

Jesus Christ Was Born on Earth (Christmas)

Lesson
47

Purpose To help the children understand the importance of Jesus Christ's birth.

- Preparation**
1. Prayerfully study Helaman 14; 3 Nephi 1; and Luke 2. Be prepared to read Helaman 14:5; 3 Nephi 1:13, 21; and Luke 2:9–15.
 2. Prepare a copy of the star puzzle handout, located at the end of the lesson, for each child. Cut out the puzzle pieces, and clip them together or put them in an envelope for each child.
 3. Be prepared to teach the children to sing or say the words to “Stars Were Gleaming” (*Children’s Songbook*, p. 37) and “Silent Night” (*Hymns*, no. 204).
 4. Materials needed:
 - a. A Bible and a Book of Mormon.
 - b. The following cutouts: the birth of Jesus Christ (cutout 3-11), the shepherds (cutout 3-12), the angel (cutout 3-5), and the Nephites and the star (cutout 3-13).
 - c. A sheet of colored paper for each child.
 - d. Glue or paste.
 - e. Picture 3-73, Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall (62370; Gospel Art Picture Kit 314).
 5. Make the necessary preparations for any enrichment activities that you will be using.
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Suggested Lesson Development

Invite a child to give the opening prayer.

Follow up with the children if you encouraged them to do something during the week.

Jesus Christ’s Birth Was Announced by an Angel

Attention activity

- Have you ever waited for something special to happen?
- What was it? (The children’s responses might include the birth of a new baby, a visit from grandparents, a birthday, their baptism, and so forth.)
- Did it seem like a long time to wait?
- How did you feel when it finally happened?

Give the children an opportunity to share experiences and express the feelings of excitement that they had. You might wish to share an event that you looked forward to.

Explain that since the time of Adam, our Father in Heaven promised that a very important event would take place. He promised to send to earth his Son, who

would be the Savior of the world. Righteous people looked forward anxiously to this great event. They knew Heavenly Father would keep his promise. They waited for Jesus to be born.

Scripture and
cutout story

Display the cutout of the birth of Jesus. Ask the children to tell what they know about the story of Jesus' birth. Help each child contribute something to the story.

- Who were in the fields near Bethlehem that night? (Shepherds, who were watching their flocks.)

Display the cutout of the shepherds.

Explain that on the night Jesus was born, an angel appeared to these humble shepherds to tell them the important news of Jesus' birth.

Display the cutout of the angel.

- How did the shepherds feel when they saw the angel? (The shepherds were frightened when the angel appeared.)

Tell the children that the shepherds did not understand that the angel had such an important message for them. Read to the class what happened in Luke 2:9–15.

- How do you think the shepherds felt when they heard the news about Jesus' birth?
- What did the shepherds do to show that they were happy about the birth of Jesus? (They went to find the baby Jesus in Bethlehem.)

Explain that because an angel appeared to the shepherds to tell them about the birth of Jesus Christ, they knew that Jesus was the Son of Heavenly Father and that his birth was important.

Song

To help the children feel the joy and excitement of Jesus' birth, help them sing or say the words to "Stars Were Gleaming."

Stars were gleaming, shepherds dreaming;
And the night was dark and chill.
Angels' story rang with glory;
Shepherds heard it on the hill.
Ah, that singing! Hear it ringing,
Earthward winging, Christmas bringing!
Hearken! We can hear it still!

See the clearness and the nearness
Of the blessed Christmas star,
Leading, guiding; wise men riding
Through the desert dark and far.
Lovely showing, shining, growing,
Onward going, gleaming, glowing,
Leading still, our Christmas star!
(“Stars Were Gleaming” by Nancy Byrd Turner
from *Hymns for Primary Worship*. Used by
permission of John Knox Press.)

After singing or saying the words to the song, explain that not only did the shepherds receive this important message about Jesus' birth, but the Nephites and Lamanites in America received the word also.

Jesus Christ's Birth Was Announced in America

Picture, scripture, and story

Explain that throughout the Book of Mormon, the prophets talked about and looked forward to the birth of Jesus Christ. The members of Christ's Church looked forward to the Savior's birth and prayed about it for many years. Tell the following story in your own words:

Five years before the birth of Jesus, a prophet named Samuel was called by God to prepare the people for the birth of Jesus. He was to warn them to repent and believe in the Savior. Samuel was a Lamanite. The Nephites had become wicked and would not listen. They became so angry with Samuel that they threw him out of their city. But the voice of the Lord came to Samuel and told him to return again. He courageously climbed upon the city wall and told the people to repent and prepare themselves for the coming birth of Jesus Christ.

Display picture 3-73, Samuel the Lamanite on the Wall.

Explain that Samuel told the people that in five years Jesus Christ would come to earth. The event that had been foretold for so long was actually coming very soon. Samuel explained that certain things would happen that would tell them that Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. The night before Jesus was born there would be great lights in the sky. They would be so bright that during the night there would be no darkness. At night it would be as light as if it were daytime.

Read Helaman 14:5 to the class.

- What did Samuel tell the Nephites to look for? (A new star.)

Tell the children that Samuel the Lamanite told the Nephites that they would see a new star in the sky when Jesus was born. Samuel knew this because he had been told by an angel that these signs would come.

- Why do you think Heavenly Father sent an angel to tell Samuel these things? (So he could tell the people.)
- Why do you think Heavenly Father wanted Samuel to tell the Nephites about these signs? (To let them know when Jesus was born and to try to get the people to repent.)

Explain that Heavenly Father sent an angel to tell Samuel about the coming events. He wanted the people in America to be looking forward to Jesus Christ's birth. Heavenly Father wanted them to know it was coming soon.

Five years after Samuel told the Nephites that Jesus would be born, the Church members were waiting for the signs that Samuel had told them about. They were watching for the night without darkness that would signal his birth. The wicked people, who did not believe Samuel's words, told the faithful followers that they would put them to death if the signs did not appear by a certain day.

The prophet at that time was a man named Nephi. Nephi was worried about what the unbelievers would do to the righteous people if the signs did not come by the day the unbelievers had chosen. He was so full of sorrow that he

prayed to Heavenly Father because of the troubles they were having. Nephi prayed all day. Then the voice of the Lord came to Nephi.

Scripture discussion

Read 3 Nephi 1:13 to the children.

- How do you think Nephi felt when he heard Jesus Christ speak these words?

Explain that Nephi was comforted and knew that Jesus would be born the next day. That very evening the first sign came.

- What happened that night?

Let the children tell what they know. Help them understand that the night came, but there was no darkness. The people were surprised that there didn't seem to be any night. They became so amazed that they fell to the earth. The righteous people knew that the time had arrived that they had looked forward to for many years. They knew that Jesus Christ was going to be born. Then something else happened.

Scripture and cutout

Read 3 Nephi 1:21 to the class to see what it was.

Display the cutout of the Nephites and the star (opposite those already used).

Explain that the Savior had been born. The faith that they had had for many years now turned to great joy as they saw the new star in the sky. Even though the Nephites were unable to go see the child, they knew his birth was important to them.

- Why did Heavenly Father make sure that the Nephites saw the star? (So they would know that Jesus Christ was born.)
- How do you think the Nephites felt when they saw the star?

Explain that the star was also seen in Jerusalem. Jesus Christ's birth was important to everyone. It was something that people had looked forward to for many years, and it really happened.

Song

Sing or say the words to "Silent Night."

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace;
Sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight!
Glories stream from heaven afar;
Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth;

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Summary

Teacher presentation	<p>Explain that it is not necessary for us to see an angel or a star each Christmas to tell us that Jesus Christ was born. We know this is true. We know it is important for us. We can feel the same joy that the shepherds and the Nephites felt when they knew he had been born. We feel this by spreading the love and joy of his birth to others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How can you share the joy of Jesus Christ's birth with others?
Teacher testimony	<p>Bear your testimony about the importance of Jesus Christ's birth and how we can share love and joy with others.</p>
Activity	<p>Distribute a set of puzzle pieces to each child. Have them put their puzzles together and glue them on a piece of colored paper. After all the children have finished, read the message on the star: "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).</p>
Discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who received this message from an angel? (The shepherds in the field.) • Who received the star as a sign of Jesus Christ's birth? (The Nephites and the people in Jerusalem.) <p>Invite a child to give the closing prayer.</p>

Enrichment Activities

Choose from the following activities those that will work best for your children. You can use them in the lesson itself or as a review or summary. For additional guidance, see "Class Time" in "Helps for the Teacher."

1. Use simple props to role play the story of the birth of Jesus Christ.
2. Give each child a paper and crayons. Help the children to fold it like a card. Write the word *Christmas* on the front. Ask the class to make Christmas cards for their families by drawing pictures of what they have learned from the lesson.

