

General Church Education



# Christmas: The Spread of the Lord's Word

Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:2, 6-7; Luke 1:65; 2:1-38

## Lesson 34

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 5: The Lord Is Our King

For ages 10-11

## Christmas: The Spread of the Lord's Word

Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:2, 6-7; Luke 1:65; 2:1-38

### Teacher Background

The Lord loves the human race and continually gives His Word so we can lead good lives and go to heaven. In most ancient times, the Lord communicated with people directly. His Word was passed orally from one generation to the next. But when people turned away, the Lord gave the Ancient Word. This was eventually corrupted. Some of it is found in ancient myths. Then the Lord gave the Jewish nation the Law and the Prophets, or the Old Testament. This revelation consists of laws that are to be obeyed, such as the Ten Commandments. But again, people stopped following the Lord, so He came to earth to restore His connection with people. The shepherds and the prophetess Anna saw the baby Lord and spread the good news of His coming. The gospel writers, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, wrote about His life. Their works are part of the New Testament. Long ago, monks copied these books, but when the printing press was invented Christians spread the Word throughout the world. We can also help to spread the good news of His coming.

### Focus Points

- The Lord always provides a revelation so people have the means to choose a good life.
- The Lord foretold His birth in the Old Testament, preparing people for His advent.
- The shepherds, Simeon and Anna witnessed the Lord's birth and shared the good news.

### Readings from the Writings

"The Lord's church is spread through the whole world; but its inmost is where the Lord is known and acknowledged, and where the Word is." *Apocalypse Explained* 313

"Religion existed from the most ancient times, and the inhabitants of all parts of the world knew about God, and something about life after death. This knowledge did not come from them themselves or their own intelligence, but from the ancient Word, and later on from the Israelites Word." *True Christian Religion* 275

"After the apostles had been given the Holy Spirit by the Lord, they preached the Gospel throughout much of the world, and spread the news of it by word of mouth and by their writings. They did this of themselves from the Lord." *True Christian Religion* 154

The Word could be written in our world, because writing existed here from the most ancient times. The Lord's providence caused this for the sake of the Word. The Word could then be circulated, because all people here are connected by travels to every part of the globe. Thus the Word could be spread everywhere. See *Earths and the Universe* 115, 116

## Teacher Activity Overview

The lesson offers the following choices:

### Recitation

Learn the Lord's Word by heart.

"Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds." (Luke 2:17-18)

### Projects and Activities (see back of lesson for answers)

Finish Sentences about the Christmas Story

Try to fill in words missing from the Christmas Story without looking!

The Spread of the Lord's Word Christmas Tree Ornament

The greatest Christmas gift of all time was the Lord being born on earth and giving us His Word. Make a Christmas tree ornament showing how the Lord's Word spread around the world.

Christmas Songs

Listen to Christmas songs online.

O Holy Night

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-o-holy-night-one-verse/>

Silent Night

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-silent-night-holy-night/>

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-hark-the-herald-angels-sing-2/>

### Additional Project and Activity Choices

Open Word Snowflake

Follow directions to make a snowflake showing the open Word. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-open-word-snowflake-pattern.pdf>

The Lord Is with Us in the Word Hanging

Make a hanging that shows the Lord connecting with people through the Word. Online at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/file/project-the-lord-is-with-us-in-the-word-hanging-john-1.pdf>

# Christmas: The Spread of the Lord's Word

Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:2, 6-7; Luke 1:65; 2:1-38

## Vocabulary

**eternal**—lasting for ever, even after death

**revelation**—knowledge that the Lord gives to people

**Savior**—a person who saves others from danger or difficulty

The Lord wants us to be happy here on earth, and in heaven forever. Whenever things become dark so that people do not know what is good and evil the Lord provides a revelation so people can choose to live a good life. In ancient times the Lord communicated directly with people. People knew right and wrong as soon as they learned it, and they happily obeyed.

## The Lord Does not Give up on People

When people decided they knew how to live their lives better than the Lord did, He provided the Ancient Word. At first people shared the Ancient Word by word of mouth from one generation to the next. In this way the Lord was with people and they knew how to live a good life. Eventually, this Word was written down, and spread throughout much of the world.

In time, people lost their faith in the Lord and chose evil over good. They turned the Ancient Word into stories where different gods performed the work that the Lord does. Many ancient myths come from these changes to the Ancient Word.

## The Old Testament



When this happened the Lord knew people needed a new revelation so they could choose right from wrong. So the Lord gave the Old Testament, which teaches the history of the children of Israel. People learned how the Lord could be present with them as they obeyed His Word. They experienced many hardships when they did not do what the Lord commanded.

## The Lord Raised up Prophets

In time, prophets warned Judah and Israel that if they did not follow Him Judah and Israel would be destroyed.



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They also gave hope by prophesying that the Lord would come on earth to save them. Sadly, despite knowing these prophesies people forgot the Lord's laws.

### **The Lord Was Born as a Baby**

Once again, the Lord gave a new revelation. This time He came on earth as a heavenly king to teach what is true Himself. He was born in a humble stable and laid in a manger. His mother, Mary, was a young woman who was willing to be part of this great miracle.

A few humble shepherds were ready to receive the Lord at His birth. They were overjoyed when they heard the news of His birth! They hurried to see the baby Jesus and then spread the good news of His birth. Others marveled when they heard the amazing news.

Mary and Joseph raised Jesus in the Jewish faith. He was circumcised and given a name on the appointed day. They took Him to the temple as the law required.

“Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.” (Luke 2:22)



### **Many Were Waiting for the Savior**

The Lord led Simeon, an old man, into the temple while Mary and Joseph were there. The Lord had promised he would see the Lord's Christ before he died. Imagine how he felt knowing he was seeing and holding the Savior promised in the prophesies.

“A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.” (Luke 2:32)

A prophetess named Anna was also ready to receive Jesus. She too was in the temple serving God. She gave thanks for the Lord's birth.

Far away in the east three wise men who knew the prophesies followed a star and brought special gifts to the savior.

“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and

worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” (Matthew 2:11)

Then they returned to their own country, where they may have spread the good news too.

### **The Lord's Life Was Written Down**

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote down the story of the Lord's life in the Gospels. Their stories became part of the Word. Along with the Book of Revelation, which tells of the Lord's second coming, these books form the New Testament.

People who follow the Lord have spread the Old and the New Testaments all over the earth. People who believe in Jesus Christ are called Christians and belong to the Christian Church. Jesus sent out His disciples to spread His Word throughout the earth.

“And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.’” (Mark 16:15)

To begin with, monks carefully copied the Word. When the printing press was invented people made many more copies of the Word. Explorers took these books all over the world, and as people settled in new lands they took the Word with them. More recently missionaries have taken it to places where ancient religions are practiced. The Word is now found almost everywhere on earth!

### **We Can Help the Lord Spread His truths**

The Lord wants all people to have the chance to choose heaven. Reading and listening to His Word helps people to make this choice. The Lord asks us to share our beliefs in His Word as the shepherds did during the first Christmas. The main reason He came into our world was:

“...for the sake of the Word, in that it could be written on our earth, and when written could then be published throughout the whole earth; and once published could be preserved for all posterity.” (*Arcana Coelestia* 9351)

We can be like the shepherds and others who have spread the good news as we learn about the Lord and find ways to tell people about Him.



## Activity Overview

### Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

“Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds.” (Luke 2:17-18)

### Projects and Activities (answers are at the back of this lesson)

Choose one or two.

Finish Sentences about the Christmas Story

Try to fill in words missing from the Christmas Story without looking!

The Spread of the Lord's Word Christmas Tree Ornament

The story of the Lord's birth traveled all over the world so that people could know and love Him. Make an ornament that shows the spread of the Lord's Word.

Christmas Songs

Listen to Christmas songs online.

O Holy Night

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-o-holy-night-one-verse/>

Silent Night

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-silent-night-holy-night/>

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

<https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-hark-the-herald-angels-sing-2/>

## Finish Sentences about the Christmas Story

Luke 2

You are probably familiar with the Christmas story. Try to fill in the missing words below without looking at the Bible. It is from the part of the story when the angels appear to the shepherds in the field. If you need, help, turn to Luke 2:10-15.

**Then the angel said to them:**

Do not be \_\_\_\_\_, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great \_\_\_\_\_, which will be to all \_\_\_\_\_.

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the \_\_\_\_\_.

And this will be a \_\_\_\_\_ unto you: You will find the babe wrapped in \_\_\_\_\_ cloths, lying in a \_\_\_\_\_.”

**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:**

\_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_,

And on \_\_\_\_\_ peace, \_\_\_\_\_ toward men!”

**So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another:**

Let us go now to \_\_\_\_\_ and see this thing that has come to pass,

which the Lord has made \_\_\_\_\_ to us.



## The Spread of the Lord's Word Christmas Tree Ornament

Make a Christmas tree ornament showing how the Lord's Word spread around the world.

### Materials Needed

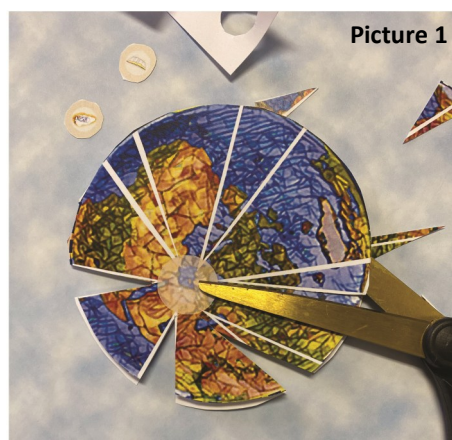
template on the following page

scissors

tape

### Directions

1. Cut around the circles on the dashed lines. Try not to cut the circles apart.
2. Cut out the small pictures of the Lord and the Word.
3. Cut out the white lines, stopping at the circle (see picture1).
4. Glue or tape the picture of the Lord on one side of the ornament.
5. Tape or glue the picture of the Word on the other side of the ornament.
6. Tape the ornament at the edges (see picture 2).
7. Display the ornament on a Christmas tree, as shown above.



Spread of the Lord’s Word Christmas Tree Ornament Templates



# Answers

## Lesson 34

Finish Sentences about the Christmas Story

**Then the angel said to them:**

Do not be **afraid**, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great **joy**, which will be to all **people**.

For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the **Lord**.

And this will be a **sign** unto you: You will find the babe wrapped in **swaddling** cloths, lying in a **manger**.”

**And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”**

**So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another:** Let us go now to **Bethlehem** and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made **known** to us.