



LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the Promised King

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1

WORD OF WONDER: From Isaiah 9:6

I've always been a slow reader. During my first year of seminary, I was behind in the reading for one of my theology classes, so I blocked out time to catch up. I expected a long day of slogging through dense paragraphs, and my expectations were met. But God brought something unexpected too. Somehow, those dense paragraphs gave me fresh eyes for the truth about who Jesus is. I ended up kneeling on the floor in teary-eyed wonder, praising Jesus the King.

Read Luke 1:26–38. It doesn't have to come through a theology textbook. It might come through a song, a poem, or a service project. It might come through a familiar passage of Scripture or one you've never read before. Or it might come as you're preparing to teach kids about God's big story. Every time we revisit the Christmas story, there's an opportunity to hear and read anew. Who is Jesus? According to the angel Gabriel, Jesus is the promised King, the one whose kingdom will never end. Do you believe that?

It's so easy to miss out on the truth, to go through the motions, to hear without hearing or see without seeing. This week don't miss out on the story. Jesus really is King, and His kingdom really is coming. Christmas changes everything!

—**Michael Rade**

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DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Mary was a young woman from the town of Nazareth who gave birth to Jesus. She was a virgin engaged to be married to Joseph, a descendant of David. It is possible Mary was also descended from David.

WHAT?

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her she would become pregnant with a baby and to name Him Jesus. Jesus would be called the Son of God and become a king like David, ruling over God's people forever in a kingdom without end.

WHERE?

The angel appeared to Mary in the town of Nazareth in the region of Galilee, which was north of Judea. Nazareth is just over 15 miles west of the Sea of Galilee. Mary traveled south to visit her relative Elizabeth in the hill country of Judea.

WHEN?

The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary when her relative Elizabeth was six months pregnant. When the angel foretold the birth of John, King Herod's reign was nearing its end. King Herod ruled over Judea until 4 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

God promised that a descendant of David would rule forever, and Daniel had a vision of one like a son of man ruling a kingdom without end (Daniel 7:13–14). These expectations are fulfilled in Jesus, born the rightful King over all creation.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: musical instruments

Wonder Ink RESOURCES: Mary Coloring Sheet (1 per kid)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?

Play Station: Musical Instruments

Allow the kids to play with the instruments as they wish. Encourage them to take turns trying different instruments.

Play Station: Mary Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a map to someone's house.



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LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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, thank You that we are here together and that Your Holy Spirit is with us. Today help us learn more about how You always keep Your promises. Thank You for keeping the best promise—the promise to send Jesus as King! We want to see, feel, hear, and know Your great love. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

Pull out the Bible

Ask: What is this called? The Bible

Ask: Why is the Bible important? Because it is God's word. Everything in it is true. It really happened.

Tell the Bible Story

The Beginner's Bible, pages 266-270

An Angel Visits Mary

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What message did the angel give Mary?** *(Mary was going to have a baby, and the baby was the promised King.)*
- **How do you think Mary felt when she saw the angel?**
- **Who did Mary go visit after she heard from the angel?** *(Her cousin Elizabeth)*
- **What happened to the baby in Elizabeth's belly when she greeted Mary?** *(The baby leaped inside of her.)*
- **Why do you think the baby inside of Elizabeth's belly leaped?**
- **How did Mary worship God?** *(With a song)*
- **What are some ways we can worship God?**

Word of Wonder

WORD OF WONDER

**A child will be born to us. A son will be given to us.
He will be called the Prince of Peace.**

—from Isaiah 9:6

God promised long ago that a child would be born, and that the child would be the Prince of Peace. God kept that promise in Jesus! Jesus is the promised King!

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How does it feel to know that God always keeps His promises?**
- **Do you think people expected the promised King to come as a baby? What makes you think so?**



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LESSON 3 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Craft: Jingle Bell Instruments

SUPPLIES: pipe cleaners (1 per kid), jingle bells (4 per kid), hole punch (optional), paper plates (1 per kid, optional), ribbon (12" per kid, optional)

Mary got an amazing message from the angel. She was so amazed that she sang a song to worship God and show how thankful she was. Our craft today can help us worship God too. Jesus is the promised King!

Give each child a pipe cleaner and four jingle bells. Show the kids how to slide the jingle bells onto the pipe cleaner. Once the bells are on the pipe cleaner, twist the two ends together to make a circle, which is like a tambourine. Help the kids as they make their jingle bell instruments.

Allow the kids a few seconds to shake the bells and then set the bells to the side.

Later, we're going to use our bells to make music as we sing songs to God, just like Mary. You can take your instrument home to help you remember that you can praise God for sending Jesus. To make the craft more complex, you can use a hole punch to make holes in paper plates and allow the kids to decorate the plates, then string bells onto the plates with ribbons through the holes.

Keep the instruments nearby because kids will use their bells during the Responding in Worship time.

