

# GOD IS MERCIFUL



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## YEAR 3, UNIT 12

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# GOD IS MERCIFUL

## MONTHLY PREPARATION GUIDE

### YEAR 3, UNIT 12 - PRE-K

#### WEEK 1

**LESSON MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece | Children's Nativity Set | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi* Activity Pages (1 set per class) | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi B&W* Activity Pages (1 image per child) | Crayons | Wooden Building Blocks (1-2 sets per class) | Bible | Party Noisemakers (1 per child) | *God is Merciful* Activity Page (1 per child) | Cardstock | White Crayon (1 per class) | Watercolor Paints & Brush (1 set per child) |

#### WEEK 2

**LESSON MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece | Angel Decorations (Garland, Angel Wings, etc.) | Christmas Music | *Angel Messengers* Activity Pages (1 set per class) | *Angel Messengers B & W* Activity Pages (1 page per child) | *Angel* Activity Page (1 per child) | White Paper | Black Construction Paper (1 per child) | Gold Pipe Cleaners (1 per child) | Coffee Filters (2 per child) | Washable Sparkle Paint | Star Stickers (optional) | Washable Markers | School Glue |

#### WEEK 3

**LESSON MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece | Burlap or Linen Tunics (1 per team) | Leather Cording (1 per team) | Toy Grasshoppers (1 per child) | Small Paper Plates (1 per child) | *John the Baptist* Activity Pages | *John the Baptist B & W* Activity Page (1 per child) | Cardstock | Brown Yarn | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Glue Sticks | Music |

#### WEEK 4

**LESSON MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece | *Scavenger Hunt Cards* Activity Page (1 per class) | Tape | *Scavenger Hunt Checklist* Activity Pages (1 list per team) | Cardstock | Crayons | *Baby Jesus* Activity Page (1 image set per child) | White and Brown Cardstock | Pencils | Scissors | Washable Markers | Glitter Pipe Cleaners (1 per child) |

# GOD PROMISES A NEW KING

## BIBLE PASSAGE

Nehemiah 2, 8-9; Malachi 3 (ICB)

## BIG IDEA

God is Merciful

## FOCUS VERSE

"The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to all he has made."

Psalm 145:9 (ICB)

## LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Children's Nativity Set | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi* Activity Pages | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi B&W* Activity Pages | Crayons | Wooden Building Blocks | Bible | Party Noisemakers | *God is Merciful* Activity Page | Cardstock | White Crayon | Watercolor Paints & Brush |

## GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Have you ever gotten excited about someone coming to visit you? Why were you so excited?
- Did you do anything special together? If so, what did you do?

## WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Do you know what today is? [Allow for responses.] Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of waiting. What do you think we are waiting for? [Allow for responses.] We are waiting to celebrate Jesus' birth. How many of you are excited about Christmas? Me too!"

"Advent helps us think about what it was like for God's people to wait on Him to send His Son, Jesus. This month's theme song will help us do that, too. Let's sing 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.'"

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is this month's recommended theme song. Kingdom Kids (available on YouTube) has our favorite version.

## PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Gather everyone for prayer.

**Sample Prayer:** "Dear God, thank You for loving us and sending Your Son, Jesus. We are so grateful You keep Your promises. In Jesus' name. Amen."

**REVIEW — 5 MINUTES****MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

**BACKGROUND:** Say, "This month, we will learn that **God is merciful**. The Bible teaches us that we are saved because of God's mercy.

"Mercy means 'not getting what we deserve.' Can you think of a time when you should have gotten in trouble but didn't? Does anyone want to share a story about that?"



MERCY CAN BE A CHALLENGING CONCEPT FOR PRE-K CHILDREN, BUT PROVIDING EXAMPLES WILL HELP. SHARE A PERSONAL STORY ABOUT A TIME YOU SHOULD HAVE GOTTEN IN TROUBLE BUT DIDN'T BECAUSE SOMEONE GAVE YOU MERCY. ROLE-PLAYING IS ANOTHER EFFECTIVE WAY TO TEACH ABOUT MERCY. COME UP WITH A FEW SCENARIOS WHERE CHILDREN MUST CHOOSE TO BE MERCIFUL AND KIND. FOR EXAMPLE, IF ONE CHILD TOOK ANOTHER CHILD'S TOY, YOU CAN ROLE-PLAY HOW TO OFFER MERCY DESPITE THE WRONGDOING.

Say, "Instead of us being punished for our sins [the wrong things we do], God sent His Son to take the punishment for us. He loved us that much. That is MERCY!"

"Today, we will learn about a time when God showed mercy by promising to send a King who would be the world's Savior. First, though, we need to post this week's puzzle piece. Who would like to do that?"



SOME KIDS WOULD LIKE TO BE CHOSEN FOR TASKS (LIKE POSTING THE WEEKLY PUZZLE PIECE) BUT AREN'T COMFORTABLE VOLUNTEERING. INCORPORATE PRACTICES THAT GIVE EVERYONE A CHANCE TO SERVE. FOR EXAMPLE, YOU CAN DOWNLOAD AN APP THAT RANDOMLY GENERATES A NAME FROM THE LIST OF STUDENTS YOU PROVIDE. (DON'T FORGET TO ADD YOUR VISITORS!)

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Before we read from God's Word, let's play a game!"

**ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES****MATERIALS:** | Children's Nativity Set |

CONSIDER PURCHASING A WOODEN, CHILD-FRIENDLY NATIVITY SET THAT YOU CAN USE FOR TODAY'S GAME BUT WILL REMAIN ON DISPLAY IN YOUR CLASSROOM THROUGHOUT THE ADVENT/ CHRISTMAS SEASON (AND FOR FUTURE YEARS). TO PREPARE FOR TODAY'S GAME, HIDE THE PIECES THROUGHOUT THE ROOM BEFORE THE CHILDREN ARRIVE.

Say, "Christmas is the time of year when we celebrate Jesus' birthday. I think we should start decorating! What do you think? Let's start by finding all the pieces of Baby Jesus' story hidden throughout the room, and then we'll put them on display to remind us that God sent us His Son, Jesus!"

**GAME GOAL:** To find all the hidden nativity pieces

**HOW TO PLAY:**

1. Place the stable in a central location.
2. When you say "Go," the children should search the room for the nativity pieces.
3. Each time they find a piece, have them bring it to the stable.
4. Celebrate when all the pieces have been found.

**ALTERNATE ACTIVITY:** If you have a small group of children, consider playing *Hot/Cold* with the nativity set. Have the children take turns being the Seeker. The Seeker will hide their eyes while one of their classmates quietly hides a piece of the nativity set. Once the Seeker starts looking for the nativity piece, the other children will direct them by saying "Hot" or "Cold."

**TRANSITION:** Say, "That was a fun game! Now, let's learn about a few people who helped the world 'get ready' for Jesus years before He was born. Are you ready to listen? [Allow for response.] Great!"

**LEARN — 15 MINUTES**

**MATERIALS:** | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi* Activity Pages (1 set per class) | *Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi* B&W Activity Pages (1 image per child) | Crayons | Wooden Building Blocks (1-2 sets per class) | Bible | Party Noisemakers (1 per child) |



GATHER THE CHILDREN AROUND YOU IN A SEMI-CIRCLE ON THE FLOOR. YOU WILL USE THE BLOCKS TO BUILD A WALL AND THEN A TEMPLE (BUILDING) INSIDE THE WALL, SO ENSURE THE CHILDREN CAN SEE THE BLOCKS AS YOU TELL THE STORY.

Show the children the images of Nehemiah, Ezra, and Malachi as you teach.

Say, "Later this month, we will talk about the Christmas story, but first, let's look back to the Old Testament when three good men, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Malachi, obeyed God and spoke His words to the people. They have something to teach us about the Christmas story long before it happened!"



SOME CHILDREN FIND IT HELPFUL TO COLOR OR DRAW AS THEY LISTEN. MAKE EXTRA COPIES OF THE BLACK-AND-WHITE IMAGES TO GIVE THE CHILDREN THE OPTION OF COLORING AS YOU TEACH TODAY'S LESSON.

Say, "God's people were very sad. Their enemies had destroyed [broken, messed up] their city and God's Temple. Even worse, most of them didn't love and obey God anymore.

"However, the Lord loved them, so He had mercy on them. [He did not give them what they deserved.] God sent a good man named Nehemiah to help the people rebuild their city and the Temple."

Use the blocks to build the wall and temple as you tell the Bible story.

Say, "Nehemiah had been taken far from home and was working for a king. He heard about what

happened to his city, so he asked the king if he could go help rebuild Jerusalem and the Temple. God was merciful and worked in the king's heart to allow Nehemiah to leave."

Ask, "How do you think Nehemiah felt when he saw his broken-down city? [Allow for responses.]"

Use your Bible for the next portion of the lesson. Place the lesson text inside your Bible, stand up, and read like you are Ezra.

Say, "Ezra, the priest [like a preacher/pastor], was there when they started fixing the Temple, and he read God's Word to the people. As the people listened, they began to cry because they knew they had not been loving God. They had not kept God's Word.

"Have you ever felt sad after doing something wrong? Why do you think you felt sad? [Allow for response.] Did you know that sadness can help us know it's time to tell God we are sorry?"

Say, "On the second day, Ezra read that God wanted His people to have a special feast. [Explain that a feast is like a big party with lots of special food.] So, Ezra and Nehemiah told the people to celebrate - to have a party because God still loved them - He had never stopped loving them!

"Why do you think God told the people to have a special feast? [Allow for responses.] So they could celebrate God's mercy! He loves us SO much!"

Say, "The people listened to stories about the awesome things God had done. They heard how God created the world and rescued His people over and over, even before they loved Him back. The people began telling God they were sorry for doing wrong things. They worshiped God and started obeying Him. God had mercy on them. He forgave them."

Give the children the noisemakers, and take a moment to celebrate God's mercy and forgiveness! Celebrate God, and give the children an opportunity to share things they love about God.

Say, "Another man named Malachi also lived during this time. He spoke God's words to the people. He told them that God would send His Son to forgive them and give them new life. Then, FOUR HUNDRED YEARS after Malachi said these things, Jesus arrived, just as God promised! Wow! Four hundred years is a long time, isn't it?!"

Ask, "How did Malachi know God would send Jesus? [Allow for responses.] Malachi knew this would happen because God told him!"

Say, "This lesson reminds us that God always keeps His promises. Sometimes, we have to wait a long time, but He will always do what He says He will do. Next, it reminds us that **God is merciful**. God's people did not deserve for Jesus to come and save them, but God sent His Son anyway. [Remind the children that mercy means not getting what we deserve.] He is merciful because He loves us SO MUCH.

"God sent His only Son to save us. That is God's mercy!"

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Mercy is 'not getting what we deserve.' Mercy is God loving us so much that He sent His Son to earth to take our punishment. Aren't you thankful for our God, who is full of MERCY?"

## DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about the story you just heard."

### 1. What is mercy?

Response: Mercy is not getting what we deserve.

### 2. What part of today's story did you like best?

Response: Answers will vary.

### 3. Name the three good men in our story. (Show the pictures)

Response: Nehemiah, Ezra, and Malachi

### 4. What did Nehemiah do? What did Ezra do?

Response: Allow the children to retell this portion of the story in their own words.

### 5. What did the people do when they heard God's Word?

Response: They cried because they knew they had not obeyed the laws of God.

### 6. Why did the people have a party?

Response: They had a party to celebrate God's love and mercy.

### 7. What was Malachi's message to the people?

Response: He told them that the Savior was coming to earth to save the people from their sins.

### 8. What did you learn about God in today's lesson?

Response: **God is merciful.** God is kind. God forgives us. God wants us to celebrate His forgiveness, etc.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Aren't you thankful Jesus came to earth to save us? That's God's mercy!"

## RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *God is Merciful* Activity Page (1 per child) | Cardstock | White Crayon (1 per class) | Watercolor Paints & Brush (1 set per child) |

Say, "The craft we are making today will help us remember that **God is merciful** to the whole world. He loves us so much!"



BEFORE CLASS, PRINT *GOD IS MERCIFUL* ACTIVITY PAGE ON CARDSTOCK, ONE FOR EACH CHILD. THEN, USING THE WHITE CRAYON, DRAW A CROSS IN THE BLANK SPACE BELOW "GOD IS MERCIFUL" AND ABOVE THE EARTH.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give one *God is Merciful* Activity Page and watercolor set to each child. (They will likely not notice the white crayon cross drawn on their papers at first.)
2. Direct the children to paint the Activity Page. Be sure to encourage them to paint in the blank space under "God is Merciful" and above the Earth. This will reveal the cross.



**TRANSITION:** Say, “Does everyone see the cross on your Activity Pages now? Isn't it amazing that even hundreds of years before Christ was born, God had a plan to send His Son to die on the cross for our sins? Just as you didn't see the white crayon cross until you painted over it, God's people didn't know the great mercy they would be shown through Jesus Christ. Because we all sin, we all deserve to be punished, but God gives us mercy instead!”

## MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “It’s time to learn our memory verse for this unit. It tells us about God’s great mercy and love for all of us. I’ll read it first, and then we will read it together.”

“**The Lord** [point up] **is good** [give thumbs up] **to everyone** [spread arms wide open].  
**He is merciful** [hold both hands in front of you, palms up] **to all** [spread arms wide open] **he has made** [have your fists one on top of the other twisting slightly].”  
**Psalm 145:9, ICB** (hold hands out like a book)

## REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “Jesus came to take the punishment for our sins. He is a God of mercy, and He loves us SO MUCH! His mercy will change us. Let’s pray.



PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN DURING THE WEEK AND ASK GOD TO MERCIFULLY TOUCH THE HEARTS OF THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW HIM.

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** “Dear Jesus, Thank You for this Advent and Christmas season when we celebrate Your coming. Help us understand that You love us very much so we can love You too. Amen.”

## RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If you have extra time, play the ENGAGE Hot/Cold Alternative Activity game. When parents and guardians arrive, please give them a copy of the monthly Parent Guide.



ALWAYS GREET FAMILY MEMBERS WITH POSITIVE COMMENTS ABOUT THEIR CHILD AND TELL THEM HOW HAPPY YOU ARE TO HAVE THEIR SON OR DAUGHTER IN CLASS.



**GOD  
PROMISES A  
NEW KING**

**WEEK 1**

**GOD IS  
MERCIFUL**

# NEHEMIAH



# EZRA



# MALACHI



# NEHEMIAH



# EZRA



# MALACHI





# GOD IS MERCIFUL!

**The Lord is kind and shows mercy. He does not become angry quickly but is full of love. The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to all he has made. Psalms 145:9 (ICB)**



# ANGELS ANNOUNCE THE NEW KING

## BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 1, Matthew 1:18-24 (ICB)

## BIG IDEA

God is Merciful

## FOCUS VERSE

"The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to all he has made."

Psalm 145:9 (ICB)

## LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Angel Decorations | Christmas Music | *Angel Messengers* Activity Pages | *Angel Messengers B & W* Activity Pages | *Angel* Activity Page | White Paper | Black Construction Paper | Gold Pipe Cleaners | Coffee Filters | Washable Sparkle Paint | Star Stickers (optional) | Washable Markers | School Glue |

## GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- Why is it so much fun to get gifts?
- Tell me about one of your favorite gifts.

## WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, "What do you think an angel looks like? [Allow for responses. Have you ever seen pictures of angels that look like sweet babies? Pictures like this are cute, but the Bible tells us the truth about angels. It describes them as strong warriors with supernatural powers.

"Angels are amazing and powerful! If we saw one, we would probably be afraid of it. We might even be tempted to bow down and worship it, but that wouldn't be right, would it? No, even the angels know there is only One who deserves our worship. Who is that? [Allow for responses.] Right! Only God deserves our worship. The Bible says angels are worshiping God right now! Let's join them!"

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is this month's recommended theme song. Kingdom Kids (available on YouTube) has our favorite version. We also love "Hark the Herald Angels Sing" (by LifeTree Kids) for this week's lesson.

## PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Ask if any of the children would like to lead in prayer. Some kids are shy about praying aloud, so do not force anyone. However, it is good to provide the opportunity.

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** “Dear God, thank You for Your great mercy. You are so good to us! [Allow the children to name ways God has been good to them.] We love You so much! Amen.”

## REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

**BACKGROUND:** Say, “Last week, we began new lessons about our merciful God. Who remembers what mercy means? [Allow for responses.] That’s right! Mercy is not getting what we deserve.” Refer to Lesson the BACKGROUND in Lesson One for suggestions on explaining “mercy” to young children.

Say, “Our story was about three good men God sent to tell the people that Jesus was coming. This week, we will talk about the angels who also shared special messages about Christ, the coming King. First, let’s place our new puzzle piece on the wall.”

**TRANSITION:** Say, “Now, who would like to play a special Christmas version of musical chairs? Great!”

## ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | Angel Decorations (Garland, Angel Wings, etc.) | Christmas Music |



BEFORE CLASS, DECORATE ONE CHAIR WITH THE ANGEL DECORATIONS (GARLAND, ANGEL WINGS, ETC.). THEN, ARRANGE CLASSROOM CHAIRS (INCLUDING THE “ANGEL CHAIR”) FACING OUTWARD IN A LARGE CIRCLE. THERE SHOULD BE ONE CHAIR FOR EACH CHILD.

Say, “Today, we will play a special version of musical chairs called *Angel Musical Chairs*. Everyone take a seat, and I’ll explain the rules.”

**GAME GOAL:** To be the last child remaining in the game

### HOW TO PLAY:

1. Have each child stand in front of a chair outside the circle.
2. Start the music and have the children walk clockwise around the circle. (The kids should walk at a comfortable pace.)
3. Stop the music suddenly. The children should quickly sit down in a seat. One player will be forced to sit in the “angel chair.”
4. The player who sat in the “angel chair” is out of the round.
5. Remove a chair and play again until only one player is left.

**TRANSITION:** Say, “We’ve been talking a little about angels already, but the best is yet to come! This week’s lesson is about three angel visits. However, it’s the message they brought, not the angels, that we really need to hear. So, let’s gather to listen to God’s Word together!”

## LEARN — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *Angel Messengers* Activity Pages (1 set per class) | *Angel Messengers B & W* Activity Pages (1 page per child) |



USE THE *ANGEL MESSENGERS* ACTIVITY PAGES AS YOU TELL TODAY'S STORY. POST EACH ONE ON THE WALL AS YOU TALK ABOUT THE CORRESPONDING PORTION OF THE LESSON. YOU CAN USE THE *ANGEL MESSENGERS B & W* ACTIVITY PAGES FOR ACTIVE CHILDREN TO COLOR AS THEY LISTEN.

Say, "Last week, we learned that our merciful God was preparing to send His Son to earth. Now it was almost time! Today's lesson is so exciting because everything is about to change! God's people have waited and waited for God's Son, and He's finally about to arrive.

"Zechariah was the first person in today's story to receive an angel's visit. He was a priest serving in the temple. He and his wife, Elizabeth, were getting old and had never been able to have children, but God is merciful. He was about to give them a son in their old age. Let's listen to the message God sent through His angels." Read Luke 1:11-20 (ICB).

**<sup>11</sup> Then, on the right side of the incense table, an angel of the Lord came and stood before Zechariah. <sup>12</sup> When he saw the angel, Zechariah was confused and frightened.**

**<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Zechariah, don't be afraid. Your prayer has been heard by God. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to a son. You will name him John. <sup>14</sup> You will be very happy. Many people will be happy because of his birth. <sup>15</sup> John will be a great man for the Lord. He will never drink wine or beer. Even at the time John is born, he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>16</sup> He will help many people of Israel return to the Lord their God..."**

**<sup>18</sup> Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know that what you say is true? I am an old man, and my wife is old, too."**

**<sup>19</sup> The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand before God. God sent me to talk to you and to tell you this good news. <sup>20</sup> Now, listen! You will not be able to talk until the day these things happen. You will lose your speech because you did not believe what I told you. But these things will really happen."**

Say, "Zechariah didn't believe the angel when he said they would have a child in their old age. Because of his unbelief, Zechariah's voice was taken away. But as soon as John was born, Zechariah could speak again, and he began to tell the people that his son John would be God's messenger. John would teach the people about God's mercy and prepare the way for Jesus."

Post the *Angel Messenger (Zechariah)* Activity Page.

Say, "The second person in our story is Mary. The angel's words to Mary tell us that God is merciful. The angel Gabriel told her she would have a son and that she should name Him Jesus. At first, Mary was afraid, but the angel helped her understand. The angel said her baby would be God's Son." Read Luke 1:35-38 (ICB).

**<sup>35</sup> The angel said to Mary, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will cover you. The baby will be holy. He will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> Now listen! Elizabeth, your relative, is very old. But she is also pregnant with a son. Everyone thought she could not have a baby, but she has been pregnant for six months. <sup>37</sup> God can do everything!"**

**<sup>38</sup> Mary said, "I am the servant girl of the Lord. Let this happen to me as you say!" Then the angel went away.**

Post the *Angel Messenger (Mary)* Activity Page.

Ask, "How does this show us God's mercy? [Allow for responses.] Mary didn't deserve to be Jesus' mother, but God is merciful. We don't deserve Jesus either – He's too perfect, loving, kind, and good – but God sent Him to save us anyway. We have one more angel visit. Let's see who he went to this time." Read Matthew 1:18-24.

**<sup>18</sup> The mother of Jesus Christ was Mary. And this is how the birth of Jesus came about. Mary was engaged to marry Joseph. But before they married, she learned that she was going to have a baby. She was pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> Mary's husband, Joseph, was a good man. He did not want to disgrace her in public, so he planned to divorce her secretly.**

**<sup>20</sup> While Joseph thought about this, an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream. The angel said, "Joseph, descendant of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife. The baby in her is from the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son. You will name the son Jesus. Give him that name because he will save his people from their sins."**

**<sup>22</sup> All this happened to make clear the full meaning of what the Lord had said through the prophet: <sup>23</sup> "The virgin will be pregnant. She will have a son, and they will name him Immanuel." This name means "God is with us."**

**<sup>24</sup> When Joseph woke up, he did what the Lord's angel had told him to do. Joseph married**

Ask, "Who received the third angel visit? [Allow for responses.] Right! Joseph, Mary's husband. Did Joseph believe the angel? [Allow for responses.] Yes, he did! This angel's words also teach us that God is merciful." Reread verse 21.

Say, "God sent Jesus to save us from our sins! God is so merciful! He showed His great mercy when He made a way for us to go to heaven and live forever with Him."

Post the *Angel Messenger (Joseph)* Activity Page.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Jesus is God's perfect gift. When we accept and follow Jesus, we become God's children. Aren't you thankful for God's mercy?"

**DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES**

Say, "Let's talk about the story you just heard."

**1. Name the three people who were visited by an angel.**

Response: Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph

**2. What did the angel tell Zechariah?**

Response: Zechariah and his wife would have a son who would tell the people about Jesus.

**3. What was the message to Mary?**

Response: The angel told Mary that she would have a baby. This baby would be the Son of God.

**4. Tell me about the third person an angel visited.**

Response: An angel visited Joseph to tell him that Mary would have a son who would be the Savior of the world.

**5. How do these stories show us that God is merciful?**

Response: Answers will vary.

**6. What did you learn about God today?**

Response: **God is merciful**, God sent His Son to save us, God loves us, God is powerful, etc.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Jesus came to earth for us. He did that because **God is merciful!**"

**RESPOND — 15 MINUTES**

**MATERIALS:** | *Angel* Activity Page (1 per child) | White Paper | Black Construction Paper (1 per child) | Gold Pipe Cleaners (1 per child) | Coffee Filters (2 per child) | Washable Sparkle Paint | Star Stickers (optional) | Washable Markers | School Glue |

Say, "We learned about three angel visits. What did the angels say? [Allow for responses.] Yes! They came to tell the people that Jesus was coming! Let's make an angel to help us remember the angel's wonderful news to Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph."



CUT OUT THE ANGEL BODIES AND MAKE HALOS FROM THE PIPE CLEANERS BEFORE YOU ARRIVE TO CLASS.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Give each child an angel and two coffee filters.
2. Use sparkle paint to decorate the angel's body and wings (coffee filters).
3. Glue the coffee filters to the black construction paper.  
Space the filters so the small ends will be underneath the angel's body.
4. Glue the long end of the halo between the coffee filters.
5. Glue the angel's body over the pipe cleaner.
6. Decorate the background with star stickers (optional).



**TRANSITION:** Say, "As Christmas draws closer, thank God for sending the angels to prepare His people for Jesus."

## MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Let's practice our memory verse again today. I will say it out loud first, then you can say it with me."

**"The Lord** [point up] **is good** [give thumbs up] **to everyone** [spread arms wide open].  
**He is merciful** [hold both hands in front of you, palms up] **to all** [spread arms wide open] **he has made** [have your fists one on top of the other twisting slightly]."

**Psalm 145:9, ICB** (hold hands out like a book)

**CHALLENGE:** Play a game of *Popcorn* to practice this month's verse. Divide the children into two or three groups and have everyone begin in a seated position. Using the same sentence breaks you have for the motions, the groups will rotate around the room, saying their phrases. When it's their group's turn, they will pop up, say their phrase, and sit back down. For example:

Group One: "The Lord"

Group Two: "is good"

Group One: "to all"

Group Two: "and His mercy"

Group One: "is over all"

Group Two: "that He has made."

Everyone: "Psalm 145:9"

## REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, "Understanding that **God is merciful** can help us be more willing to give others mercy. When someone hurts our feelings or is mean to us, how should we treat them? [Allow for responses.] Yes! We show them mercy because **God is merciful** to us! How do we do this? [Allow for responses.] Those are great examples! Having mercy certainly means forgiving them."



ENSURE CHILDREN UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EXTENDING MERCY TO SOMEONE UNKIND AND STAYING IN A DAMAGING SITUATION. WHILE WE WANT CHILDREN TO GROW IN MERCY, WE DO NOT WANT KIDS TO THINK GOD WANTS THEM TO BE IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH SOMEONE DANGEROUS OR ABUSIVE (THIS INCLUDES BULLYING). EXPLAIN THAT THEY SHOULD TELL A SAFE ADULT IF THEY ARE EVER AFRAID OF SOMEONE. ALL CHURCH VOLUNTEERS AND PAID STAFF SHOULD BE TRAINED TO RESPOND APPROPRIATELY TO DISCLOSURES OF ABUSE.

Say, "Is there someone who needs your mercy? You don't have to say their name out loud. It's hard to be merciful when we are angry or hurt, but God loved us so much that He loved us even when we were His

enemies. [See Romans 5:10.] As we pray, ask the Holy Spirit to help you be merciful to that person God is bringing to your mind. If you can't think of anyone, ask Jesus to help you become a person who can love your enemies."

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** *"Dear God, Thank You for being merciful to us. Please make us more like Your Son, Jesus, by helping me give mercy to others, especially those who are unkind or make me angry. I love You. Amen."*

## **RELEASE —**

If you have extra time before the parents arrive, replay *Angel Musical Chairs* or another game the kids enjoy.





**ANGELS  
ANNOUNCE THE  
NEW KING**

**WEEK 2**

**GOD IS  
MERCIFUL**



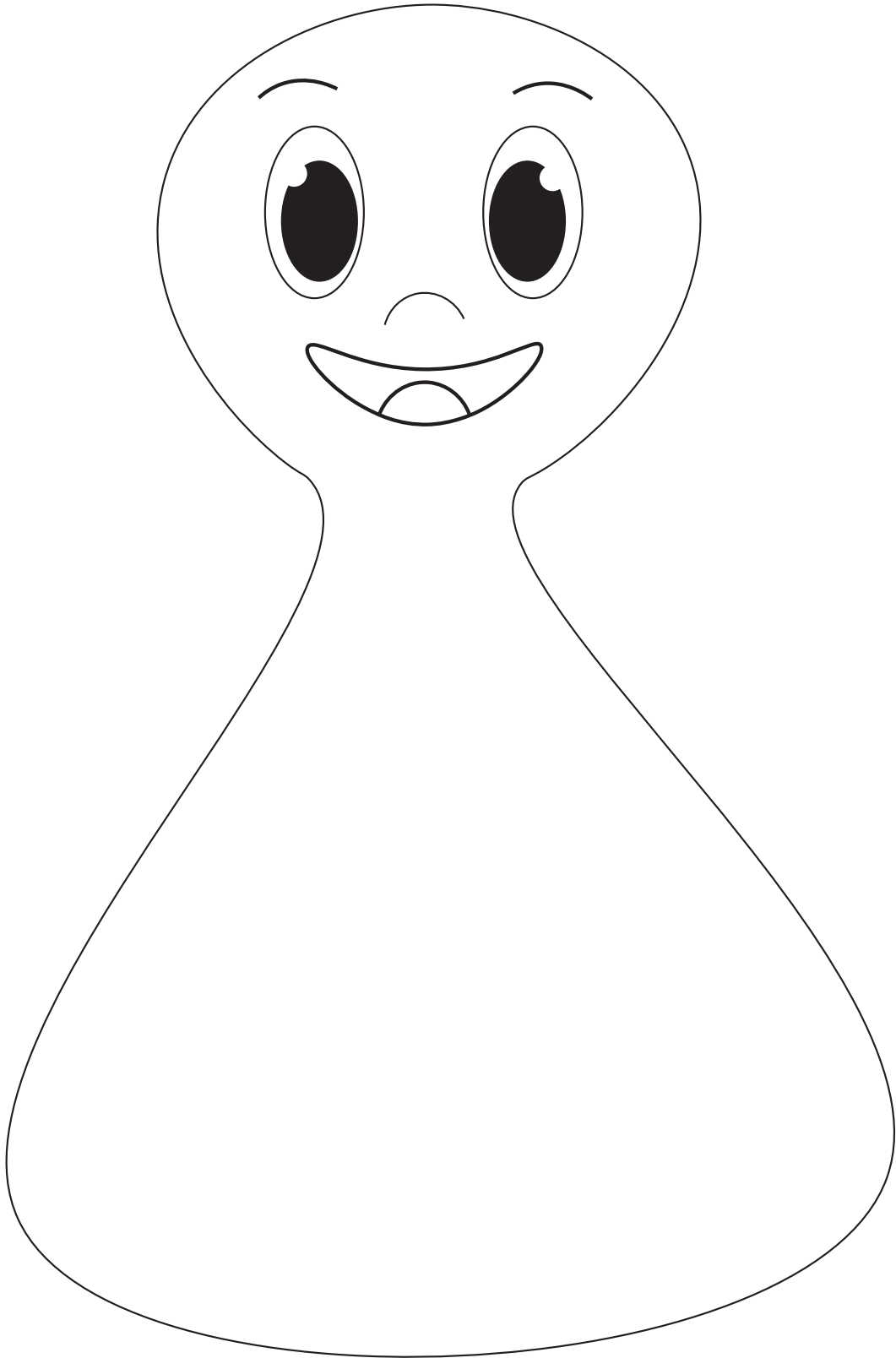














# GOD PREPARES FOR THE NEW KING

## BIBLE PASSAGE

Read Luke 1:60-64; Matthew 3: 13-17 (ICB)

## BIG IDEA

God is Merciful

## FOCUS VERSE

"The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to all he has made."

Psalm 145:9 (ICB)

## LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | Burlap or Linen Tunics | Leather Cording | Toy Grasshoppers | Small Paper Plates  
| *John the Baptist* Activity Pages | *John the Baptist B & W* Activity Page | Cardstock | Brown Yarn |  
Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Glue Sticks | Music |

## GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite food?
- What is your favorite restaurant?

## WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Ask, "What do you like best about Christmastime? Is it the decorations, the music, the candy, the gifts, or something else? [Allow for responses.] One thing that makes the Christmas season exciting is that we are all waiting for the big day.

"Before Jesus came, God's people were also waiting. They knew God would send them a Savior, but they didn't know when. They talked about the 'big day' and sang songs about it. They were excited because they knew everything would change when God sent the Messiah [Jesus]! And it did!

"Right now, we are in the season of Advent. It's the time when Christians think about what it was like to wait for Jesus to arrive for the first time. Like these people from long ago, we are waiting. We're waiting for Christmas, of course, but we are also waiting for Christ to come again!" Sing together.

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" is this month's recommended theme song. Kingdom Kids (available on YouTube) has our favorite version. Additionally, "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus" by Getty Kids is an excellent compliment to this week's lesson.

## PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Make your prayer time special and explain that this is one way we talk with God. Ask the children to tell you why it's important for us to talk with God.

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** *"Dear God, thank You for this Christmas season when we can remember how You came to earth to be our Savior. Help us to see what a great God You are and to understand how much You love us. We pray these things in the name of Your Son, Jesus. Amen."*

## REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

**BACKGROUND:** Say, "All month, we have been learning something important about God. Does anyone remember what that is? [Allow for responses.] Yes! God is merciful! In the first week, we learned that long before Christ was born, God told His people that He would send Jesus to save them from their sins.

"Last week, we heard about three angel visits. God had special messages for Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph, so He sent His angel to deliver them. Today, we will learn about Zechariah's son, John, who was born about the same time as Jesus. It is a fantastic story about God's mercy, and I can't wait to share it with you. First, let's place our puzzle piece on the wall."

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Speaking of getting ready, we're going to play a game to get our hearts and minds ready for God's Word. Let's begin!"

## ENGAGE — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | Burlap or Linen Tunics (1 per team) | Leather Cording (1 per team) | Toy Grasshoppers (1 per child) | Small Paper Plates (1 per child) |



PURCHASE A (ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL) TUNIC OR CREATE ONE FROM BURLAP OR LINEN FABRIC BY FOLDING THE FABRIC IN HALF AND CUTTING A SPACE FOR THE CHILDREN TO PULL THE MATERIAL OVER THEIR HEADS. CUT THE CORDING INTO 36-INCH STRIPS.

Say, "Today, we will play a John the Baptist relay. To win, your team must be the fastest at putting on clothes like John the Baptist wore and making plates of food like he ate. Who is ready to play?"

**GAME GOAL:** To be the first team to have all players complete all relay tasks



MODEL HOW TO DO THE RELAY BEFORE YOU BEGIN.

### HOW TO PLAY:

1. Create two stations on one side of the room. The first station should have a stack of paper plates. The second station should contain toy grasshoppers. Space these stations at least four feet from one another.

2. Divide the class into at least two teams and have them form lines opposite from the stations.
3. Provide each team with a tunic and a piece of leather cording.
4. Explain when you say "Go," the first member from each team should put on the tunic and then tie the leather cording around their waists. Once the players have put on the two clothing items, they should grab a plate at the first station. Next, they should run to the second station, where they will place a grasshopper on their plate. Finally, they will run back to their team with the grasshopper on the plate.
5. When they return to their team, they should remove their clothing items and hand them to their teammate.
6. The process continues until all team members have completed the tasks.
7. The team to finish first wins.

**MODIFICATION:** Younger children may not be able to tie the leather cording. Leave this item off the relay list if needed.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "What a fun game! You were all super-fast, and I love how you worked together! Now, if you thought that was a strange relay, listen closely because it's all about to make sense."

## LEARN — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *John the Baptist Activity Pages* |



ALTHOUGH WE PROVIDE A WRITTEN SCRIPT OF THE LESSON, PREPARE BY PRAYING FOR YOUR KIDS, IMMERSING YOURSELF IN THE BIBLE PASSAGE, AND READING THE LESSON CONTENT SEVERAL TIMES THROUGHOUT THE WEEK. WHEN YOU SHARE FROM YOUR HEART, CHILDREN CONNECT BETTER WITH THE LESSON.

Say, "This is our third week learning about God's mercy. Do you remember what mercy means? [Allow for responses.] That's right! Mercy is not getting what we deserve. [Give examples of merciful acts. Review the BACKGROUND in Lesson 1 for more suggestions.] God loves us so much that He sent Jesus to die on the cross so that everyone who believes in Him can be saved. Today's story is about a man named John the Baptist. We learned a little about him last week. Do you remember the angel visiting Zechariah in the temple? What can you tell me about that story? [Allow for responses.]

"God told Zechariah that he and his wife would have a baby named John. John the Baptist, the man from today's story, was that baby! The angel explained that Zechariah's son would be God's special messenger and tell others about Jesus.

"What happened to Zechariah when he did not believe he and his wife could have a baby in their old age? [Allow for responses.] God took Zechariah's ability to speak until after John was born.

"The day of John's birth was a celebration! Friends and family came to see the new baby. These people said, 'Call him Zechariah after his father.'" Read Luke 1:60-64.

**60 But his mother said, "No! He will be named John." 61 The people said to Elizabeth, "But no one in your family has this name!" 62 Then they made signs to his father, "What would you like to name him?"**

**63 Zechariah asked for something to write on. Then he wrote, "His name is John." Everyone was surprised. 64 Then Zechariah could talk again. He began to praise God.**

Say, "John grew to be a strong man. He lived in the desert and wore clothes made of camel hair and a leather belt. He ate strange food like locusts [like grasshoppers] with honey." Remind the kids of the relay game they just played.

Show the children the *John the Baptist Activity Page (1)*. Ask them what they think about the man in the picture.

Ask, "I wonder what it was like to live in the desert and eat locusts and honey." Allow the children to imagine that kind of life.

Say, "Before we see what John did next, I want to show you another picture. [Show the children *John the Baptist Activity Page (2)*.] What do you think is happening in this picture? [Allow the children to share their thoughts.] John preached and told the people that God was about to send a King to save them. He told people they should repent. [Explain that to repent is to be sorry for sinning and to stop sinning]. Many people believed John, repented from their sins, and then John baptized them in water. This is why he is called John the Baptist."



IF YOUR KIDS DON'T REGULARLY SEE BAPTISMS OR IF YOU HAVE CHILDREN WHO ARE NEW TO CHURCH, TAKE A MOMENT TO EXPLAIN BAPTISM. FOR MORE ON THIS TOPIC, SEE OUR BONUS LESSON AT [WWW.IPHC.ORG/KIDS/KIDS-CURRICULUM/](http://WWW.IPHC.ORG/KIDS/KIDS-CURRICULUM/) FOR AN ENTIRE TEACHING ON THIS TOPIC.

Say, "One day, when John was baptizing people, Jesus came to the river and asked John to baptize Him. Whoa! Imagine you were John preaching and baptizing people when Jesus suddenly walked up. What do you think John thought? [Allow for responses.] Well, this is what happened." Read Matthew 3:13-17.

**13 At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River. He came to John and wanted John to baptize him. 14 But John tried to stop him. John said, "Why do you come to me to be baptized? I should be baptized by you!"**

**15 Jesus answered, "Let it be this way for now. We should do all things that are right." So John agreed to baptize Jesus.**

**16 Jesus was baptized and came up out of the water. Heaven opened, and he saw God's Spirit coming down on him like a dove. 17 And a voice spoke from heaven. The voice said, "This is my Son and I love him. I am very pleased with him."**

Ask, "Wow! Who can tell me what just happened in our story?" Have the children summarize in their own words to ensure they understand.

Say, "Isn't this a fantastic story about God's mercy? God was sending His people the perfect King! No, they didn't deserve this King, but God loved them so much that He sent Jesus [His Son] anyway. That is a reason to celebrate!"

**TRANSITION:** Say, "John obeyed God and preached the Good News that our merciful God was making a way for all people to be saved. Do you think God sent Jesus for you, too? [Allow for responses.] Yes! He did! God is merciful!"

## DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about the story you just heard."

### 1. What do you remember about Zechariah's story?

Response: Allow the children to summarize Zechariah's story in their own words.

### 2. What did God want John to do?

Response: John was one of God's great messengers. He was preaching about Jesus' coming.

### 3. Where did John live? What did he wear and eat?

Response: He lived in the desert. His clothes were made of camel's hair. He ate locusts and honey.

### 4. Why was John called John the Baptist?

Response: He baptized people in water.

### 5. Did John want to baptize Jesus?

Response: He didn't feel worthy (holy or important enough), but Jesus told Him God wanted him to do it.

### 6. What happened when John baptized Jesus?

Response: The Holy Spirit came down like a dove, and God the Father said from heaven, 'This is My Son.'

### 7. What do we learn about God from this lesson?

Response: **God is merciful.** God sent His Son, Jesus, to save us. God sent messengers like John the Baptist to prepare His people for Jesus, etc.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Great job discussing our story! Let's make something to take home to help you remember everything we've learned."

## RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *John the Baptist B & W* Activity Page (1 per child) | Cardstock | Brown Yarn | Scissors | Markers or Crayons | Glue Sticks |



BEFORE CLASS, PRINT THE *JOHN THE BAPTIST B & W* ACTIVITY PAGE ON CARDSTOCK. ALSO, PRECUT THE YARN INTO SHORT PIECES BETWEEN 0.5 INCHES AND 1 INCH.

Ask, "What do you remember about John the Baptist? [Allow for responses and then note that he lived in the desert, ate locusts and wild honey, and wore clothes made of camel's hair.] Good job! Let's create a picture you can take home to remind you of God's messenger, John the Baptist."

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Give each child a *John the Baptist B & W* Activity Page.
2. Have the children color the picture.
3. Help the kids glue the small pieces of yarn all over John's tunic.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Your pictures look great! Sometimes, God gives us special messengers, like John, who point us to Jesus. This is one more way we know how merciful God is!"

**MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES**

**MATERIALS:** | Grasshopper Toy | Music |

Say, "Let's practice this month's verse, and then we're going to play a game to help us remember today's story!"

**"The Lord** [point up] **is good** [give thumbs up] **to everyone** [spread arms wide open].  
**He is merciful** [hold both hands in front of you, palms up] **to all** [spread arms wide open] **he has made** [have your fists one on top of the other twisting slightly]."  
**Psalm 145:9, ICB** (hold hands out like a book)

**CHALLENGE:** Play "Grasshopper Musical Chairs" to help the children remember today's story.

**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Arrange the chairs facing out and in a circle. Include one chair for each child. Place a toy grasshopper on one of the chairs.
2. Start the music. The children will walk around the circle as long as the music plays. When you stop the music, the children should quickly take a seat. Whoever sits in the chair with the grasshopper is out for that round.
3. Remove a chair and continue playing until only one person is in the game.

**REFLECT — 5 MINUTES**

Say, "Even though we don't deserve it, God sent Jesus to die on the cross and take our punishment. God is good to us, He is kind to us, and He loves us more than we can imagine. **God is merciful!** Let's pray."

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** *"Heavenly Father, we are so grateful for Your mercy. Thank You for loving us and sending Jesus to be our Savior. Help us boldly share the Good News of Your mercy with our family and friends. In Jesus' name. Amen."*

**RELEASE —**

If you have extra time before the families arrive, replay the musical chairs game from this week's MEMORIZE.



**GOD PREPARES  
FOR THE NEW  
KING**

**WEEK 3**

**GOD IS  
MERCIFUL**



# JOHN ALONE





# JOHN BAPTIZING JESUS





# GOD SENDS THE NEW KING

## BIBLE PASSAGE

Luke 2:6-14 (ICB)

## BIG IDEA

God is Merciful

## FOCUS VERSE

"The Lord is good to everyone. He is merciful to all he has made."

Psalm 145:9 (ICB)

## LESSON MATERIALS

| Puzzle Piece | *Scavenger Hunt Cards* Activity Page | Tape | *Scavenger Hunt Checklist* Activity Pages | Cardstock | Crayons | *Baby Jesus* Activity Page | White and Brown Cardstock | Pencils | Scissors | Washable Markers | Glitter Pipe Cleaners |

## GREET — 15 MINUTES

Connection questions to ask as the children arrive:

- What is your favorite Christmas movie?
- Do you have a favorite Christmas song? What is it?

## WORSHIP — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Christmas is here! Advent and all its waiting is over; now it is time to celebrate!" Help the children understand that Christmas is more than stockings, candy, and gifts. Christmas is the day we celebrate our Savior's birth! So, make today's time together jubilant! Begin by singing your celebratory Christmas songs. Our favorites include "Joy to the World," "Hark the Herald Angels Sing," and "Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee."

## PRAY — 5 MINUTES

Pray with your children.

**Sample Prayer:** "Dear God, thank You for Christmas! Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus. You have given us so much more than we deserve, and we celebrate You today! Amen."

## REVIEW — 5 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | Puzzle Piece |

**BACKGROUND:** Say, "This is our Christmas lesson, and it is time to celebrate! God loves us so much that He had a plan from the very beginning to give us mercy by sending His Son to rescue us and make us His friends."

Use the puzzle pieces to review this month's lessons.

Say, "Three weeks ago, we learned that hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God sent a message through His prophets. He told the people that their King was coming! In lesson two, we learned about the angel who announced the birth of King Jesus to three different people. Do you remember who those people were? [Allow for responses.] Great! Yes, they were Zechariah, Mary, and Joseph.

"Last week, we learned about John the Baptist, whom God sent to tell people about Jesus. One day, John even got to baptize Jesus and hear God say, 'This is my Son!' Finally, we come to the day God's people had waited on for hundreds of years. Today, we get to celebrate Jesus' birth!"



REDIRECT TALKATIVE OR ENERGETIC CHILDREN BY GIVING THEM OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE. THESE BOYS AND GIRLS ARE FREQUENTLY OVERLOOKED FOR TASKS BUT OFTEN RISE TO THE OCCASION WHEN THEY BELIEVE AN ADULT TRUSTS THEM. SO, LOOK FOR WAYS TO INCORPORATE ALL YOUR KIDS IN CLASSROOM TASKS LIKE POSTING THE PUZZLE PIECE, HANDING OUT CRAFT SUPPLIES, ACTING OUT A BIBLE LESSON, OR LEADING IN THE MEMORY VERSE RECITATION.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Before we get to our lesson, let's play a game!"

## ENGAGE — 10 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *Scavenger Hunt Cards* Activity Page (1 per class) | Tape | *Scavenger Hunt Checklist* Activity Pages (1 list per team) | Cardstock | Crayons |



PRINT THE *SCAVENGER HUNT CARDS* ON CARDSTOCK AND CUT THEM OUT. THEN, BEFORE THE CHILDREN ARRIVE, HIDE CARDS IN VARIOUS PLACES THROUGHOUT THE CLASSROOM. IF POSSIBLE, LAMINATE THE CARDS SO THEY DO NOT TEAR. THIS WAY, YOU CAN ALSO KEEP THEM FOR FUTURE YEARS.

Say, "Raise your hand if you've ever done a scavenger hunt. Great! We have a special CHRISTMAS scavenger hunt today, and I can't wait to see how you do. Let's get started."

**GAME GOAL:** To be the first team to finish the scavenger hunt

### HOW TO PLAY:

1. Divide the children into small teams.
2. Give each team a *Scavenger Hunt Checklist* Activity Page and a crayon.
3. Explain that they will search the room for the *Scavenger Hunt Cards* that match the items on their *Scavenger Hunt Checklist*. Once they find an item, they should check it or circle it on their paper.
4. The first team to find every item wins.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "Wow, that was a fun! Wasn't it exciting to discover the missing cards? That excitement is nothing compared to how God's people must have felt when they discovered Jesus had come. They had been waiting on Him their whole lives! Let's read about this most wonderful day!"

## LEARN — 15 MINUTES

Say, "Christmas is here! It's time to celebrate Jesus' birth. Let's see what the Bible tells us about this special day.

"Mary and Joseph were on a long trip to Bethlehem when it was time for Jesus to be born. It was so crowded in the town that the only place Joseph could find for them to sleep was a stable [like a barn] where animals lived. When Baby Jesus arrived, Mary wrapped Him in warm cloths and laid him in a manger [a feeding trough for animals]." Read Luke 2:6-7.



WHENEVER THE LESSON QUOTES SCRIPTURE, READ DIRECTLY FROM YOUR BIBLE. CHILDREN NEED TO MAKE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN OUR RETELLING AND GOD'S WORDS.

**<sup>6</sup> While Joseph and Mary were in Bethlehem, the time came for her to have the baby. <sup>7</sup> She gave birth to her first son. There were no rooms left in the inn. So she wrapped the baby with cloths and laid him in a box where animals are fed.**

Ask, "What do you think that night was like for Mary and Joseph?" Allow for responses.



ENCOURAGE THE CHILDREN TO USE THEIR IMAGINATIONS TO ENTER INTO THE STORY AS THEY CONSIDER WHAT THESE EXPERIENCES WERE LIKE FOR MARY, JOSEPH, AND THE SHEPHERDS. YOU CAN HELP THEM DO THIS BY ASKING THEM TO CLOSE THEIR EYES AND IMAGINE THE SCENES.

Say, "On the same night, shepherds were in the fields watching their sheep when suddenly an angel came with the best news! The Savior had been born in Bethlehem! Listen closely as I read from God's Word. When I finish, I want you to tell me what the angels said about Jesus." Read Luke 2:8-14.

**<sup>8</sup> That night, some shepherds were in the fields nearby watching their sheep. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord stood before them. The glory of the Lord was shining around them, and suddenly they became very frightened. <sup>10</sup> The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid, because I am bringing you some good news. It will be a joy to all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today your Savior was born in David's town. He is Christ, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This is how you will know him: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a feeding box."**

**<sup>13</sup> Then a very large group of angels from heaven joined the first angel. All the angels were praising God, saying:**

**<sup>14</sup> "Give glory to God in heaven, and on earth let there be peace to the people who please God."**

Ask, "What did the angels say about Jesus?" [Allow for responses.] Emphasize the following information: 1) Jesus' birth was good news. 2) Jesus (God) came as a human baby. 3) The shepherds would find Jesus in a manger.

Say, "When the angels left, the shepherds agreed they should find the newborn baby, and that's what they did! They found the stable and saw Mary, Joseph, and Baby Jesus. They bowed and worshiped Him, then went and told everyone about everything that had just happened to them.

"All of this happened because God loves us. God is merciful! "

**TRANSITION:** Say, "God sent His Only Son to be our Savior! Aren't you thankful for God's mercy? He did that for you and me!"

## DISCUSS — 10 MINUTES

Say, "Let's talk about the story you just heard."

### 1. Where was Baby Jesus born?

Response: He was born in a stable.

### 2. Who visited the shepherds and told them about Jesus?

Response: Angels

### 3. How do you think the shepherds felt when they saw the angels? Why?

Response: Answers will vary.

### 4. Why did Jesus come to earth?

Response: He came to save us.

### 5. What have you learned about God today?

Response: **God is merciful.** God loves us. God sent His Son, Jesus, as a baby, etc.

**TRANSITION:** Say, "I am proud of how you listened to our story. Now, let's make something to remind us that **God is merciful.**

## RESPOND — 15 MINUTES

**MATERIALS:** | *Baby Jesus* Activity Page (1 image set per child) | White and Brown Cardstock | Pencils | Scissors | Washable Markers | Glitter Pipe Cleaners (1 per child) | Tape |

Say, "Today, we are going to make an ornament to remind us of the day God sent His Son, Jesus, to be with us. Let's get started!"



PRINT THE *BABY JESUS* ACTIVITY PAGE ON WHITE CARDSTOCK.  
PRE-CUT THE BABY IMAGES AND THE "STRAW" STRIPS.

### INSTRUCTION:

1. Trace around each child's hand onto the brown cardstock paper. Cut out the hand print. This will be the manger.

2. Color and glue the “straw” strips onto the hand print. It’s okay if they go off the edge. It will give the craft a 3-D effect.
3. Color the *Baby Jesus* image and glue it on the straw.
4. Cut a length of the glitter pipe cleaner and bend it to make an arch. Tape the bottom of the arch on the back of the hand print. This will serve as the ornament hanger.

**TRANSITION:** Say, “God is so merciful that He sent His only Son to save us by taking the punishment for our sins. We celebrate Christmas, remembering that this is why Jesus came! I hope you will think of God’s mercy whenever you look at your beautiful ornaments.”

## MEMORIZE — 5 MINUTES

Say, “This is the last day to practice this month’s memory verse. Who would like to lead the rest of us in saying it?”

**“The Lord** [point up] **is good** [give thumbs up] **to everyone** [spread arms wide open].  
**He is merciful** [hold both hands in front of you, palms up] **to all** [spread arms wide open] **he has made** [have your fists one on top of the other twisting slightly].”  
**Psalm 145:9, ICB** (hold hands out like a book)

**CHALLENGE:** Discuss the meaning and application of the verse together. Use the following questions to aid in conversation:

1. What do you think this verse means?
2. Do you have any questions about it?
3. Why should this verse make us happy?
4. How does Christmas remind us that **God is merciful** and good?

## REFLECT — 5 MINUTES

Say, “God loves us so much that He sent His Son, Jesus, to save us! That’s why we celebrate Christmas! I’m so glad Jesus came, aren’t you?”

**SAMPLE PRAYER:** “Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be born. We know He came because You love us and want us to be in Your family. Please help us love You more and more each day. Amen.”



AS ALWAYS, BE SENSITIVE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT AND ASK HIM TO DIRECT YOU THROUGHOUT THE LESSON. PRAY FOR YOUR CHILDREN DAILY AND ASK GOD TO OPEN THEIR EYES TO HIS GREAT MERCY.

## RELEASE — 5 MINUTES

If you have extra time before the parents arrive, celebrate Jesus’ birth with your favorite Christmas hymns and worship songs.



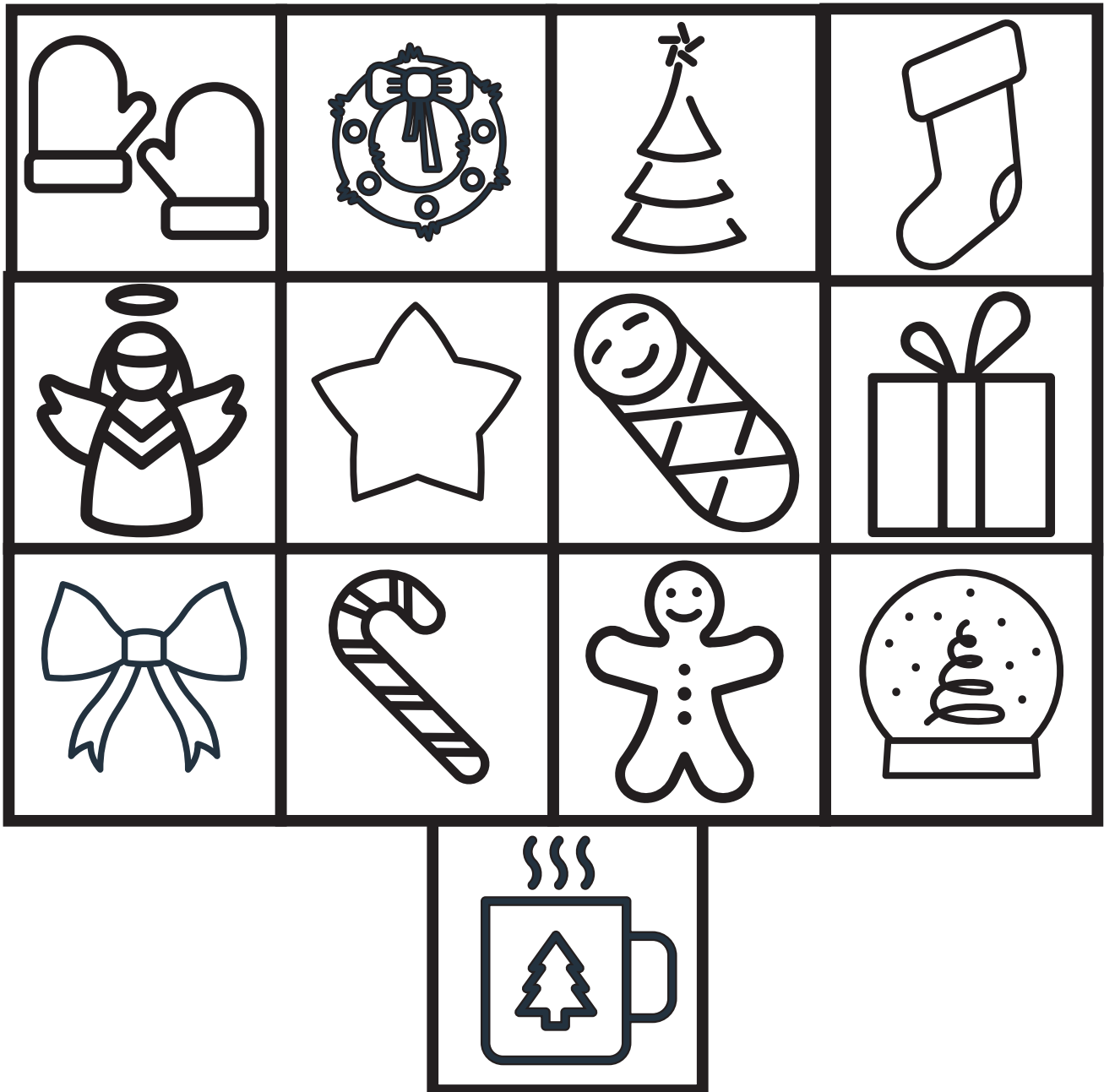
**GOD SENDS  
THE NEW  
RING**

**WEEK 4**

**GOD IS  
MERCIFUL**



# CHRISTMAS SCAVENGER HUNT CARDS



# Christmas Scavenger Hunt

## Checklist



# Christmas Scavenger Hunt

## Checklist



