up, I was always jealous of my sisters' names. They have fairly common names. Their names are not hard to pronounce, and every time we went on vacation, they found a personalized memento. As a six-year-old, this was heartbreaking!

One summer, my dad found me crying by myself after another trip to a souvenir store. I begged to know why he had chosen such an odd name for me! He told me that he and my mom had picked my name out of a list of other options because it meant something to them. Apparently, *Callie* means “beautiful!” Who knew?

Names have always held special meanings for their owners. But the most important naming is found in Matthew 1:21: “She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save His people from their sins” (NIV). How wonderful that Jesus’ name has a special meaning not just for Him, but for us as well! Every aspect of Jesus proclaims that He has come to save us—right down to His name.

This Christmas season, remember Jesus’ name and that He came to save us from our sins. But also remember that He has promised to come again! And one day, every knee will bow, and every tongue will say, “Jesus is Lord.”

—**Callie Bogle**

Children’s Ministry Associate

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The Gospel of Matthew does not name its own author, but early Christians ascribed it to one of the 12 disciples of Jesus named Matthew. He was a former tax collector.

WHAT?

Matthew 1 provides the genealogy of Jesus, the list of His ancestors back to Abraham. It also tells the story of how Jesus' adoptive father, Joseph, found out about Jesus' miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit.

WHERE?

The story takes place in Nazareth, which was the hometown of Joseph and Mary. Mary would have given birth there instead of Bethlehem had a Roman census not forced them to travel to Bethlehem, which fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus' birth in Micah 5:2.

WHEN?

The story takes place shortly before 6–4 BC. We know this because King Herod, who tried to have Jesus killed, died in 4 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Long after God's promise to Abraham, He sent His Son, born as a baby to a young girl and her fiancé. Jesus, a descendant of Abraham, was the fulfilment of all God said He would do—finally, God sent Jesus to save the world.

Small Group

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Sent Jesus to Save Us

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1

WORD OF WONDER: Isaiah 7:14

Pre-Service (15-20 min)

Small group leaders should be in place 30 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups,

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 ...

- When God promised to send something special to the world, do you think the people expected the promise to come as a baby? Why or why not?
- If you found out the gift to the world was a baby, what do you think your reaction would be?

RESOURCES: [Joseph and Jesus Coloring Page](#)

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

Head to Large Group!

Small Group Discussion: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Distribute Bibles to all kids and help them find the book of Matthew. Encourage kids to find the passages in their own Bibles and follow along. Remind kids the chapter is the big black number, and the verses are the little black numbers. If kids struggle with finding passage, have volunteers assist them. Read Matthew 1:1–2, 5–6, 17–25 aloud. Then talk through the questions below:

- **What book of the Bible was today's story from?**
- **Who did God send an angel to in a dream?**
- **What did the angel tell Joseph?**
- **What do you think Joseph's reaction would have been when he woke up and remembered his dream and what the angel said to him?**
- **God began to set His plan in motion more than 1,500 years before it actually happened. Why do you think He waited so long to send His Son?**
- **How would you have reacted if you had been Joseph, knowing God had made you a big part of His plan?**
- **God sent Jesus to save us. What does that mean to you?**
- **How does God's gift of His Son change you?**

"God sent His Son to save us. What an amazing gift! God's plan, which goes back thousands of years, includes you and me. God knew that this gift would change not only the people back then, but also that this gift would change us. Jesus would one day go to the cross to take the punishment for our sins, so we could be forgiven. God sent His Son to save us! Let's talk to God in prayer."

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Ask kids to share their praise to God for sending His Son, Jesus, to us. Give time for kids to share their prayer requests. Then invite them to stand in a circle and put arms around each other to form a huddle. Ask if there is a volunteer to pray, and then close in prayer.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Distribute Bibles to all kids and encourage kids to find Matthew 1 in their own Bibles. Be sure to help new kids who are not familiar with the Bible. Show them the table of contents and page numbers.

Give a brief overview of the history and context using the info on page 3 of this guide.

Read Matthew 1:1–2, 5–6, 17–25. Have kids read it together in pairs first. Then read it aloud as a whole group as kids follow along in their Bibles.

- What does Matthew 1 help us understand about Jesus' family tree?
- What happened to Joseph in today's story?
- What do you think Joseph's reaction would have been when he woke up and remembered his dream and what the angel said to him?
- What name did Joseph give to God's Son? What does it mean?
- How would you have reacted if you had been Joseph, knowing God had made you a big part of His plan?
- How does the meaning of Jesus' name impact you?
- Why do you think God waited so long to send Jesus to earth?
- There are so many people in David's family tree who loved and obeyed God. Who are some of the people in your family tree who love and obey God? Why do you think that matters to your family tree?

Make It Inclusive!

Be sensitive to kids in your group who may be in foster care or who don't come from Christian homes. They may not know much about their family trees, or there may not be anyone else in their family who follows Jesus. Encourage them to share about a friend, teacher, or someone else they know who loves and obeys God.

"What an amazing gift God gave to us! Wouldn't it be a tragedy if this never happened? What if Jesus never came? It would mean no one would ever take the punishment for our sins. No one would love us the way Jesus does. The gift of Jesus to the world allows us to be forgiven and free from our sins. God sent His Son to save us! The best Christmas gift ever! Let's talk to God in prayer."

*****Have kids turn to their RBKids Notes Page and invite them to fill in the questions and spaces. Talk through each section with them, engaging in conversation about their answers. Instruct them to use the bottom "Small Group" section to write any thoughts, prayers, or questions from today that they want to talk to their parents about when they get home.**

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Stand in a circle, put arms around each other, and form a huddle. Ask kids to share their praises and prayer requests. Consider asking several kids to pray aloud and remind them to thank God for sending His Son, Jesus, to us.

WORD OF WONDER

The Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel.

—Isaiah 7:14 (NIRV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

"The Word of Wonder for The Jesus Family Tree series is Isaiah 7:14. In God's big story, we see that David's family tree includes Joseph. At first, Joseph didn't understand that Mary was carrying such a special gift, God's Son. This verse tells us about the sign God promised to give to the world. It was for Joseph and Mary, and it was for us too!"

Encourage kids to open their Bibles to Isaiah 7:14. Have kids face a friend and read the verse together. Tell kids to turn around and find another friend and read the verse again. Then, say the verse all together as loudly as you can!

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

- What sign did God promise to give? Why do you think God gave a sign?
- Why did God call His Son Immanuel? What does that name mean to you?

Leader Tip: Help kids understand that the name Immanuel means "God with us."

Word of Wonder Activity

SUPPLIES: red or green disposable cups (16 per group), tape (1 roll per group), scissors (2–4 pairs per group), timer (optional)

RESOURCES: Isaiah 7:14 NIRV Sheet (1 per group)

Before kids arrive, print one copy of the Isaiah 7:14 NIRV or NIV Sheet for each group. Set out scissors, cups, tape, and Isaiah 7:14 Sheets for each group.

Encourage kids to say the verse as fast as they can, as slow as they can, and at a normal speed. Ask leaders to gather supplies for their group. Invite kids to cut out the rectangles on the sheet and tape one rectangle on each cup. Ask them to set the cups up on the floor in no specific order. Tell kids that, one at a time, they will find the first phrase of the verse as fast they can and set it in front of them. Next, the same person will find the next phrase and stack it on top of the first. They will continue to stack cups in order according to the verse. Encourage kids to stack cups as quickly and accurately as possible, and give each kid a chance to try!

Therefore	the Lord
himself	will
give	you
a sign:	The virgin
will conceive	and give birth
to a son,	and will
call him	Immanuel.
Isaiah	7:14
Wonder Ink	

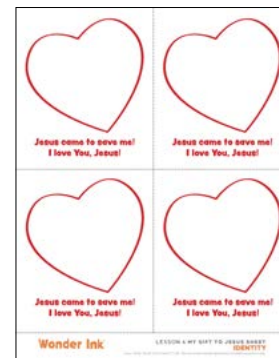
Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Consider having the kids work together as a group to stack the cups in order rather than have them do it one at a time. Also, consider preparing the cups ahead of time, cutting out the slips and taping one to each cup. As the leader, you can help kids read the words.

Responding in Worship: My Gift to Jesus

SUPPLIES: Christmas wrapping paper, cardstock, glue, glitter, decorative stickers, bows, tape, scissors, markers, Christmas gift labels

RESOURCES: [My Gift to Jesus Sheet \(1 heart per kid\)](#), [The Jesus Family Tree Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Before kids arrive, print the My Gift to Jesus Sheet on cardstock and cut along dotted lines. Print enough copies so each child gets one heart. Set out supplies.



"Today's part of God's big story is the perfect way to begin Christmas! Knowing God sent Jesus to save us and love us makes Christmas even more amazing! God chose to send His one and only Son to us through David's family tree. Joseph played a part. Mary played a part. David and Isaiah and even Abraham and Ruth played a part. God included so many people in His plan—and guess what? We play a part!"

God loves us so much that He sent Immanuel to be with us—to walk the earth and experience what we experience, to love us even when we mess up, and to forgive us even when we do wrong against Him. There's nothing we can ever do to make Jesus not love us, and that is a beautiful gift!

When you get up on Christmas morning, wouldn't it be cool if the first thing you did was to tell Jesus how much you love Him? Wouldn't it be cool if the first thing you did wasn't to get a gift but to give one ... to Jesus! This Christmas, before we do anything else, let's tell Jesus that He's the most important part of Christmas and that we're so thankful He came to earth to love us and save us!"

Explain to kids that they get to make a gift to give to Jesus on Christmas. Show kids the hearts and tell them to write or draw a thank-you note or love note to Jesus. Encourage kids to use glitter and stickers to decorate the love note. Next, they can wrap their note in Christmas wrapping paper and add a bow. Invite them to fill out a Christmas label, writing Jesus in the "to" portion and their name in the "from" portion and attaching it to the gift with tape. Encourage kids to take their present for Jesus home and put it under their family's Christmas tree or in another place they will see often. Then, on Christmas morning, it can be the first gift they unwrap as a reminder of what God has done and His love for us. If their family has already celebrated Christmas, encourage them to give this special gift to Jesus by opening it with their families before a meal or at bedtime.

Play music from [The Jesus Family Tree Elementary Spotify playlist](#) as kids work on their gifts for Jesus.

Leader Tip: While some of the kids in your ministry may have a pile of gifts under their tree each Christmas, some likely do not. When talking about gift-giving traditions, be sensitive to the different situations kids experience at home.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids may struggle with this activity due to writing or wrapping. Encourage volunteers to be available to assist kids who need help. If a kid is unable to write or cut or wrap, assure him that is OK and that there are people to help!

Optional Game: Angel Says

You will play a game similar to Simon Says, but you will play the game using the phrase “Angel says.”

Do you remember who came to Joseph in a dream? Allow the kids to answer. **Yes, an angel came to Joseph! The angel gave Joseph some instructions. He was told that he should marry Mary and name the baby Jesus. We’re going to play a game where we will have follow directions, like Joseph. I’m going to give you a command, and if I say, “Angel says,” you should do it. If I don’t say, “Angel says” before my command, don’t do it!**

Let’s practice! Angel says ... hop up and down. Good job! You hopped when I said, “Angel says.” Let’s try again. Pause. Are you ready? OK! Now ... turn around in a circle. Oh no, I didn’t say, “Angel says.” Now are you ready to play?

Call out various silly things for the kids to do, saying, “Angel says” before you give some of the commands. If you don’t say, “Angel says” before a command, and kids do it anyway, they’re out of the game (or they can just keep playing).

You can use the following commands (or make up your own), varying when you say “Angel says” before giving the commands:

- Sit down.
- Spin in a circle.
- Touch your nose.
- Clap your hands.
- Stomp your feet.
- Jump up and down.
- Run in place.
- Do a dance.
- Touch your toes.
- Put your hands on your hips.
- Lie down on the floor.
- Wave your arms in the air.