

Grade 4—Unit 7

The Messiah Is Born

In this unit, students will be introduced to eight people in the genealogy of Jesus. Each person is attributed a characteristic associated with following God. The unit culminates with the birth of Jesus, God’s great gift of love to the world.

Note: *This unit is designed for use during the Christmas season.*

LESSONS

1. Generation to Generation
2. Abraham, Example of Obedience
3. Jacob, Example of Hope
4. Rahab’s Joy, Ruth’s Love, Boaz’s Kindness
5. David’s Repentance, Hezekiah’s Faithfulness, Josiah’s Enlightenment
6. Jesus, the Promise Fulfilled

Plan ahead for materials needed:

Lesson 1—You will need to gather materials for an Advent wreath.

Lesson 6—You will need a guest reader. Make arrangements for someone to read the Christmas story from Luke 2 and conduct a discussion based on John 3:16. You will also need a birthday cake and juice. A parent might be willing to bake and decorate a cake.

Unit 7: The Messiah Is Born

Unit Information

SUMMARY

Old Testament characters Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, Ruth, Boaz, David, Hezekiah, and Josiah each have their places in the genealogy of Christ, as recorded in Matthew 1. While many of the Israelites, especially the later kings, did not choose to follow God, these ancestors of Jesus did make choices to honor and obey God. This unit highlights one “follower of God” characteristic for each of these people. In addition, the Messiah’s birth is announced, and students will look at John 3:16 as a reminder of God’s purpose in sending Jesus.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

Lesson 1

Matthew 1:1-17

Lesson 2

Genesis 12:1-7; Genesis 22:1-18

Lesson 3

Genesis 27:1-35; Genesis 28:10-17

Lesson 4

Joshua 2:1-24; Ruth 1:1-17; Ruth 2:1-21

Memory texts, Lessons 1-4: Isaiah 9:2, 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-26

Lesson 5

2 Samuel 11:1-27; 2 Kings 18:1-8; 2 Kings 20:1-11; 2 Kings 22-23

Memory text: Micah 6:8

Lesson 6

Luke 2

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Jesus’ Family Tree

A genealogy of Jesus and his family is recorded in Matthew 1:1-17. It contains a long list of Jesus’ ancestors. Eight of these people are highlighted in this unit.

The genealogical record begins with Abraham, whose name means “father of nations.” Abraham’s original home was the rich and beautiful city of Ur, located on the Euphrates River. God called Abraham to move to the land of Canaan, and he obeyed. During this time of transition, Abraham lived as a nomad. Wherever he camped, he built an altar and worshiped God. Abraham’s faithfulness was rewarded (Hebrews 11:8-10). Along with the promise of his descendants becoming a great nation came the test of waiting for the birth of his son. When Abraham was a very old man (*approximately 100 years old*), Isaac was born. Even then Abraham’s faith was tested when God asked him to offer his only son on the altar as a sacrifice. Again his faith was rewarded. God provided an alternate sacrifice, and Isaac was permitted to live (Hebrews 11:11-12, 17-19).

The promise of a great nation that God had given to Abraham was renewed with Jacob. Jacob deceived his father, Isaac, to receive the birthright. Soon after that, however, Jacob sensed the presence of God in a dream. God forgave him and promised that his descendants would be as numerous as the dust of the earth.

An unlikely candidate also appears in Matthew's genealogical records. Students will remember Rahab as the woman who helped the Israelites gain entry into Jericho. Although she is often referred to as a prostitute, Rahab may have been better known as an innkeeper who operated a house of lodging. Whatever her title, it seems that she was not known in Jericho for her high moral character.

Because of the strategic location of her house on the city wall, two spies from the Israelite army sought lodging there. When the king got wind of enemy spies, he came looking for them. Rahab hid the spies and lied about their presence. It is important to realize, however, that what Rahab *was* is not as important as what Rahab *became*. She and her family were spared during the destruction of Jericho and became part of the Israelite community—God's chosen people.

Rahab is listed in Matthew 1 as the mother of Boaz. She is also one of two women mentioned in the list of heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:31.

The loving spirit of Ruth, a foreigner from Moab, earned her a place in Matthew's genealogy. As a young widow, she expressed loyalty to her husband's mother, people, country, and God. All of this from a person whose people were hated by the early Israelites! Ruth followed Naomi to the land of her birth without faltering. She never complained about leaving her home and people.

Ruth worked to support her mother-in-law and later married Boaz, an Israelite landowner and man of God. Her love for God and for her mother-in-law worked a miracle for Ruth. She became the great-grandmother of King David.

David and Bathsheba are both mentioned as ancestors of Jesus. From earlier lessons, students will remember David's repentant spirit and desire to serve the Lord as Israel's second king. The man "after God's own heart" (1 Samuel 13:14) was promised a kingdom that would have no end. That promise came true in Jesus, the Son of David.

The Bible does not tell us much about Bathsheba. We do know that she was the mother of Solomon, Israel's third king. The prophet Nathan sought help from Bathsheba when Adonijah tried to usurp David's throne. Through her efforts, plans were set in motion to appoint Solomon as successor to King David.

Hezekiah is another of Jesus' kingly ancestors. As king of Judah, Hezekiah reopened and repaired the temple and organized a national campaign to destroy all the trappings of idol worship. When he realized that his country was threatened by Assyria, he masterminded the construction of a rock tunnel to ensure that Jerusalem would have an adequate water supply in the event of a siege. Hezekiah grew very ill and prayed for the Lord to spare his life. God granted him an additional 15 years and caused the shadow on the sundial to move backward ten degrees as a symbol of this promise.

The young king Josiah was another ancestor of strength and stability. Although he was only eight when his father was assassinated, this "child king" led his people back to God. Josiah repaired the temple, found the scroll containing the laws of Moses, studied them, and read them to his people. His reforms included the keeping of the Passover. He devoted himself to pleasing the God of his ancestor, David.

The birth of Jesus fulfilled many years of waiting and hoping. God's love for the people of Israel is fully evidenced through the birth and life of his son.

Matthew's genealogy was written to show that Jesus was a descendant of David through a rightful line of succession, since that was important to the

Jewish people. Jesus the Messiah came from a long line of people with both weaknesses and strengths. Perhaps this was God’s way of showing us redeeming grace.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Jesus’ ancestors were human people with both strengths and weaknesses.
- Some of Christ’s ancestors demonstrated “follower of God” characteristics.
- The birth of Christ fulfilled God’s promise.
- The birth of Christ demonstrated God’s great love for the world.
- As God’s people, we follow this example and share God’s love.

WORSHIP

1. Redecorate the worship center into a Christmas theme, one of gift-giving—God’s gift to us. If allowed, use candles that can be lit for the Christmas story in Lesson 6. Lesson 1 suggests a genealogy chart and charts containing the three memory passages from Isaiah and Jeremiah. These could be placed in the worship center.

2. Use the memory texts as Scripture during worship. Lesson 1 suggests an activity where students create artistic designs for the memory texts. Allow plenty of time for sharing and discussing these designs. In response to Micah 6:8, Lesson 5 suggests that students “catch” people doing acts of mercy and justice. This is another activity students can share about during worship. Encourage honest praise and acceptance of each other’s work during this sharing. Ask students to share what they learned from another student’s work.

3. Prayers of thanksgiving for God’s great gift of Jesus, and prayers of petition asking God to help us truly understand this gift, are important during the holiday season.

4. Music for worship can be favorite Christmas carols. Share your favorite Christmas CD with your students.

5. Read a story. Since this unit is about gift-giving, read *The Year of the Perfect Christmas Tree* by Gloria Houston (see information on p. 41). This story gives a fantastic example of unselfish giving.

MEMORY PASSAGES

The Isaiah and Jeremiah passages are visually stimulating. Lesson 1 provides a visual art activity using these passages. In Lesson 5, an activity based on Micah 6:8 helps students to see Christ in others.

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

Students will work together a great deal in this unit. Plan groups wisely to eliminate conflict and have creative strength in each group. Carefully observe group interactions and enter in as necessary. Lesson 4 gives an opportunity to evaluate group presentations. A formal assessment culminates the unit.

The Messiah Is Born

LESSON 1: GENERATION TO GENERATION

Objective

Students will be introduced to eight faithful followers of God who were part of the genealogy of Christ.

Key Concepts

- Matthew’s genealogy shows that Jesus is a descendant of Abraham and King David, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies.
- Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, Boaz, Ruth, David, Hezekiah, and Josiah—all members of Matthew’s genealogy of Christ—were faithful followers of God.

Text: Matthew 1:1-17

Memory Texts: Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes *(You may need additional time to complete the Advent wreath. You might allow small groups of students to work on it throughout the week, as time permits.)*

Materials

- Bibles
- Name cards for bulletin board: Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, Boaz, Ruth, David, Hezekiah, Josiah
- Title card for bulletin board: The Genealogy of Jesus
- Advent wreath materials: large piece of cardboard for base *(see options under lesson step 3 for other materials)*
- Art supplies: paper and markers, etc.
- “Character Profile” (p. 224)
- Transparency/projection or enlarged sheet of memory texts: Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16 (p. 225)

Teacher Preparation

- Write these vocabulary words on the board: genealogy, ancestors, descendants, generation.
- Prepare large name cards and title card for the bulletin board display.
- In this unit, your class will decorate a large Advent wreath with symbols and story booklets to represent the selected ancestors of Jesus. Each of these persons was a follower of God, and each of their stories presents a special Advent theme. You may want to give the completed wreath as a gift to someone in your community and perhaps sit down with the recipient(s) and share the stories of the people represented. Directions for the wreath are given in this lesson. Directions for making the ornaments accompany the remaining lessons.
- Collect the materials you will need to make the class Advent wreath. Cut the wreath base from the piece of cardboard. You will want to make it large enough to accommodate nine ornaments and booklets. If your class time is limited, you may use a purchased grapevine or straw wreath.

- Make copies of the “Character Profile” sheet. *Each student will need eight of these for the entire unit.*

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Draw attention to the vocabulary words on the board and introduce them. Select a student to give the names of his/her ancestors back as many generations as he/she can remember (*or use your own genealogy*). List the names on the board and use them to explain the vocabulary words.

genealogy—recorded history of a person’s ancestry
 ancestor—person from whom one is descended, a forebear or forerunner
 descendant—offspring of a certain ancestor, family, or group
 generation—all people born in the same period of time; an average of 20-30 years from the birth of one generation to birth of the next generation

LESSON STEPS

1. Who do we know? Ask students to open their Bibles to Matthew 1:1-17. Explain that this tells the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Divide the class into teams of two and have them read the text. They should make a list of all the people they know something about. In order to put the person on their list, they must be able to write at least one fact about the person. (*Allow a few minutes for students to compile their lists.*)

Lead a short discussion, asking leading questions such as: Who is the first person on your list? Who did you write down next? What do you know about this person? Whenever a student names one of the characters (*Abraham, Jacob, Rahab, Boaz, Ruth, David, Hezekiah, Josiah*) that will be studied in this unit, post the name card on the bulletin board under the heading, “The Genealogy of Jesus.”

Call attention to verse 17 and read what it says about the generations. Have the students figure out how many generations are listed altogether (*42 generations*). Explain that they will be studying only eight of the people in this genealogy. Refer to the name cards you have posted. Ask them to share one thing they know about each of these people. Be sure they remember the covenant God made with David.

2. Introduce the Advent wreath project. Ask students what they think is the connection between Christmas and the genealogy of Jesus. (*The people on the “Genealogy of Jesus” list followed God. Eventually, God fulfilled the promise through them and presented Jesus as a gift to the world. Therefore, we follow this model and present gifts to those we love.*)

Explain that they will do a special project to highlight the stories of these eight followers of God. Hand out eight Character Profile sheets to each student. They will write a profile for each of the eight ancestors of Jesus listed on the bulletin board. As they learn about these people, they will design symbols and booklets to place on an Advent wreath. When the wreath is completed, they will present it as a gift to someone and share the stories of Jesus’ ancestors. (*Ask students to store the profile sheets in their notebooks or binders. This will save time in following lessons.*)

3. Make the wreath. Two suggestions are provided here for making the wreath. You may also use your own design, but be sure that creating it will involve the entire class. (*A third option is to purchase a straw or grapevine wreath. Make sure it is large enough to accommodate all of the ornaments.*)

Option One

Materials:

- Green tissue paper, cut into 1-inch squares
- Glue (such as Elmer’s School Glue), poured into small dishes
- Pencils with erasers
- Scissors

Divide the class into three groups, one to cut tissue-paper squares, one to put glue on the tissue paper, and one to attach the glued tissue paper to the base of the wreath. Put a cut square of tissue paper over the eraser end of a pencil. Dip the tissue paper in glue, so that only the part over the eraser receives glue. Attach the glued tip of the tissue to the cardboard wreath. The rest of the tissue will stand up to create a three-dimensional “evergreen” effect. Place the tufts of tissue close together to give fullness to the wreath. At the end of the unit, after all ornaments are attached to the wreath, you may choose to add additional decorations, such as red holly berries.

Option Two

Materials:

- Green construction paper
- Glue (such as Elmer’s School Glue)
- Scissors
- Pencils

This option may seem too elementary for fourth graders, however it does portray the idea of helping hands or an offering of love. Children should trace their hands a number of times on the green construction paper, and then carefully cut them out. Use these cutouts to cover the base of the wreath. Once a number of hands are ready, a small group of students should begin to attach them to the wreath. Begin by gluing hands (*glue the palm only, fingers should be free*) to the outer edge of the wreath, so that the fingers overlap the edge slightly. Then start a second circle around, slightly overlapping the first circle, again pointing the hands to the outside of the wreath. Continue until the entire wreath is covered. At the end of the unit, after all ornaments are attached to the wreath, you may choose to add additional decorations.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Memory text visualization.** The prophecy memory texts—Isaiah 9:2, Isaiah 40:1-5, and Jeremiah 33:14-16—are full of symbolism. Creative students will be able to capture this in artistic design. Ask them to read the passages, then close their eyes and visualize what they have just read. Now have them capture on paper the pictures in their minds the way a camera captures a scene in nature. The verse should be neatly printed on the picture.

Name _____

Date _____

Character Profile

Directions: As you read or listen to the story, complete the character profile, to have a written record of this ancestor of Jesus.

Name of the person: _____

Person's symbol: _____

"Faithful Follower of God" characteristic: _____

Important events in the person's life:

In this space, design an ornament to commemorate this person.	Materials needed to create this ornament.

Isaiah 9:2

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

Isaiah 40:1-5

Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that
she has served her term, that her penalty is paid,
that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins.
A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain.
Then the glory of the LORD shall be revealed,
and all people shall see it together,
for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Jeremiah 33:14-16

The days are surely coming, says the LORD,
when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel
and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time
I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David;
and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.
In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety.
And this is the name by which it will be called:
"The LORD is our righteousness."

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LESSON 2: ABRAHAM, EXAMPLE OF OBEDIENCE

Objective

Students will examine stories of Abraham's life that point to obedient living.

Key Concepts

- Abraham's obedient trust in God caused God to promise him a nation.
- Because of Abraham's obedient waiting, he was blessed with a son, Isaac.
- Abraham's journey became the first journey of the Israelite nation, eventually leading to the birth of the promised Messiah.

Text: Genesis 12:1-7; Genesis 22:1-18

Memory text: Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Character Profile sheets (Lesson 1, p. 224)

Teacher Preparation

- For each of the eight characters studied in this unit, you will need to help the class select a symbol and a "follower of God" characteristic the person demonstrates. *(Do not share the lesson title. Rather, let the students search for the characteristic of obedience.)*
- Read the biblical background (pp. 218-220) for an overview of the genealogical characters.
- Read the two Scripture texts with the stories of Abraham. Prepare to tell the second story in your own words.
- Be sure each student has a Character Profile sheet.
- Plan the eight groupings of students to make ornaments. As the ornaments are assigned, encourage them to collect the materials they will need to create their group's ornament.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Follow the leader. Begin this lesson with a variation of this game. Send one person out of the room. The rest of the class forms a circle. One student is selected to act as leader, performing such actions as clapping hands, snapping fingers, running in place, etc., changing actions often. The rest of the class joins in, following the student's lead. Bring back the person who was sent out of the room and have him/her stand in the center of the circle. He/she must try to guess which of the students is the leader. Play several rounds of the game.

LESSON STEPS

1. Discuss the game and other experiences of following a leader. Ask, “What happens to the game when people don’t follow properly?” Remind students that God wants to be our leader and desires that we follow. Abraham is an example of the kind of obedient following that God expects of us.

Ask students to remove a Character Profile sheet from their binders (*or hand out sheets*). Explain that they will be meeting Abraham, the first of the ancestors of Christ they will study in this unit. They will complete their profile sheets as they read the stories. (*Help the students select the important events of the person’s life. These events should lead to the symbol and the “follower of God” characteristic.*)

2. Story one, Genesis 12:1-7. Have the students find this text in their Bibles and read it aloud with them. Ask these questions: What did Abraham give up to follow God? What characteristics would you need to follow God to an unknown land? What promise did God give to Abraham? Who would receive the promise?

3. Story two, Genesis 22:1-18. Again ask students to find the text. Tell this story in your own words. Students should follow along with the text. Ask these questions: What did God ask Abraham to do this time? When Isaac asked about the offering, what did Abraham tell him? When the angel of the Lord told Abraham to stop, what did he say he now knew about Abraham? What promise was Abraham given this time? What kinds of obedience do you think God requires of us?

4. A symbol for Abraham. Tell students that they need to select a symbol and a “follower of God” characteristic for Abraham. Through a discussion, help the students understand that Abraham’s characteristic is obedience. A good symbol of his obedient following might be a set of footsteps.

5. Explanation of making ornaments. Have students make a rough draft of the ornament and list the materials needed to create it on the Character Profile sheet. Explain that each time a new character is studied, a group will be assigned to complete the ornament. By the end of Lesson 5, the entire class will be divided into eight small groups. Each group will create one of the ornaments, which will be placed on the Advent wreath. The groups will also be responsible to create a tiny booklet about the person. This will also be placed on the wreath.

6. Decide on an ornament. Discuss various ideas for an ornament and select the one most favored by the class. Assign the group that will complete it.

Suggestion for an ornament: Use a lid from orange juice concentrate. Draw the footprints on the can lid with a permanent marker. Paint the footprints. To enhance the design, you might use a nail and hammer to punch holes around the outline of the footprints. Lay the circle on a scrap piece of wood while hammering. Decorate the edge with lace, ribbon, glitter, etc.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

• **Memory text visualization.** Continue this art activity described in Extend the Lesson, Lesson 1.

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LESSON 3: JACOB, EXAMPLE OF HOPE

Objective

Students will examine two stories of Jacob's life that move from deceitful living to hopeful living.

Key Concepts

- Jacob's deceitful living led to fear.
- Jacob encountered God through a dream.
- Jacob's encounter with God led to hope.
- God promised hope for the future generations of Jacob's family.

Text: Genesis 27:1-35; Genesis 28:10-18

Memory text: Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Character Profile sheets (Lesson 1, p. 224)
- Materials for creating ornaments (students are to bring these)

Teacher Preparation

- Read the Scripture texts for the lesson and prepare to share them.
- Make sure you have enough Character Profile sheets. It was suggested in Lesson 1 that you prepare enough activity sheets for all eight lessons.
- As groups are assigned to make ornaments, encourage them to collect the materials they will need.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Ask students to recall a time when someone tricked them. Invite several students to tell their stories. Then ask the class to identify the emotions we feel when someone tricks us.

Have students take out Character Profile sheets (*or hand them out*). Remind them that each day as they meet another character from the genealogy of Christ they will complete a profile for that person. (*Again, work with your students.*)

LESSON STEPS

1. Jacob's trick. Ask students if they remember the story of Jacob tricking his father, Isaac. Have them open their Bibles to Genesis 27:1-35. Invite the class to sequentially and in their own words share the story, one detail at a time. Ask, "What happened first?" and have a student share the first detail. Then say, "What happened next?" and another student shares the next detail. Continue through the story in this way.

Ask the students how they define Jacob's character at this point. *(They will likely see Jacob's behavior as deceitful and sinful.)* "What did this behavior lead to?" *(fear and running).*

2. Jacob encounters God. Now ask the students to turn to Genesis 28:10-18. Read this short story together. Ask: What happened in this story? *(Jacob had an encounter with God.)* How did this encounter change Jacob's behavior or character? *(He believed and worshiped God.)* When God spoke to Jacob, what did God offer him? *(Hope: "I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying.")* How did Jacob respond to this encounter? *(He set up his pillow stone and called it Bethel, which means "house of God.")*

3. A symbol for Jacob. *(After a brief discussion on what the students think is a good "follower of God" characteristic for Jacob, share the following information.)* Jacob's encounter with God created hope within him for God's gift to the coming generations. Followers of God are hopeful people, looking forward to the fulfillment of God's promises. A symbol for Jacob might be a tent, since he was camping out when his encounter happened. Or it might be a stone, representing the stone Jacob used for a pillow and later for a pillar. He called the pillar Bethel, which meant "house of God or sanctuary." *(Make sure students have completed their profiles.)*

4. Decide on an ornament. Again, the students should create a rough draft of an ornament to represent Jacob. *(See Lesson 1, Step 5 to review details.)* Also complete the materials list. Discuss the various ideas for an ornament and select the one most favored by the class. Assign the group that will be responsible to make the ornament.

Suggestion for an ornament: Draw a stone on a piece of lightweight cardboard or poster board. Outline the stone in black and paint it gray. Cut out when dry. Decorate with bits of moss in the crevices. Add tiny bits of green glitter to the moss.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Christmas gift.** If you have not finished the Advent wreath, continue work on it.
- **Memory text visualization.** Continue this art activity described in Extend the Lesson, Lesson 1.

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LESSON 4: RAHAB'S JOY, RUTH'S LOVE, BOAZ'S KINDNESS

Objective

Students will be introduced to Rahab, Ruth, and Boaz, part of the genealogy of Christ, whose lives exhibited qualities of joy, love, and kindness.

Key Concepts

- Rahab experienced the joy of forgiveness that God offers.
- Ruth showed unconditional love for her mother-in-law, Naomi.
- Boaz extended kindness to Ruth and Naomi.

Text: Joshua 2:1-24; Ruth 1:1-17; Ruth 2:1-21

Memory text: Isaiah 9:2; Isaiah 40:1-5; Jeremiah 33:14-16

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Character Profile sheets (from Lesson 1, p. 224)
- Materials for ornaments (students are to bring these)

Teacher Preparation

- Read and become familiar with the Scripture texts for this lesson.
- Students will each need three copies of the Character Profile sheet.
- Read over the small group directions in lesson step 1 of the lesson and plan the groups.
- Make sure student ornament groups are collecting their materials.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Ask students to find Matthew 1:1-17 and locate the names of Rahab, Ruth, and Boaz. Ask them to find out what these three people have in common. (*According to Matthew, Rahab was the mother of Boaz, and Ruth was the wife of Boaz. The marriage of Boaz and Ruth is clear in the book of Ruth, while the relationship of Boaz to Rahab is recorded only in Matthew.*)

Using the bulletin board you created in Lesson 1, review the genealogy of Christ studied so far, including Rahab, Ruth, and Boaz. Explain that today students will become familiar with details about these three characters, and will choose a symbol and character trait for each one.

LESSON STEPS

1. Small group study. Divide the class into three small groups and give each group its assignment. Group 1 will study about Rahab from Joshua 2:1-24. Group 2 will examine the life of Ruth from Ruth 1:1-17, and Group 3 will learn

about Boaz from Ruth 2:1-21. Each student will complete a profile sheet for the character he/she studied, being sure to name a symbol and a “follower of God” character trait for the character. After listening to the ideas of all group members, the group should decide on one symbol, character trait, and ornament design. *(You should participate in these groups as necessary, to create an ornament of value and the character trait that most emphasizes the character’s personality.)*

Suggestions for symbols, character traits, and ornaments:

Rahab—character trait (*joy*); symbol (*bell*); ornament (*Use purchased silver or gold bell with ringer. Paint the word JOY on the body of the bell.*)

Ruth—character trait (*love*); symbol (*shawl*); ornament, (*Use small piece of loosely woven, brightly colored fabric. Carefully fringe the edges. Fold into three corners and tie as you would to wear it. Use fabric tape to hold in shape.*)

Boaz—character trait (*kindness*); symbol (*bundle of wheat*); ornament (*Collect weeds with seed heads. Cut them into 3- to 4-inch pieces. Bind together with small piece of twine. Sprinkle bits of gold glitter on weeds.*)

2. Group presentations. Have each group plan and deliver a short presentation about their character for the rest of the class. Presentations should include important details about the person, the symbol, character trait, and ornament design. While each group is presenting, the other students should complete a character profile for that person. *(Select students from each of these larger groups that will be responsible for making the actual ornament.)*

EXTEND THE LESSON

(This activity will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Advent wreath.** If you have not yet finished the wreath, continue work on it.
- **Ornaments.** At this point, you have decided on five of the eight ornaments for the wreath. These groups can begin working on their ornaments.
- **Memory text visualization.** Complete this art activity described in Extend the Lesson, Lesson 1.

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LESSON 5: DAVID'S REPENTANCE, HEZEKIAH'S FAITHFULNESS, JOSIAH'S ENLIGHTENMENT

Objective

Students will discover three human kings who, as followers of God, demonstrated repentance, chose to be faithful, and were willing to be enlightened.

Key Concepts

- David sought repentance for his sinful behavior.
- Hezekiah, a man of prayer, remained faithful to God's commands.
- Josiah learned what the Lord required and instituted renewal and a return to God.

Text: 2 Samuel 11:1-27; 2 Kings 18:1-8; 2 Kings 20:1-11; 2 Kings 22-23

Memory text: Micah 6:8

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes

Materials

- Bibles
- Character Profile sheets (from Lesson 1, p. 224)
- Materials for ornaments (students are to bring these)
- Memory text transparency/projection (p. 236)

Teacher Preparation

- Read all the Scripture texts for the lesson, so you are familiar with the stories of the three kings. Be ready to tell each story. (*The stories are written in the lesson for your convenience.*)
- Students will need three Character Profile sheets.
- Divide the students who are not yet in ornament groups into three groups to create ornaments for David, Hezekiah, and Josiah.
- Lesson 6 requires a guest reader. Finalize plans with that person. You might ask him/her to conduct the John 3:16 discussion.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

Talk about kings. Explain that in today's lesson you will visit three kings—David, Hezekiah, and Josiah—who were part of the genealogy of Christ. While most of the human kings were not followers of God, these three were. Ask: What "follower of God" traits do you think a king might possess? (*List students' ideas on the board, but do not agree or disagree. Hopefully, they will draw on their previous study of these kings, particularly David.*)

Ask students to take out three Character Profile sheets. Remind them to complete a sheet for each king as you tell their stories.

LESSON STEPS

Note: This lesson contains stories of three kings from the line of David and Christ. Following are examples of how you might tell the stories. It is important that certain aspects of each story are told, so that the symbols and character traits are apparent.

1. David's story from 2 Samuel 11:1-27. *(This story is reused because it points out David's willingness to seek forgiveness. However, if you prefer to use a different story, consider David's census-taking from 2 Samuel 24, which also speaks of David's need for forgiveness.)*

David was chosen by God to be the king of Israel. God said that David was a man after his own heart. David followed God's voice and obeyed God's commands. However, David was human, and he made mistakes just like the rest of us. Here is one example of a serious mistake that David made.

David's men were away at battle, but David had stayed at home. One evening he was walking on the roof of his palace looking out over the city. Suddenly he spied a beautiful woman. David discovered that this woman was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah who was away serving in David's army. So David asked Bathsheba to come to his palace, and she did. David tried to hide his sin by having Uriah, her husband, killed in the line of duty. God was extremely displeased with David's behavior, so he sent the prophet Nathan to tell him. Nathan showed David his sin and the consequences of his behavior. Then David said, "I have sinned against the Lord." He was truly sorry for his behavior, and God knew that and forgave him. However, David still had to live with the consequences of his behavior.

David was forgiven because he repented of his sin. To this day, this king is remembered for acknowledging his sin and repenting. When we see a Star of David, we are reminded of David's dependence on God and God's almighty power demonstrated during David's reign.

2. Hezekiah's story from 2 Kings 18:1-8. After the reign of Solomon, there were few kings that tried to follow God throughout their reigns. Hezekiah was one of them. Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became king of Judah, and he reigned for 29 years. The Bible tells us that Hezekiah did what was right in the sight of the Lord. He trusted in God, kept the commands of the Lord, and was successful in whatever he did.

Hezekiah boldly destroyed idols, altars, and pagan temples. He reopened the temple in Jerusalem. He reinstated the Feast of the Passover. The following story shows that Hezekiah had a personal relationship with God, including a powerful prayer life.

(2 Kings 20:1-11) While Hezekiah was king, he became seriously ill, and the prophet Isaiah told him that he was going to die. Hezekiah was very sad, so he prayed to God, "I have walked with you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion, and I have done what is good in your eyes." Because of Hezekiah's prayer and his faithfulness, God granted him 15 more years of life. God even gave Hezekiah a sign to let him know that he would be healed. Praying hands remind us of Hezekiah's prayer life and his faithfulness to God.

3. Josiah's story from 2 Kings 22-23:3. Josiah was the great-grandson of Hezekiah. His grandfather and father had both been unfaithful to God, but Josiah

chose to follow God as his great-grandfather had done. Josiah was eight years old when he became king of Judah. The Bible tells us that “he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord and walked in all the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left.”

Josiah decided to have the temple repaired. During this time, workers found a book that Hilkiah, the priest, recognized as the Book of the Law. The book was taken to Josiah. Josiah read the book and realized that Judah was not following the commandments God had given. He sent several of his people to ask the Lord about the information in this book. They found out that the Lord was angry, but because Josiah listened to the Lord, he would be blessed.

(2 Kings 23:21-25) Then Josiah called all the people together and read the book to them. He renewed his covenant with God, which stated that he would “follow the Lord and keep his commands, regulations, and decrees with all his heart and all his soul.” The people also pledged themselves to the covenant. Again, just as his great-grandfather had done, Josiah rid Judah and Jerusalem of household gods, idols, and other detestable things. Finally, he ordered the people to celebrate the Passover as it was explained in the Book of the Law. Josiah “saw the light” and heard God’s commandments when he read the Book of the Law. We see the light through the Word of God and when we “let the Son shine in.”

4. Symbols and “follower of God” characteristics. Write DAVID, HEZEKIAH, and JOSIAH on the board. Have students look at their profile sheets and ask them to share ideas for symbols and characteristics for these human kings. List ideas on the board. After doing this, the class should make a final decision for each king. Divide remaining students not in ornament groups into three groups, with each group completing an ornament and booklet for one of the three kings.

Suggestions for symbols, character traits, and ornaments:

David—character trait (*repentance*); symbol (*Star of David*); ornament (*Cut two equilateral triangles from poster board, 4-inch sides suggested. Fold the triangles and cut out the center, leaving a generous rim, approximately ¼ inch. Lay Triangle 1 upside down over Triangle 2, making sure all points match. Mark every other overlap and cut through the marks. Now place each slashed section of Triangle 1 under Triangle 2 and tape securely. This gives a woven effect. Finish the star with gold paint and decorations such as glitter, sequins, etc.*)

Hezekiah—character trait (*faithfulness*); symbol (*praying hands*); ornament (*Draw a hand onto poster board, tracing and detailing with marker. Color lightly with a crayon. Cut out the design. You might inscribe on the hands, “Prayer strengthens faith.”*)

Josiah—character trait (*enlightenment*); symbol (*candle & candleholder, scroll, or medallion*); ornament (*Cut oval-shaped medallion out of poster board. Inscribe on it “Let the Son shine in.” Decorate with gold glitter gel pen to look like sunbeams. Add gold glitter, etc.*)

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Ornaments.** All of the groups should now be working on their ornaments.
- **Character booklets.** Each group should also make a small booklet (about 4" x 3"). Put the name of the person on the front cover and decorate it to look like a

Christmas ornament. On the next page write a brief explanation of the person's symbol. The third page should list the person's character trait. The last page can tell why the character trait was chosen for that person. *Example: This person was a faithful follower of God because . . .* These tiny booklets will be hung next to the person's ornament on the wreath.

Remind students that they will be asked to share their person's story with the person(s) who will receive your wreath.

• **Memory text: Micah 6:8.** Share the passage with the students. Then talk about the actions of the three kings and how their lives demonstrated humility, justice, and mercy. *(In 2 Kings 22:19, we are told that Josiah humbled himself before the Lord when he learned about the covenant he and his people had broken with the Lord. David showed acts of justice and mercy many times during his life, especially in his relationship to King Saul. The fact that these kings were respected would indicate that their lives demonstrated justice, mercy, and humility.)*

Ask students to be spies for the next several days and catch people doing acts of justice and mercy, and showing humility. Ask them to write a list, naming the person and a description of what they caught the person doing. Tell them you will have a time during worship for them to share their findings.



He has told you,
O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD
require of you
but to do justice, and
to love kindness,
and to walk humbly
with your God?

Micah 6:8



The Messiah Is Born

LESSON 6: JESUS, THE PROMISE FULFILLED

Objective

Students will revisit the story of Christ's birth and understand the connection to John 3:16.

Key Concepts

- The birth of Jesus fulfilled the promise God made to Abraham.
- God sent Jesus out of great love for the world.
- We share gifts as an expression of God's love.

Text: Luke 2

Estimated Lesson Time: 40-45 minutes *(Plan for any extra time you may need to complete the wreath gift.)*

Materials

- Birthday cake, plates, napkins
- Juice, cups
- Music and lyrics for Christmas carols
- Materials for finishing ornaments
- Large red bow for wreath

Teacher Preparation

- This lesson can take place in the worship center, or perhaps your school has a chapel that has been decorated for Christmas. Gather together in a circle. If allowed, light candles for the reading of Luke 2. Otherwise, have the room dimly lit.
- Make arrangements for a guest reader to come and read Luke 2 to the class.
- Prepare a birthday cake for Jesus to share after the reading of the Christmas story. *(Consider asking a parent to help by making and decorating a cake.)*
- Select several Christmas carols. Have books or copies available. *(See songs under the heading of "Proclaiming" in Hymnal: A Worship Book. Be sure to include "Away in a manger" and "For God so loved us.")*
- Collect any materials still needed to complete the ornaments, booklets, and wreath. Purchase a large red bow for a finishing touch to the wreath.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

God's promise. Tell the students that 42 generations after God made a promise to Abraham, God has chosen to fulfill the promise. Invite them to the worship center or chapel and ask them to sit in a circle, including the guest reader in the circle. Introduce the guest and explain that he/she is here to share the story of the promise fulfilled. But before the story is read, you would like the students to briefly share with the guest what they have learned about the genealogy of Jesus.

LESSON STEPS

- 1. Sharing the stories.** Ask volunteers to briefly share the stories of the eight people the class has studied. Be sure they explain the symbol and “follower of God” character trait chosen for each person.
- 2. Read Luke 2.** Begin by singing a carol of your choice. Then have the guest read the story. After the reading, sing “Away in a manger.”
- 3. Discuss the story.** *(This discussion can be led by the guest or you.)* In this story, God gave a gift to the world. The gift came in the form of a tiny baby named Jesus. What was the purpose of the gift according to Luke 2:11? *(to be our savior)* What does it mean to us to be given a savior? *(John 3:16)* Why did God give us a savior? *(John 3:16)* Why are we giving a gift to someone? *(to share God’s love)* End the discussion by singing “For God so loved us,” #167 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*.
- 4. Celebrate the promise fulfilled.** Share the birthday cake and juice. You might want to sing “Happy birthday” or “The friendly beasts” or another carol.
- 5. Ornaments and booklets.** Have students go to their work areas and finish their ornaments and booklets. They should also practice how they will share the story of Christ’s ancestors with the recipient of the wreath gift. Students who are finished should create an ornament to represent Christ. *(Suggestion: Draw a small, open book on poster board. Print John 3:16 on the open pages. Color the cover black, and gild the edges of the pages with a gold glitter pen. Attach a red ribbon.)*
- 6. Final touches.** Attach all ornaments and booklets to the wreath. Add a large red bow for a finishing touch.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 40-45 minutes.)

- **Write thank-you notes** to your guest reader for today.
- **Deliver the gift.** Plan an extended or extra session to deliver your Advent wreath gift and share the stories with the recipient(s).

The Messiah Is Born

Unit 7 Assessment

Part 1

Directions: Write the correct name in the blank. Each name will be used one time.

Abraham	Hezekiah	Boaz	Rahab
Ruth	Jacob	Josiah	David

- _____ 1. Showed great kindness to Ruth when she was gleaning in his fields
- _____ 2. Received his birthright by tricking his father
- _____ 3. Read the Book of the Law and reestablished the covenant with God
- _____ 4. "A man after God's own heart;" served God as Israel's second human king
- _____ 5. Followed her mother-in-law to her homeland with unconditional love
- _____ 6. King of Judah who reopened and repaired the temple; Josiah's great-grandfather
- _____ 7. Chose to follow God in obedience into an unknown land
- _____ 8. Her family was saved when she protected God's people

Part 2

Directions: Write a definition for each word.

9. genealogy _____
10. ancestor _____
11. descendant _____
12. generation _____

Part 3

Directions: Each person studied in this unit chose to follow God. Choose three of the characters listed at the top of the page and explain how each one was a "follower of God."

13. _____
- _____
14. _____
- _____
15. _____
- _____

Part 4

Directions: Write answers to these questions.

16. When Jesus was born, both a prophecy and a promise were fulfilled. Why did God send Jesus into the world?

17. If you give Christmas gifts this year, why will you give them?

18. If you could choose to be one of Jesus' ancestors, who would it be and why?

ANSWER KEY

The Messiah Is Born

Unit 7 Assessment

Part 1

Directions: Write the correct name in the blank. Each name will be used one time.

Abraham	Hezekiah	Boaz	Rahab
Ruth	Jacob	Josiah	David

- Boaz 1. Showed great kindness to Ruth when she was gleaning in his fields
- Jacob 2. Received his birthright by tricking his father
- Josiah 3. Read the Book of the Law and reestablished the covenant with God
- David 4. “A man after God’s own heart;” served God as Israel’s second human king
- Ruth 5. Followed her mother-in-law to her homeland with unconditional love
- Hezekiah 6. King of Judah who reopened and repaired the temple; Josiah’s great-grandfather
- Abraham 7. Chose to follow God in obedience into an unknown land
- Rahab 8. Her family was saved when she protected God’s people

Part 2

Directions: Write a definition for each word.

- 9. genealogy recorded history of a person’s ancestry
- 10. ancestor person from whom one is descended, a forebear or forerunner
- 11. descendant offspring of a certain ancestor, family, or group
- 12. generation all people born in the same period of time; an average of 20-30 years from the birth of one generation to birth of the next generation

Part 3

Directions: Each person studied in this unit chose to follow God. Choose three of the characters listed at the top of the page and explain how each one was a “follower of God.”

- 13. (Accept reasonable answers.)
Hopefully, students will write about “follower of God” characteristics.
- 14. _____
- 15. _____

Part 4

Directions: Write answers to these questions.

16. When Jesus was born, both a prophecy and a promise were fulfilled. Why did God send Jesus into the world?

Students should write about the concept in John 3:16.

17. If you give Christmas gifts this year, why will you give them?

Look for the idea of being ambassadors of God's love.

18. If you could choose to be one of Jesus' ancestors, who would it be and why?

Look for "follower of God" characteristics that the student would like to be shown in his/her life.
