

Kindergarten—Unit 7

Jesus Was a Child like You and Me

This unit focuses on Jesus' childhood. Students will learn about the flight to Egypt, family life in Jesus' time, and Jesus' visit to the temple in Jerusalem. God cared for Jesus and his family. God cares for us. Jesus experienced the everyday life of a Palestinian village. He showed unusual spiritual understanding at an early age.

LESSONS

1. Fleeing to Egypt
2. When Jesus Was a Boy
3. Have You Seen Our Son?

Unit 7: Jesus Was a Child like You and Me

Unit Information

SUMMARY

This unit is based on three events in Jesus' childhood; the flight to Egypt and two visits to the temple—one as an infant and one as a 12-year-old. Within the framework of these stories and the background information provided, students can imagine what Jesus' life as a child was like. Children are encouraged to identify with the child Jesus as the real person he was.

KEY BIBLE TEXTS

- Matthew 2:13-23
- Luke 2:22-40
- Luke 2:41-52

BIBLICAL BACKGROUND

Fleeing to Egypt

As in the story of Jesus' birth, an angel appeared as a messenger to Joseph. This time the message warned of impending danger and outlined a plan. Herod was trying to find Jesus, to kill him. To do so, he had launched a plot to kill all boys under the age of two. Joseph needed to take his family to Egypt at once. Because Joseph obeyed the angel, Jesus escaped being killed.

When Jesus Was a Boy

The Bible tells us little about Jesus' childhood, except that he was raised in Nazareth and "grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him" (Luke 2:40). Information uncovered through archeological digs and other historical writings give clues to the kind of life Jesus might have led.

Joseph and Mary would have settled into village life. Jesus would have become an apprentice to his father, a carpenter. By age six, he would have begun his schooling at the neighborhood synagogue school. He would have learned to read and write in Hebrew, memorized passages from scripture, and learned Jewish law.

It is possible to piece together a picture of what family life would have been like. The house would have been small, basically one large room. A flat roof would have created extra living space. Mary and Jesus' sisters would have taken care of the house. They would have carried water in large jugs from a village well, ground corn daily on two round grinding stones, and maintained a supply of olive oil, both for cooking and for light.

The rhythm of Jewish family life centered around the synagogue and religious events. The family would have observed the weekly sabbath. Other Jewish feasts and festivals, such as Passover and the Feast of Booths, were celebrated as well. Jewish tradition and heritage were passed from one generation to the next through participation in these events. Jesus' parents fulfilled their religious duties when they took Jesus to be circumcised on the eighth day of his life. At this point,

he was given the name Jesus, as the angel Gabriel had instructed. A firstborn child was considered holy, or belonging to God. He must be redeemed with an offering of five shekels. According to Luke, Joseph fulfilled this requirement at the temple in Jerusalem.

Have You Seen Our Son?

Becoming 12 years of age was a significant rite of passage for Jewish boys. At age 12, they were required to follow the law. On reaching this age, Jesus, as every other adult male, was eligible to observe the Passover in Jerusalem.

During the Passover, it was customary for religious leaders to have public meetings, at which they discussed religious and theological questions. Jesus joined those that gathered around the religious leaders to ask questions and discuss issues.

This may have been the first acknowledgement Jesus made that God was his Father, whom he had to obey. It is easy to form a picture of a rather arrogant young man talking and showing off knowledge with a group of older men. Yet, it does not appear that Jesus acted in that way. After Joseph and Mary found him, Jesus reminded them that he was doing his Father's business, returned with them to Nazareth, and "was obedient to them" (Luke 2:51). Jesus, at age 12, was turning the spotlight on God and away from himself.

ESSENTIAL UNDERSTANDINGS

- Jesus is the son of God.
- God took care of Jesus.
- Mary and Joseph dedicated their son to God.
- Jesus was a person who felt the same feelings that you and I feel.
- Jesus understands the problems we face. He understands our happy and sad feelings.

WORSHIP / BIBLE MEMORY

As a child learning in the synagogue, Jesus would have heard the words from Deuteronomy 6:4-9 many times. This passage is called the *Shema* ("hear" in Hebrew). At the beginning of each worship session, light a candle and read the passage to the children. Ask them to imagine they are sitting on the floor in a synagogue, 2,000 years ago, listening to rabbis teach them these words. Challenge more able students to learn it by heart.

1. Introduce the Bible memory verse, explaining that it reminds us that "Jesus was a person, just like you and me." The verse has three parts. The first one tells how Jesus' body grew: "And the child grew and became strong." The second part tells how his mind grew: "He was filled with wisdom." And the last part tells how much God loved Jesus: "And the grace of God was upon him."

Invite children to learn the verse with motions that remind them of the three parts of the verse:

And the child grew and became strong (*Crouch and gradually stand*)

He was filled with wisdom (*Put hands on head*)

And the grace of God was upon him. (*Lock thumbs and flutter fingers. Bring "dove" to rest on heart.*)

2. There are not many songs that focus on the childhood of Jesus. Sing the following songs from *Jubilee Songbook* that center on God’s care for us:

- We Are Marching in the Light of God, page 10
- Jesus Cares for Us, page 60
- You Are with Me All the Time, page 61
- Angels Watchin’ Over Me, page 63

3. Prayers for each session:

- Lesson 1

Our God, you take care of us in many ways. You give us strength to face danger. You give us wisdom to take the right way. Thank you for giving Mary and Joseph strength and wisdom to flee to Egypt when Jesus was in danger. Thank you for sending an angel to protect Jesus.

- Lesson 2

Thank you, God, for parents that love you and love us. We remember that Mary and Joseph took Jesus to be dedicated. We know that our parents, too, want us to love and serve God. Help us to grow to be the people you want us to be.

- Lesson 3

We know that all good things come from you. Thank you for wonderful minds that can learn amazing things. We know that Jesus loved to learn about you and your world. Help us to love learning, just as Jesus did.

ASSESSING TEACHING / LEARNING

Observing students at work on activities and listening to their conversations is a good way to assess their understanding of the concepts in this unit. Can they retell the story of the flight to Egypt? Can they talk about ways that their life is different from and the same as Jesus’ life? Can they speak of learning and remembering stories in a positive way?

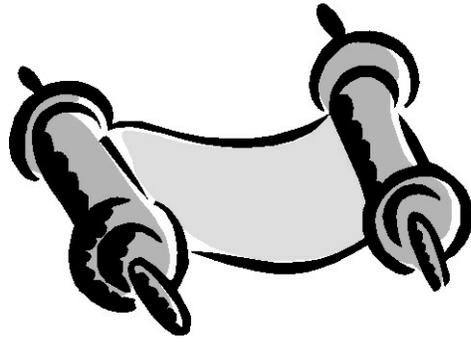
MEMORY PASSAGES

This unit offers the following verses for students to memorize: Luke 2:40 and the bonus verses, Deuteronomy 6:4-6 (*to verse 9, if desired*) and Psalm 46:1. You will find them in large format on pages 205-207, to copy as take-home sheets for students.



And the child grew
and became strong;
he was filled with wisdom,
and the grace of God
was upon him.

Luke 2:40



Hear, O Israel: The Lord
our God, the Lord is one.
Love the Lord your God with
all your heart and with
all your soul and with all your
strength. These commandments
that I give you today are to
be upon your hearts.

Deuteronomy 6:4-6



God is our refuge
and strength,
an ever-present help
in trouble.

Psalm 46:1

Jesus Was a Child like You and Me

LESSON 1: FLEEING TO EGYPT

Objective

Children will be able to retell the travels of Jesus' family. They will understand that God took care of Jesus and his family.

Key Concepts

- Jesus and his family left Bethlehem because Herod wanted to kill Jesus.
- God took care of Jesus.

Text: Matthew 2:13-23

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- For Bible story: bag with 3 towels, 3 water bottles, crackers
- Sand trays (1 per 3-5 children)
- Story figures (about 1 per child)
- 12" x 18" tan construction paper (1 sheet per child)
- Smaller size envelopes (3 per child)
- Paper story figure patterns (p. 211)
- Scissors, glue sticks, crayons or markers, sand (optional)
- For Extend the Lesson, option two: picture book about the desert
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: world globe

Teacher Preparation

- Read through Bible story.
- Prepare sand trays using the bottoms of cardboard boxes, dishpans, or other shallow pans. Put enough sand in each one to cover the bottom.
- Label each set of envelopes with the words Nazareth, Bethlehem, and Egypt on the *backs* of the envelopes.
- Copy paper story figures onto heavy paper, making one set per child.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, pages 203-204.

2. Go to "Egypt." Go around the circle, with each child naming something he/she will take on a trip to Egypt: "I'm going to Egypt and I'm taking a ____." Each child repeats "I'm going to Egypt," but names a new item. If you think your children are capable, have them try to remember the previous items and list them before adding their own. Items for the trip can be serious or silly. *(They may have played a similar game in the lesson about Mary and Joseph's trip to Bethlehem.)*

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the story, "Fleeing to Egypt." You can act out this story with the children. You be the narrator. Choose children to be Mary, Joseph, Jesus, a donkey,

and the angel. *(Try to use children who have not yet had the opportunity to act out the Bible story.)* Instruct the angel and the donkey to stand away from the others. Also have ready a bag, three towels, three water bottles and some crackers.

After Jesus was born, Mary, Joseph and Jesus continued to live in Bethlehem. Jesus grew into a young boy. He played with his neighbors, listened to his mother tell stories, and watched his father work. *(Mary and Joseph can put Jesus between them and pretend to be his parents.)* While they lived in Bethlehem, Jesus grew to be a boy about your age, maybe five years old.

One night, when the family was sleeping *(unroll towels and have Mary, Joseph, and Jesus lie down on them)*, an angel came to their house. *(Have angel come and stand next to Joseph.)* The angel talked to Joseph in a dream, and said, “The king in your country is bad. He wants to kill Jesus, because when Jesus grows up, people might listen to him instead of the king. Get up quickly! *(Have angel repeat “Get up quickly!” and motion for Joseph to get up.)* Take Mary and Jesus and go to the country of Egypt until it is safe to come back home.”

Joseph got up right away and woke Mary. They packed things quickly, loaded their donkey, and left immediately for Egypt. There they would be safe from jealous King Herod. *(Mary, Joseph, and Jesus roll up towels and put them in bag, along with water bottles and crackers. Put bag on donkey, who crawls on hands and knees.)*

The family walked through the hot, dry desert for many days. *(Family walks with donkey around room, stopping occasionally to drink from water bottles and eat crackers.)* The desert was a dangerous and uncomfortable place to travel. It was hard to find food and water. The sand was scorching hot during the day, but the air was very cold at night. They couldn’t wait until they got to Egypt and found a new place to live. God was watching over the family all through their trip. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus knew that God would take care of them. Finally, they arrived and settled down in a new home in Egypt. *(They stop, unroll towels, and lie down on them.)*

One night, after they were settled in Egypt, an angel came to Joseph again in a dream. *(Have angel come near Joseph.)* The angel said, “Joseph, you can go back to Israel now. King Herod is dead. He can’t hurt Jesus anymore.” So once again, the family packed up their things *(repeat packing motions)*, took their donkey, and traveled through the desert to Israel. *(Family walks around room again.)* They were happy to be going home. They planned to go back to Bethlehem, but Joseph found out that Herod’s son was the king there now. He was afraid Herod’s son might want to hurt Jesus, too. So, instead of going to Bethlehem, the family traveled to Nazareth. *(Family unrolls towels as if settling down again.)*

Nazareth is the town where Jesus grew to be a man. The Bible says that “Jesus increased in wisdom and in years and in divine and human favor.” That means Jesus grew older and bigger. He learned more and more things, and God and the people around him liked him more and more.

2. Wonder about the story, using the following statements:

- I wonder what Jesus was like when he was a boy.
- I wonder whether it was very hard to move so many times.
- I wonder what other ways God kept Jesus safe from harm.
- I wonder how God keeps me from harm.

Pray, “You are a wonderful God. You sent angels to keep Jesus safe. Thank you for all the ways you take care of us. Amen.”

3. Retell the story. Divide your class into small groups of 3-5 children. Provide a sand tray and four story figures to each group. Invite children (*all at the same time, in various parts of the classroom*) to take turns retelling the Bible story to the other children in their group. If some children will struggle with this task, invite capable students to partner with them to retell the story.

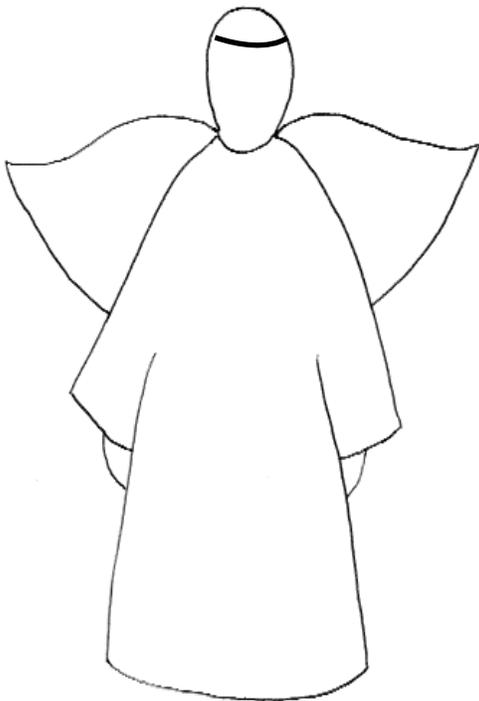
4. Make a map. *Before* handing out materials for this art project, show the class a large piece of tan construction paper, three envelopes labeled “Bethlehem,” “Nazareth,” and “Egypt,” and samples of the paper story figures. Explain that they will make a simple map showing the places where Mary, Joseph, and Jesus traveled in the story.

Demonstrate how to glue the three envelopes onto the paper, with gummed flaps outwards and open, to create pockets for the story figures. When the envelopes are glued the children will draw roads between the three envelopes. Finally, they will cut out the four story figures (*Mary on a donkey, Joseph, boy Jesus, and angel*). If you have energy for more clean-up, you can let the children use glue sticks to cover large areas of their paper and sprinkle sand to represent the desert areas. If some children finish early, they can decorate their maps, envelope houses, or story figures with crayons or markers. As children finish, encourage them to retell the story again, using the story map they created.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **God’s care.** Talk about the way God took care of Jesus and his family on the trip to Egypt. On the chalkboard or a large poster board, list ways that God takes care of us.
- **Learn about the desert.** Find a book with pictures of desert landscapes and desert wildlife. Talk with the children about the dangers and discomforts of traveling through a desert. Have them think about where Mary and Joseph got food and water during their journey.
- **Using a world globe,** show children where Mary and Joseph traveled. While you have the globe out, show how far across the world you live from the place where Jesus lived.
- **Talk about trips.** Have children tell about times they needed to make sudden trips—to Grandma’s, to the doctor, etc. What did they pack?



Jesus Was a Child like You and Me

LESSON 2: WHEN JESUS WAS A BOY

Objective

Children will be able to name ways that life in Jesus' time was the same and different from their own.

Key Concepts

- When Jesus was a baby, Mary and Joseph dedicated him to God.
- Jesus grew from a baby into a boy.
- Jesus ate, slept, worked, went to school, and played.

Text: Luke 2:22-40

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
- For “history basket”: large basket, blanket, step stool, towel, 3 medium stones, pita bread, tunics
- Pictures or certificates from students' baby dedications
- Chart paper, marker
- Book pages (pp. 217-220), markers or crayons
- Story figures and story cloth
- Small box to represent temple
- For Extend the Lesson, option one: pita bread, feta cheese, grapes, olives, canned tuna, figs, dates, etc.
- For Extend the Lesson, option three: heart stickers

Teacher Preparation

- Ahead of time, invite parents to send in pictures or certificates from the children's baby dedications.
- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- Prepare a history basket: In a large basket, place a blanket, step stool, rolled-up towel, three stones, some pita bread, and tunics. You and the children will talk about how each item was used in Jesus' time.
- Copy book pages (*one set per child*) and staple them together. (*Use a blank paper for the cover.*)
- If using Extend the Lesson, option two, practice the steps to the *hora*.

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, pages 203-204.

2. Learn about life in Jesus' time. In your own words, give children the following information about where and how Jesus lived:

Land—The land of Palestine was varied. It included hills, plains, and deserts. There were many wild animals, including bears, foxes, jackals, and leopards.

Nazareth—A hilly town in the southern part of Galilee, located along a major trade road. Many different groups of people lived there. Palms, olives, figs, and grapes grew on the hillsides around the Sea of Galilee. The province of Galilee contained rolling hills and fertile valleys. The Sea of Galilee was known for having lots of fish. Galilee was a garden spot compared to Judea (*Bethlehem*). Judea (*where Mary and Joseph lived when Jesus was a baby*) was more like a desert with very rocky land.

Climate—Galilee’s climate was pleasant year-round, especially in the highlands. The entire country had a long dry season and two rainy seasons.

People—Palestine was under the rule of the Roman Empire. Since Nazareth was on a major trade road, many people from all nations would have been found there.

Language—The Jewish people spoke Hebrew and Aramaic, and most could probably speak Greek as well.

Pull the items out of the history basket, one at a time, and talk about how they were used when Jesus was growing up:

Blanket. Make a Bible-times house in your classroom by covering a table with the blanket. Put the stepstool next to the table, to represent steps to the roof. Explain that houses were made of natural materials like stones and clay.

Rolled-up towel. Talk about the mats people used for sleeping. They were rolled up during the day and unrolled when it was time for bed. Give students the opportunity to lie on the towel and compare it with their own beds.

Three stones. Talk about how people cooked over an open fire, setting their pots on stones.

Pita bread. Talk about the types of food Jesus would have eaten (*grapes, olives, flat bread, fish, cucumbers, tomatoes, dates, figs, goat cheese, etc.*) Emphasize the simple and natural qualities of their food.

Tunics. As you show the tunics, mention that boys and girls wore tunics with belts. However, girls would have worn an overdrape as well. Invite several students to model the tunics for the class.

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the story of Jesus’ presentation at the temple. Use story figures for Joseph, Mary, Simeon, and Anna, and a symbol for baby Jesus that can be attached to both Mary and Simeon. Lay out the story cloth and set a box upside down to represent the temple in Jerusalem. Put Anna a short distance from the temple and Simeon close to the temple. Arrange Joseph and Mary (*with Jesus in her arms*) farther from the temple.

Joseph and Mary loved God very much. They wanted their son, Jesus, to grow to love God, too. When Jesus was a baby, Joseph and Mary took him to the temple in Jerusalem. (*Move Mary and Joseph to temple.*) Long ago, Jewish people like Mary and Joseph gave God a sacrifice when their first child was born. This was to show their love and respect for God and to show that they wanted to dedicate their child to God.

When Mary and Joseph arrived at the temple with baby Jesus, they met a

man named Simeon. (*Move Mary and Joseph near Simeon.*) Simeon was a good man, and he was old. God had told Simeon that he would not die before he saw the Messiah, the Savior of his people. When Simeon saw Joseph and Mary enter the temple with baby Jesus, God’s Holy Spirit told Simeon, “This is the one. This is the Messiah, the Savior.”

Simeon went up to Mary and Joseph and asked to hold Jesus in his arms. Simeon took the baby (*attach Jesus to Simeon*) and praised God. “Master,” he said, “Now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.” Mary and Joseph were amazed at what Simeon said about their little baby! Then, Simeon said a blessing for Mary and Joseph.

There was another person at the temple that day, praying for the Messiah to come. That person was Anna, a very old woman. She lived at the temple, praying day and night. (*Move Anna close to Mary and Joseph.*) When Anna realized that Jesus was the Messiah, she began to praise God, too. She told everyone who would listen about Jesus and how he would save them.

When Mary and Joseph had worshipped and sacrificed at the temple they went home. (*Attach Jesus to Mary again and move Mary and Joseph away from temple.*) In the days ahead, Joseph and Mary thought a lot about what Simeon and Anna had said. They knew that Jesus was a special child.

2. Wonder about the story, using the following statements:

- I wonder what sign the Holy Spirit gave Simeon that Jesus was the Messiah.
- I wonder what Mary and Joseph thought about Simeon and Anna's words.
- I wonder what other ways Mary and Joseph dedicated their child to God.

Pray, “Thank you, God, that Mary and Joseph dedicated Jesus to you. Thank you for our parents and how they teach us to love and worship you. Amen.”

3. Dedicated to God. Share the pictures and certificates of the children’s dedication ceremonies (*or baptisms, if you have students of other faith traditions*), emphasizing the love and commitment their parents have for them. Talk about how Mary and Joseph loved Jesus and wanted to dedicate him to God, just as their own parents love them and want them to grow up to serve God.

4. Different and alike. Make a chart showing the differences and similarities between Jesus’ childhood and your students’ childhoods. Use the information from the lesson introduction and the Bible story to come up with categories like the following. Point out that the important things are the same:

<u>Different</u>	<u>Same</u>
Clothes	Parents love us
Food	Parents dedicate us to God
Houses	Go to church
Beds	Play with family and friends
Toys	Help with chores around the house
Climate	Go to school

5. Make a book. Give each of the children a set of book pages (pp. 217-220) about the similarities between Jesus’ childhood and their own. Read the book together, letting children join in or read what they can themselves. Allow time for them to illustrate the book, and send it home with them to share with their parents.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Taste foods** that Jesus would have eaten: grapes, olives, pita bread, fish (tuna), cucumbers, tomatoes, dates, figs, goat cheese, etc.
- **Dance the hora.** People have danced the *hora* for many years. It is a popular Israeli folk dance. It usually begins slowly and speeds up. You can move to the right or to the left as you dance. Once you have learned the steps, either sing or listen to a recording of “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.”

Form large circle, facing center.

Join hands.

Step to left side with left foot, crossing right foot in back, weight on right foot.

Again, step to left with left foot, hop on it, and swing right foot across front.

Step on right foot, hop on it, and swing left foot across in front.

- **Read an interactive story**, comparing life in Jesus’ time with the children’s life today:

A Day in the Life of Joshua and Miriam

Let’s pretend that long ago, in the land where Jesus grew up, lived two children named Joshua and Miriam. These children were a lot like you. They had people who loved them, friends to play with, and good things to eat. But because they lived so long ago, some things about their lives were very different from your lives today. These children were neighbors to Jesus. We will talk about the kind of life Jesus, Joshua and Miriam might have had and the way we live today.

Let’s begin by thinking about this morning:

- Where did you sleep last night? In a bed. Have you ever slept in a sleeping bag on the floor? Joshua and Miriam would have slept on a mat *(show rolled-up towel from history basket)*.
- What did you eat for breakfast? *(Let students respond.)* What do you think Joshua and Miriam would have eaten? Maybe flat bread, dates, and grapes. *(Pass out samples.)*
- And look what clothing you put on this morning. You’re wearing _____ *(students fill in)*. But Joshua and Miriam would have worn sandals and tunics. *(Show tunic from basket.)*
- When your mom asks you to feed the dog, you give it _____ *(students fill in)*. Miriam and Joshua would have fed their donkey hay.
- Miriam and Joshua liked to play with their friends, just like you. They may have played tag and catch. What are some things you know they *wouldn’t* have played with *(bikes, computers, Legos, etc.)* What games might they have played *(marbles, races, etc.)*.
- When it’s time to wash up, where do we get our water? A faucet, the sink. Do you remember where Miriam would have gone to get water? From a well. How would she carry it home from the well? On her head. Who wants to try to carry this jug on your head?
- Who goes to school? *(Let students respond.)* Would Joshua and Miriam have gone to school? Just Joshua. Girls stayed home to work with their mothers.

- At school, you work at tables and read from books. In Joshua's school, everyone sat on the floor. Even the rabbi, who was the teacher, sat on the floor! What did they read from? Scrolls.
- For dinner, we eat _____ (*students fill in*). For Joshua and Miriam, dinner would have been grapes, figs, cheese, and bread.
- In the evenings what do you do? (*Let students respond.*) Joshua, Miriam, and their parents would have gone up to the roof, talked to each other, prayed to God, and looked at the stars. (*Allow a few students to do this on the play house.*)
- One thing we do, that Joshua and Miriam also did, is set aside a special day each week to worship God. We go to church. Joshua and Miriam went to the synagogue.

God loves us today, just as God loved Joshua, Miriam and Jesus more than 2,000 years ago. I'm going to give you a heart sticker to remind you that God loves you today, just like God loved the children who lived long ago. (*Give each student a heart sticker OR a homemade heart with the words "God loves me" printed on the front.*)

Mary and Joseph loved Jesus.
My mom and dad love me.

Jesus went to school.
I go to school.

Jesus played with friends.
I play with friends.

Jesus helped Mary and Joseph.
I help my mom and dad.

Jesus Was a Child like You and Me

LESSON 3: HAVE YOU SEEN OUR SON?

Objective

Children will understand that Jesus loved to learn. They will remember the stories they have learned so far this year.

Key Concepts

- Jesus went to the temple in Jerusalem with his parents.
- Jesus studied with the religious leaders in the temple.
- Jesus obeyed his parents.

Text: Luke 2:41-52

Estimated Lesson Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials

- *Jubilee Songbook*
 - Story cloth and story figures, paper or cloth to represent a road
 - Small box to represent temple
 - Play-dough or sand tray for each child, writing tool
- OR
- Copies of Deuteronomy 6:5 (p. 225), scissors, craft sticks or pencils, tape or glue
 - For Extend the Lesson, option one: book about being lost, such as *Lost!* by David McPhail (Little, Brown Young Readers, 1993) or *Lost in the Museum* by Miriam Cohen (Yearling, 1995)

Teacher Preparation

- Practice telling the Bible story with props.
- If choosing that option, make one copy of Deuteronomy 6:5 for each child.
- If using Extend the Lesson, option two, practice the action rhyme (p. 224).

INTRODUCING THE LESSON

1. Worship and Bible memory. See Unit Information, pages 203-204.

2. “Who is lost?” game. Have children sit down, spaced apart. Have everyone close their eyes. (*No peeking!*) Tap one child on the shoulder and have him or her leave the room. When the child is gone, have the others open their eyes and ask, “Who is lost?” See who can name the missing child first. Continue until children (*or you*) tire of the game. Discuss how it feels to be lost. Invite children to share about times they were separated from their parents, in a store or other setting.

LESSON STEPS

1. Tell the story, “Have You Seen Our Son?” On the story cloth, place a small box to represent the temple. Use paper or cloth to create a road leading to the temple. Place several figures in the box, to represent religious leaders and teachers. Put figures to represent Mary, Joseph, and Jesus far away from the temple. Place several travelers beside them.

Jesus was a Jewish boy. *(Put hand on Jesus.)* His parents were Jews. *(Put hand on Mary and Joseph.)* They followed the laws of the Jewish faith. Every Jewish man, beginning when he was 12 years old, must visit the holy city of Jerusalem three times a year. One of these times was to celebrate the festival of Passover. At Passover, Jewish people remembered how God helped them escape slavery long ago in Egypt. They celebrated for seven days!

When Jesus was 12 years old, he was finally old enough to travel to Jerusalem. Mary, Joseph and their family got ready to go. They packed food and other things they would need. They had no car, no airplane, not even a buggy! They had to walk all the way from Nazareth to Jerusalem. *(Compare distance of 120 miles with city near you.)* There were no hotels to stay in. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus probably stayed in strangers' homes or slept beside the road. But they had to be careful. There were robbers hiding in the bushes. It was a dangerous trip!

Mary and Joseph probably knew many of the people in their traveling group. Maybe they were cousins or aunts and uncles. *(Move travelers along road to temple.)* Jesus stayed with his parents for part of the journey, but sometimes he walked and talked with the others in their group.

When they arrived in Jerusalem, they found a place to stay. Maybe they rented a room from a family in Jerusalem. Jesus and his parents visited the temple. They worshipped God, made sacrifices, and celebrated the feast of the Passover with the other people. While they were in the city, Jesus wanted to learn. He went to the temple, to listen to the teachers talk about God and the Bible. *(Put Jesus in temple with teachers.)* He loved listening to the stories of God's people. He loved hearing what the wise teachers said about God. Jesus was already preparing to be a preacher. He asked questions, and the teachers listened to him, even though he was a boy. They were amazed at how well Jesus understood ideas about God!

While Jesus was in the temple, Mary and Joseph prepared to travel back to Nazareth with their group. *(Arrange travelers on road away from Jerusalem.)* They knew Jesus liked to walk with other people, so they began the journey home without him, thinking he was with friends. *(Move travelers down road.)* After a day of travel, Mary and Joseph began to get worried. They hadn't seen Jesus since they left. They started looking for him among their friends and relatives.

"Have you seen our son? Have you seen our son?" they asked everyone they saw. No one had seen Jesus. Mary and Joseph had to travel back to Jerusalem and look for him. They said goodbye to their friends and relatives and turned back. *(Move travelers away from Jerusalem, Mary and Joseph towards Jerusalem.)*

When they arrived in the city, they looked frantically for Jesus. They searched and searched, asking everyone, "Have you seen our son?" Finally, they found Jesus. He was in the temple, listening to the teachers and asking them questions. *(Put Mary and Joseph in temple with Jesus and teachers.)* Mary said to Jesus, "Child, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been looking for you. We have been worried!" Jesus said to them, "Why were you looking for me? Didn't you know that I need to be in my Father's house?" Mary and Joseph didn't understand what Jesus told them.

Jesus said good-bye to the teachers and went home to Nazareth with his parents. *(Move family back to Nazareth.)* He listened to them and obeyed them.

2. Wonder about the story, using the following statements:

- I wonder what Jerusalem was like during the festival of Passover.
- I wonder what Jesus asked the teachers in the temple.

- I wonder why Mary and Joseph didn't understand that Jesus needed to be in the temple.

Pray, "God, Jesus loved to learn about you when he was a boy. Help us to want to learn, just like Jesus did. Amen."

3. Bible story review. Summarize for the children that Jesus wanted to learn and do what God wanted him to do. He loved learning the stories of God's people so much that he didn't even notice when his parents left the temple! God wants us to learn and remember stories about God's people, too. Say, "Let's see if we can remember some of the stories we have learned this year." Prompt children's memory with the following names and themes and see how many details they can remember from the Bible stories. As they remember, reinforce the theme of each story:

We are God's Gifts

Lost sheep, prodigal son, lost coin, Jesus blesses the children

The Five Senses

Blind Bartimaeus (*sight*), Jesus heals deaf mute (*hearing*), woman who washed Jesus' feet (*smell*), come to the Banquet (*taste*), the healing of Jairus' daughter (*touch*)

We Change and Grow

Samuel's birth, Samuel's call, Josiah the boy king

What Can We Share?

Parable of the mustard seed, David is chosen

Fruit of the Spirit

Shunammite woman who showed love (*love*), Jesus heals the crippled man (*joy*), Namaan and the slave girl (*peace*), Lydia shares her home with Paul (*kindness, goodness*), wise and foolish builders (*patience, faithfulness*)

God's Most Precious Gift

Angel visits Mary, angels visit the shepherds, wise men visit baby Jesus

Jesus Was a Child Like You and Me

Fleeing to Egypt, Jesus presented in the temple

3. Bible verse art. Choose one of the following art activities to help children learn Deuteronomy 6:5:

- Explain that in Jesus' time, boys began attending school around age six. The rabbi was their teacher. After learning to read and write, they memorized the Bible. Learning scripture was the main reason for going to school.

Paper and pencils were not available, so students wrote on clay tablets with a pointed stick, or in the sand. Recreate the experience of a child's school experience in Jesus' time. Give each child a container of play-dough and a craft stick or other writing tool. Show how to roll the dough thin and make letters in the play-dough. Encourage children who are able to write the first line of the verse in the play-dough (*Love the Lord*). OR, give each child a flat, shallow container of sand. Let them write the verse with a craft stick or pencil in the sand.

- Give each child a copy of Deuteronomy 6:5. Help them tape (*or glue*) craft sticks or unsharpened pencils to each side of the verse. Show how to roll up the verse like a scroll. Use this opportunity to tell children how precious "books" or scrolls were in Jesus' time. Everything was handwritten, onto materials that were expensive and hard to find.

EXTEND THE LESSON

(These activities will extend the lesson to longer than 30-40 minutes.)

- **Read a book** about being lost, such as *Lost!* by David McPhail (Little, Brown Young Readers, 1993) or *Lost in the Museum* by Miriam Cohen (Yearling, 1995).
- **Learn an action rhyme** about the lost boy, Jesus:

The Lost Boy

Look in the courtyard *(hands over eyes, looking)*
Not there *(shake head no)*
Look in the marketplace *(look again)*
No! *(shake head no)*
Where in the town of Jerusalem *(hunch shoulders, hold hands out)*
Would a boy of 12 years go?

Look on the hillside *(look again)*
Not there *(shake head no)*
Look in the temple *(look again)*
Well! *(place hands on hips)*
Everyone's standing around *(shake head yes)*
To hear
What the young boy has to tell.

—by Sharon Lee

Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5

Love the Lord your God
with all your heart
and with all your soul
and with all your strength.

Deuteronomy 6:5