

Bible Point

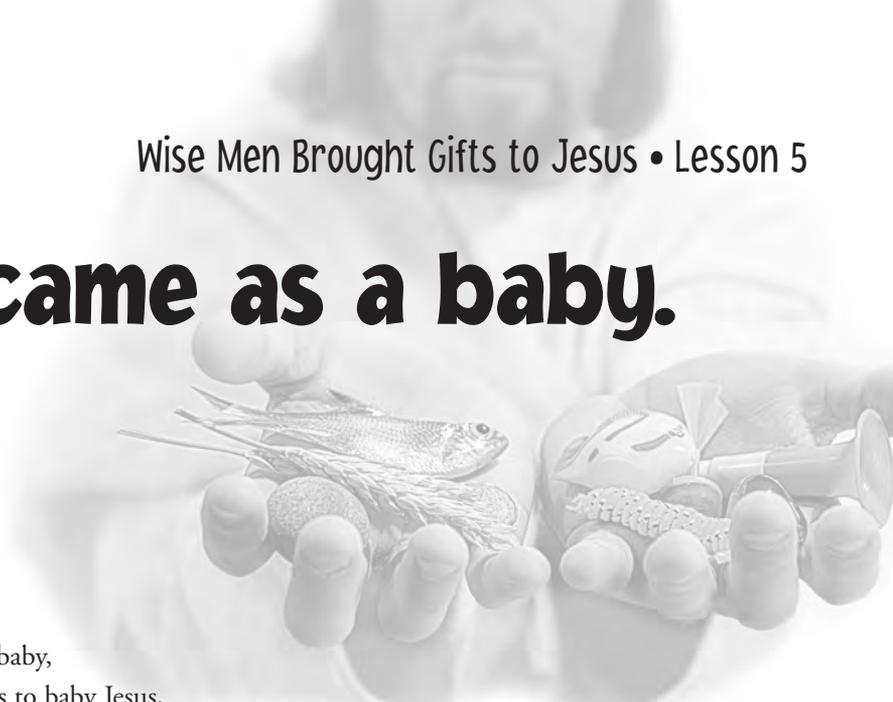
Jesus came as a baby.

Bible Verse

Jesus was born (adapted from Luke 2:6).

Growing Closer to Jesus

- Children will
- discover that Jesus was a special baby,
 - learn that wise men brought gifts to baby Jesus,
 - see that they can give gifts to Jesus, and
 - review the story of Jesus' birth.



Teacher Enrichment

Bible Basis

■ Wise men brought gifts to Jesus.



Some time after Jesus' birth, travelers from a location far east of Israel came to worship Jesus, the newborn king whose star they saw from where they lived. Nowhere in the Bible are we told that they were kings or that there were three of them; those ideas come from tradition. Likely the wise men came to a house where Mary and Joseph were staying in Bethlehem, perhaps several months after Jesus was born. But the key is that these strangers came from far away to bring gifts and to worship the baby Jesus.

Prayer

- Read Matthew 2:1-12.
- What does the visit of the Magi say about who God wanted to reach through Jesus?
- What gifts have you brought to lay at Jesus' feet?
- Prayer: Lord, I give you my heart. Help me to...



Repeating the Bible Point over and over will help the children remember it and apply it to their lives. Help children learn one point that will stay with them for days and even years to come.

Before the Lesson

- Collect items for the activities you plan to use, referring to the Classroom Supplies and Learning Lab Supplies listed in the chart on the next page.
- Pray for the children in your class and for God's direction in teaching the lesson.

This Lesson at a Glance

	What Children Will Do	Classroom Supplies	Learning Lab Supplies
Arrival Activities Direct children to one or more of the optional activities until everyone arrives.	Welcome Time —Receive a warm welcome from the teacher and Cuddles the Lamb.	Name tags (p. 8), marker, tape or safety pins, CD player	
	Option 1: Book Nook —Look at picture books about Jesus' birth in Bethlehem.	Storybooks about Jesus' birth, stuffed animals	
	Option 2: Animals in the Stable —Decorate boxes to represent stables, and pretend to be their favorite animals.	A variety of large boxes, crayons	
	Pick-Up Time —Sing a song as they help clean up the room.	CD player	
Bible Story Time	Bible Song —Sing a song about the Bible.	Bible, CD player	
	Jesus Came as a Baby —Interact with sensory items on the StoryBoard as they hear the Bible story from Luke 2:1-20 and Matthew 2.	CD player	
	Away in a Manger —Sing a song about Jesus' birth.	CD player	
Bible Activities	Interactive Bible Bulletin Board —Review the Bible story with Cuddles the Lamb, create a bulletin board together, play a game, and learn a fun rhyme.	Wise men and gift patterns (pp. 73-74), scissors, tape	
	Sing It Out —Sing a song about Jesus' birth.	CD player	
	Bible Craft —Create colorful gift wrap.	Scissors, tissue paper, sponges, tempera paint, water, plastic foam meat trays, fine-tipped marker, newsprint	
	Bible Game —Find stuffed animals in boxes representing stables.	Boxes from "Animals in the Stable" activity, stuffed animals	
Closing 	Thanking God —Say a prayer and have a jiggly snack.	Finger gelatin, star-shaped cookie cutter, small paper plates, small spatula	

*See the end of this lesson for extra-time ideas and supplies.

Arrival Activities

Welcome Time

SUPPLIES: name tags (p. 8), marker, tape, CD player



- Play “Away in a Manger” (track 4) from the CD as children are arriving. The music will soothe them as they adapt to their new surroundings.
- Use Cuddles the Lamb to greet each child by name and with a warm smile.
- Tape or pin a name tag to each child’s clothing.
- Say: **Today we’re going to learn that ► Jesus came as a baby.**

- Place Cuddles out of sight so the children won’t be distracted by him during the next activity.

Option 1: Book Nook

SUPPLIES: Christmas storybooks, stuffed animals

Scatter a variety of colorful Christmas storybooks in a corner of the room. Set stuffed animals around the “book nook,” and encourage each child to choose a fuzzy friend to share a book with. Help children find pictures of the manger, Mary and Joseph, the bright star, shepherds with their sheep, camels, and baby Jesus. If you have time, read a few short stories to the children. Remind them that ► Jesus came as a baby.

Option 2: Animals in the Stable

SUPPLIES: large cardboard boxes, crayons

Provide a variety of boxes large enough for the children to stand in. Let the children decorate their “stables” with crayons. As the children work, remind them that ► Jesus came as a baby and that he was born in a stable where animals lived. Have the children stand or sit in the boxes and imitate the sounds of their favorite farm animals. Point out that the animals in the stable were special because they were there when Jesus was born.

Pick-Up Time

SUPPLIES: CD player



As Arrival Activities draw to a close, gently mention that it will soon be time to clean up. Encourage children to help you pick up things in the room as you lead them in singing “Let’s Pick Up All Our Things.” Use the CD (track 2) and sing the song to the tune of “Looby Loo.”



**Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things
And put them all away.**

**Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Everyone here can help.
Let’s put it all away.**

**Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
Let’s pick up all our things.
It’s time to stop our play.**



Toddlers love colorful illustrations! Be sure to provide picture books that are inviting and exciting to look at. Provide carpet squares or a few comfortable pillows to make your book nook more inviting.



Singing helps young children make a smooth transition to the next activity. At first, children will just listen to the song, but they’ll quickly catch on and sing along.

Bible Story Time

■ Bible Song



BIBLE POINT ▶

SUPPLIES: Bible, CD player



Say: ▶ Jesus came as a baby. How do we know that? **The Bible tells us.** Show children the Bible. **The Bible is God's special book. The Bible tells us about God. Let's learn a song about the Bible.** Using the CD (track 3), lead the children in singing "God's Special Book" to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat."



SING

This is God's special book.
Yes, it's God's book you see!
I learn about all God has done,
And his love for me!

(Repeat.)

Bible!

■ Bible Story: Jesus Came as a Baby

This Bible story is featured in *My First Hands-On Bible™*. Order several now for your ministry at group.com.



SUPPLIES: CD player



Before class begins, make sure to check that the sensory items are still attached securely so the children can touch them without danger of pulling the items off or putting them into their mouths.



BIBLE POINT ▶

BIBLE VERSE ▶

Panel 2



Hold the StoryBoard so that Panel 2 is revealed and Panels 1 and 3 are folded back. Say: **We've been learning that ▶ Jesus came as a baby.** Show Panel 2, which shows the stable with Mary, Joseph, and baby Jesus. Point to the figure of baby Jesus and say: ▶ **Jesus was born in a stable a long time ago. He was a special gift from God to us.**

Ask: • **Who was the baby?** (Jesus.)

Say: **When I point to you, come point to baby Jesus and touch the hay in the manger.**

After each child has had a chance to touch the hay and point to baby Jesus, say: ▶ **Jesus came as a baby, and babies have mommies.**

Ask: • **Who was Jesus' mommy?** (Mary.)

Say: **Mommies love their babies and take good care of them. Mary wrapped baby Jesus in a soft, cuddly blanket. She wrapped the blanket all around him.** Wrap your arms around yourself. **Can you show me your "blanket"?** Encourage the children to hug themselves. **A soft, cuddly blanket is like a warm hug! When I say your name, come and touch baby Jesus' soft blanket, and then I'll give you a hug.**



BIBLE POINT ▶

Continue until each child has touched the blanket and been affirmed with a hug from you.

Say: ► ***Jesus came as a baby. Let's find out more!***



Panel 1



Play the “Sheep and Lamb Sounds” segment of the *CD* (track 6). Ask: • **What animal is making that funny sound?** (Sheep; lambs.)

• **Can you make a sound like a sheep or a lamb?** Pause for children to respond.

Point to the shepherds on Panel 1. Say: **Shepherds were taking care of their sheep and giving them food to eat. Let's give the sheep a pat just as the shepherds might have.** Let children pat the sheep.

Ask: • **How do sheep feel?** (Soft; fuzzy.)

- **What sounds do the sheep make?** (Baa, baa.)
- **Who takes care of the sheep?** (The shepherds.)

Say: **While the shepherds were taking care of the sheep, angels came to tell the shepherds that baby Jesus had been born! Let's touch the angel's robe.** Have the children touch the angel's robe on the StoryBoard. After each child has had a turn, ask:

- **How does the angel's robe feel?** (Soft; smooth.)
- **Who sent the beautiful angels?** (God.)
- **What did the angels tell the shepherds?** (Jesus is born; that Jesus came as a baby.)

Say: **God sent the angels to tell the shepherds that ► *Jesus came as a baby.* The shepherds were so excited, they wanted to see this special baby. So they went to find him.**



Panel 3



Reveal Panel 3 of the StoryBoard, which shows the wise men, camels, and the star. Point to the star and say: **When Jesus was born, a very large and very shiny star appeared in the sky.**

Ask: • **How does the star look?** (Big; shiny; sparkly.)

• **Who do you think put that big, shiny star in the sky?** (God.)

Say: **Yes, God put that big star in the sky to show the wise men how to find Jesus. The wise men came from far away—maybe they even traveled on camels!** Point to the camels and tell children about how camels have humps and live in the desert. **Let's add a few more of our stars to the sky.** Choose two children to put self-adhesive star stickers from Sensory Packet 1 on the StoryBoard's sky.

Think of how those stars twinkled! Let's “twinkle” like stars. Have children stand and open and close their fingers.

Point to the wise men and say: **The wise men saw the bright star in the sky. They followed the star to find Jesus. The wise men brought Jesus special gifts. Some of the gifts had special smells. Let's smell the gifts now.**

When each child has had a chance to smell the tea bag and perfumed felt, ask:

- **How do the gifts smell?** (Good; yucky; yummy.)
- **Why did the wise men bring gifts to Jesus?** (Because they loved him; because it was his birthday.)



Understanding Your Toddlers' and 2s' Social/Emotional Development

Toddlers and 2s...

- play beside—but not with—other children (parallel play).
- are possessive about toys and are reluctant to share.
- have tantrums when they're frustrated.
- can chew food well.
- can drink from cups and eat with spoons.
- need adult help in socialization.
- imitate adults.
- often say “no” in response to questions.


BIBLE POINT ▶


Important: Put the StoryBoard away and out of reach of children.


BIBLE POINT ▶

Say: **What a special night it was when ▶ Jesus came as a baby. The wise men brought gifts to Jesus. Let's make a gift box with our hands.** Have children hold their hands cupped together. **Peek inside.** Bring your hands up to your eyes and open the "box" to peek inside. **Close it up!** Pause for children to cup their hands. **Now, peek inside again.**

Ask: • **What special gifts might you get at Christmas?** (A doll; a rabbit.)

• **What special gift can you give at Christmas?** Encourage children to open their hands and tell about gifts they could give. If some of the children need help, tell them a hug is a nice gift, and give them a hug.

After each child has had a chance to share, say: **Jesus is a special gift from God. God sent Jesus because he loves us. Let's sing a song about the night that ▶ Jesus came as a baby!**

■ *Away in a Manger*

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD (track 4), lead children in singing "Away in a Manger." (Words are on page 15.)

Encourage children to rock pretend babies in their arms as they sing and to twinkle their fingers in the air when the song mentions the stars looking down. After the song, thank children for singing with you.

Say: **Imagine sleeping on hay! But that's what Jesus slept on. Let's see if we can find the manger on our bulletin board.**

Bible Activities

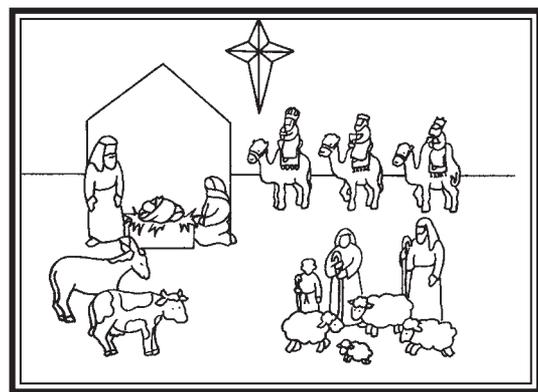
■ *Interactive Bible Bulletin Board*

SUPPLIES: wise men and gift patterns (pp. 73-74), scissors, tape



Before class, photocopy the wise men and gift patterns. Make sure to photocopy a gift pattern for each child. Cut out the shapes.

Also before class, remove the *gift box* and *surprise ball* from the Learning Lab.



If you meet in a rented facility or in a multipurpose room, consider purchasing a bulletin board on wheels or a board that is small enough to carry. Your efforts will provide opportunities for learning as well as familiar decorations for your kids!



Bring out Cuddles the Lamb. Go through the following script; then put Cuddles away out of sight.

Teacher: Cuddles the Lamb is here to visit us again today. Let's say hello to Cuddles.

Cuddles: Hi! Did you learn about sheep again today? Sheep were the only animals there when ► Jesus came as a baby.

Teacher: Oh, Cuddles. Sheep were there when Jesus was born, but there were probably other animals, too. We learned that the wise men might have ridden on animals to see Jesus. Children, can you tell Cuddles what animals the wise men maybe rode on?

Lead children in telling Cuddles that maybe the wise men rode on camels.

Cuddles: Camels! What do they look like?

Help the children tell Cuddles about camels.

Teacher: Let's put the wise men and camels on our bulletin board. Cuddles, can you help us?

Hand the cutouts of wise men on camels to three children. Help children tape the pictures to the bulletin board or on a wall.

Cuddles: Did the wise men give Jesus a camel?

Teacher: No, Cuddles. The wise men brought little Jesus special gifts.

Hand the other children each a picture of a gift. Help children tape the pictures around the bulletin board. Each time a child places a gift, say, "Thank you, God, for Jesus." Have children repeat the sentence with you.

Cuddles: I'd sure like a gift.

Teacher: We can give you a gift, Cuddles. We can give you the gift of love!



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Have children sit in a circle on the floor. Hold up the *gift box* so all the children can see it.



Say: ► Jesus came as a baby. Sometimes when a baby is born, people bring gifts to the baby. The wise men brought gifts to baby Jesus because they knew how special he is. Jesus is God's gift to the world. When we believe in Jesus, we can be his forever friend and live with him in heaven.



We can give a gift back to Jesus by showing love to other people. One way we can show love is to whisper something nice to someone. Let's pass the *gift box* around. When you get the box, open the lid and whisper

something nice inside, and then hurry and close the lid so the whisper won't get out. Maybe you'll whisper, "God is good" or "My mom is nice." Then pass the box to the next person. That person will open the lid and quickly whisper something nice in the box, too!

Once children have finished whispering in the *gift box*, let Cuddles pretend to whisper into the box, too. Thank Cuddles and the children for all of their nice words. Then have children wave goodbye to Cuddles as you place him and the *gift box* out of sight.

Next, use the *surprise ball* as you lead children in the following action rhyme.

God gave us a special gift (*point to self*),
A gift for you and me. (*Point to person sitting nearby, and then point to self.*)
God gave us Jesus (*point up*),
The best gift there could be! (*Wave arms in the air and shout 'Hooray!'*)
God gave us a special gift (*point to self*),
A gift that we can share. (*Extend arms, palms up, to the middle of the circle.*)
God gave us Jesus (*point up*)
To show how much he cares for [child's name]! (*Pat hands on thighs like a drum roll.*)

Roll the *surprise ball* to a child in the circle as you say, "**Jesus cares for** [child's name]!" Have everyone clap for the child you named. Then have the child gently roll the ball back to you. Repeat the rhyme with the children and at the end of the rhyme, roll the ball to a different child. Repeat the process until you've rolled the ball to and affirmed each child in class.

Say: **I'm so glad that Jesus loves us! Let's sing a special song about the night** ► *Jesus came as a baby.*



BIBLE POINT ►

■ Sing It Out

SUPPLIES: CD player



Using the CD, lead children in doing the motions and singing "Bright Star" (track 5) to the tune of "The Mulberry Bush."



SING

The star was shining in the night (*"twinkle" fingers in the air*),
In the night, in the night. (*"Twinkle" fingers in the air.*)
The star was shining in the night. (*"Twinkle" fingers in the air.*)
It was a pretty sight! (*Cup hands next to eyes.*)

In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*),
The baby slept, the baby slept. (*Rest head on hands.*)
In the manger the baby slept (*rest head on hands*)
All through the night. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*),
The angels sang, the angels sang. (*Cup hands next to mouth.*)
In the sky the angels sang (*cup hands next to mouth*)
About the baby Jesus. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*),
See the child, see the child. (*Walk in place.*)
The shepherds went to see the child (*walk in place*)
And bowed on their knees. (*Bow on one knee.*)

The wise men brought their gifts to him (*extend hands in front*),
Gifts to him, gifts to him. (*Extend hands in front.*)
The wise men brought their gifts to him (*extend hands in front*)—
All the way to Jesus. (*Pretend to rock a baby.*)

Jesus, we're so glad you're here (*clap hands to left and right*),
Glad you're here, glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
Jesus, we're so glad you're here. (*Clap hands to left and right.*)
We want to give you love. (*Cross hands over chest.*)

Say: ► ***Jesus came as a baby*, and we're so glad he did! The wise men brought gifts to Jesus. We can make special gift wrap to use later.**

■ Bible Craft

SUPPLIES: sponges, scissors, tempera paint, water, plastic foam meat trays, tissue paper, fine-tipped marker, newsprint

Before class, cut sponges into star shapes. If possible, cut a star sponge for each child in class. If you have a larger class, let pairs share a sponge.

Cover a worktable with newsprint. Dilute tempera paint by adding a small amount of water. Pour the diluted paint into foam meat trays to serve as ink pads, and distribute the star sponges. Place a sheet of tissue paper in front of each child. Use a fine-tipped marker to write children's names on their tissue paper. Help children decorate their tissue papers with lots of star prints. Tell the children they're making gift wrap.

Say: **We've made gift wrap to remind us that ► *Jesus came as a baby* and was God's special gift to each of us.** Set aside the finished gift wrap to dry.

Say: **Jesus is God's gift to us. And we've been learning about the night Jesus was born in the stable. Let's play a game with pretend stables.**

■ Bible Game

SUPPLIES: stuffed animals, box "stables" from "Animals in the Stable" activity

Hide stuffed animals inside the box "stables" used in the "Animals in the Stable" activity. Say: **We're going to pretend we're looking for a stable to stay in just like Jesus' family did when ► *Jesus came as a baby*. There were animals living inside the stable. Let's see who can find the animals in our stables.**

Ask each child to find one animal and bring it to the story area. Help the children identify the animals they've found.

To add variety to this game, have half the children hide their eyes while the others hide the animals in the stable boxes again. Then let the children open their eyes and find the animals. Play the game once more and have the "hiders" and "finders" switch roles.

Say: **Jesus was born in a stable on a starry night. Let's be pretend stars and wink and blink our way to the snack table.**



As children work on their wrapping paper, ask an adult helper to hide stuffed animals in large boxes to prepare for the Bible game. You'll need an animal for each child.

Make sure children wear art smocks as they work.





If star-shaped cookie cutters are not available, cut the finger gelatin into squares and tell the children to pretend they received a gift like the gifts wise men brought Jesus.

Closing

■ *Thanking God*

SUPPLIES: gelatin, small spatula, star-shaped cookie cutter, small paper plates

Before class, make finger gelatin. Use a star-shaped cookie cutter to cut it into star shapes. You'll need a star shape for each child.

Say: **We've learned that ► *Jesus came as a baby.* He was God's special gift to us. Let's say a prayer to thank God for sending baby Jesus. Fold your hands.** Pray: **Thank you, God, for giving us baby Jesus. Amen.**

Have children wash their hands. Seat children at the snack table. Give each child a piece of star-shaped finger gelatin on a small paper plate.

As children leave, remind them to tell their families that ► *Jesus came as a baby.*

For Extra Time

If you have a long class time or want to add additional elements to your lesson, try one of the following activities.

■ *Bright Star Song*

Without using the *CD*, sing "Bright Star" to the tune of "The Mulberry Bush." Words are on pages 70-71.

■ *Nativity Play*

Provide a nonbreakable Nativity set for the children to handle. Encourage children to tell about the roles the individual figures played in the Christmas story.

If you don't have a Nativity set, make one by photocopying and cutting out the patterns at the end of each lesson in Module 1. Then tape the illustrations to small boxes so they can stand alone.

Patterns

Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.



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Cut loosely around each pattern instead of cutting exactly on the outlines.

