

28.06 Birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1-7)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- A plastic cup or measuring cup with a mark on it indicating a full cup. Water to fill the cup to various points as you teach the lesson.
- Bands of white fabric and a doll. Wrap the doll in “swaddling clothes” at the appropriate point in the story

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach:

- *Palestine*: the name of the land we have always called Israel
- *census*: counting the people. Every ten years in the United States, the government counts all the people in the country. Sometimes governments take a census in order to know how much to tax people.
- *tax*: the money paid to a government to pay for its services, like army protection, education, salaries for government heads, *etc.*
- *ancestors*: great-, great-, great-, great-, grandfathers and great, great-, great-, great-, grandmothers
- *manger*: the trough where hay for the animals is placed

Introduction/Review:

Who do you suppose is the most famous mother of all history? If you say, Mary, the mother of Jesus, I would agree with you. In fact, she is so honored that some religions actually worship her. Should people worship Mary? [No.] Why not? [Because she is a human, not a god.] Yet, when the angel Gabriel came to tell Mary that she would bear the Christ, he said she was blessed among women. She was the most blessed of any women who ever lived because God caused her to bear His Son, Jesus Christ.

Story:

Galatians 4:4 states, “When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.” “*The fullness of time*” means when the time was full or perfectly complete or ready. [Show measuring cup.] If I say, “When I fill the water up to the top line, today’s lesson will be complete,” will the lesson be done if I put water up to this line? [Put water in to come to the quarter cup line.] The answer is no. Water to this line is not the full line. If a full cup of water shows us when Jesus was born, the rest of the cup shows us time in the Old Testament. This line [indicate 1/4 mark] might indicate the places in the Old Testament when God prophesied things like, “A virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

Babylon, Persia, Greece

If I put more water in this cup (up to the half mark), would the lesson be over? Would the fullness of time be here? No. Water to this line might compare to the time when Daniel prophesied to Nebuchadnezzar that the statue he dreamed of represented the future kingdoms of the world. [Show picture found at the end of this lesson.] The head of gold was Babylon—Nebuchadnezzar and other Babylonian kings, when the people of Israel were scattered everywhere throughout the known world. Was the time of Babylon the “fullness of time”? [No.]

[Pour water to the 5/8 mark.] The chest of silver was Persia, the kingdom that defeated Babylon, one of

whose kings was Cyrus, whom God had said would let Israel go back into its own land. Was this the “fullness of time”? [No.]

[Pour water to the 3/4 mark.] The belly and thighs of bronze (*brass* in the KJV) represented Greece, when Alexander the Great and others spread one language and culture throughout the known world. Was this the “fullness of time”? [No.]

Rome

[Pour water to the 7/8 mark.] Oh, is it the fullness of time yet? [No.] Is it getting close to the fullness of time? [Yes.] Look at Nebuchadnezzar’s image again. Only one more kingdom would rule the known world before Jesus would be born, and that kingdom was Rome. Was this the “fullness of time”? Well, almost.

The ruler over all the Roman kingdom was named Caesar Augustus. He wanted to see how many people were in his kingdom, particularly in Palestine; so he ordered a census in order to levy a tax on these people. In this census people didn’t just fill out a paper and mail it in. No. Every person was commanded to go to the city where his ancestors had been born and lived.

✓“Don’t let me hear any excuses,” the census man might have said. “I don’t care if your wife is almost ready to have a baby. Joseph, you have to go to Bethlehem because your grandfather twenty-five times removed was David and David lived in Bethlehem.”

Bethlehem

✓I don’t think Joseph—who had married Mary after the angel told him that Mary’s baby was the Son of God—I don’t think Joseph complained. But if I had been he, I might have said something like, ✓“Look, I live clear up here in Nazareth. Bethlehem is 80 miles away. Even if Mary rides a donkey, and we travel twenty miles a day [from Lamar to Hasty; Teacher, give a comparable distance from your town], it will take us at least four to seven days to walk so far. This is too much to expect of a woman who is about to have a baby!”

However, Joseph did not complain. The prophecy of Micah 5:2 had stated, “But you, Bethlehem . . . Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel.” From this prophecy anyone who knew anything about the coming Christ knew that Bethlehem would be the town where Messiah would be born. God moved an emperor way far away in Rome to say, “Go to the town of your ancestors,” in order to get Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem. God does amazing things!

Stable

So, Joseph and Mary made the four-to-seven-day journey, but lots of other people who didn’t normally live in Bethlehem had to come back to Bethlehem too. ✓Perhaps Joseph went to the homes of his Bethlehem relatives and asked to stay in their guest room. No, there was no room; they could not stay there. But down below, in the storage room where the animals stayed—that would be a room separated from the rest of the house where Mary could deliver her baby in privacy. [Teacher, this view, based on the Greek word *kataluma* is not the usual interpretation, and I have not researched it except for reading a couple of web sites. One site is <http://blog.bibleplaces.com/2006/12/in-typical-christmas-pageant-one-of.html>. See * below for a short explanation.]

Birth of Jesus

There, with the animals nearby, Mary brought forth her firstborn son and laid Him in a manger. Actually, just as all Hebrew women did, she first washed Him in water, then rubbed him with salt and oil, and then wrapped him up in cloths that the Bible calls “*swaddling clothes*.” These were bands of cloth that held the arms of the baby close to his body and also kept the baby warm. Mothers today often wrap their newborn infants tightly in blankets. This is a kind of swaddling.

On that day Mary must have felt a special love beyond the wonderful love of most mothers as she held the

Baby Jesus, the Son of God in her arms. We thank our mothers for life, but we can even more thank God that He sent His Son through a mother, Mary, so that we might have eternal life.

[Fill the cup to the top mark.] Yes, “when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman.” Thank You, God, for Jesus.

*” The upper area was the place where Jewish families lived and slept. The lower area was a place where more of the day-to-day work of the house was done and where animals that needed a little extra protection were kept. It is in this lower area that Jesus was likely born. When we read that there was “no place for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7), we often think of a hotel or similar. However, the Greek word behind the word translated as “inn” is *katalyma*, which simply means “lodging place, resting place, or guest room”. This likely refers to the upper living area. Therefore, Mary and Joseph were forced to stay in the lower living area, where animals were often kept, which is why there is a manger present (<https://theologicallyspeaking.com/2009/12/19/were-you-born-in-a-barn-neither-was-jesus/>).

Lessons from this lesson:

- God always keeps His promises. His timing is not ours. His is always exactly right. Jesus came in the fullness of time.

Activities:

- Play dough: baby; swaddling strips
- Sing “Away in a Manger.”
- Sing the names of the New Testament books to the tune, “Happy Birthday to You.”
- Finger play: (copied)

A stable (*make “house” with hands*); a manger (*make box with hands*); a baby (*cradle “baby”*);
With animals all around (*arms outstretched*).

The baby is sleeping (*folded hands against cheek*).

Let’s tiptoe (*walk on tiptoes*), and not even make a sound (*Shhhh!*)

Who is the baby? It’s Jesus,

God’s Son, sent from heaven above (*point to heaven*).

Why did He come down from heaven?

To tell us of God’s love! (*point to heaven*).

- Sort pictures taken from Christmas cards into Bible Christmas and non-Bible Christmas.
- Sing this slightly silly song, “Clean the Stable,” by Jill Kemp (tune: “My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean”).

I don’t want to sweep out the stable (*stamp foot*)

Or get the water today.

Do I have to get hay for the manger (*hands on hips*)?

I just want to go out and play.

Who cares if I sweep out the stable (*palms up*)?

Who cares if there’s water today?

Who cares if there’s hay in the manger?

I just want to go out and play.

Who’s this fast asleep in the stable (*pointing*)?

Whose donkey is staying today?

Whose baby is this in the manger?

It’s Jesus asleep in the hay (*Shhh*).

Memory Verse[s]:

- John 1:1-14:

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
- 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.
- 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
- 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
- 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth

Handwork:

- Print on card stock the baby and manger found below. Students may color and cut out the pieces.
- Make a Mother's Day card. Cut 4x12-inch strips of colored poster board (or backer boards from your greeting card merchandiser friend). Glue a strip of green paper (or draw a stem with green crayon), and glue or draw green narrow leaves at the base of the stem. Glue a cupcake paper at the top of the stem and a yellow center inside the cupcake paper. On the back side of the card, glue the words found at the end of this lesson.

Palestine

census

tax

ancestors

manger

Nebuchadnezzar's Statue

Daniel 2

Rock
Jesus Christ

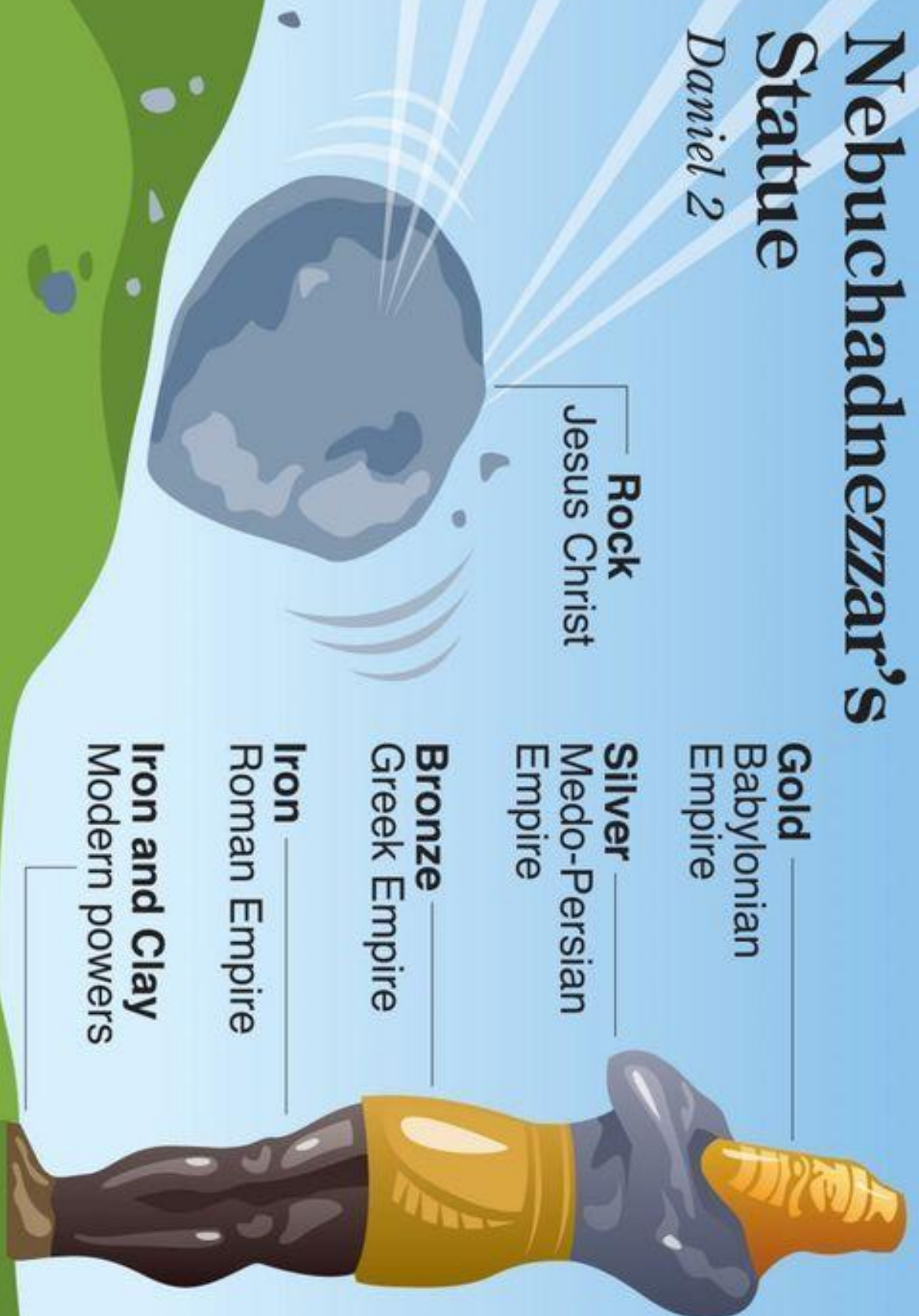
Gold _____
Babylonian
Empire

Silver _____
Medo-Persian
Empire

Bronze _____
Greek Empire

Iron _____
Roman Empire

Iron and Clay
Modern powers



Away in a Manger, but Not in a Barn

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**Typical 1st Century AD
Jewish Home**

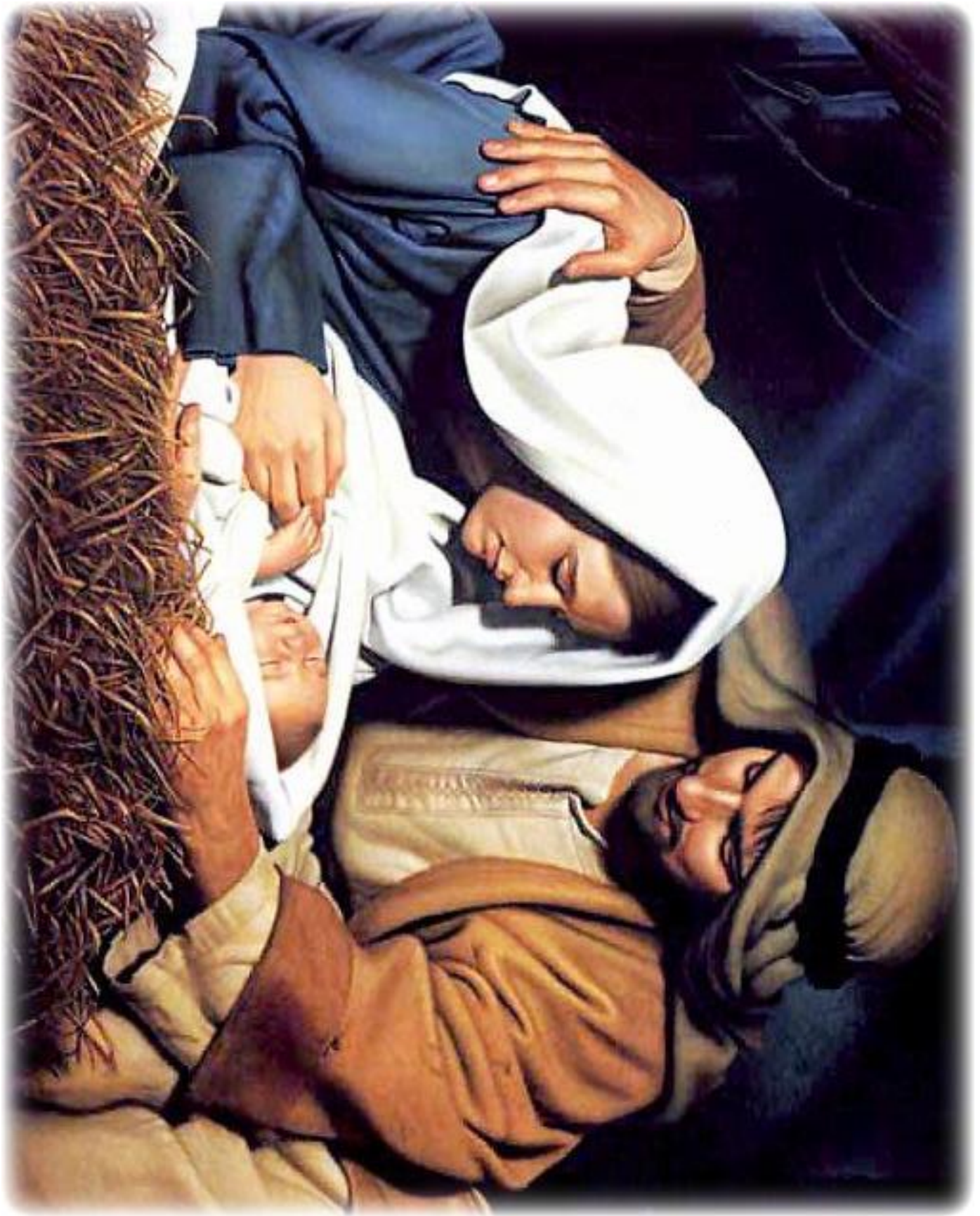
Living and Sleeping Quarters

Daytime Living Quarters
where vulnerable or especially
valuable animals were stored at night

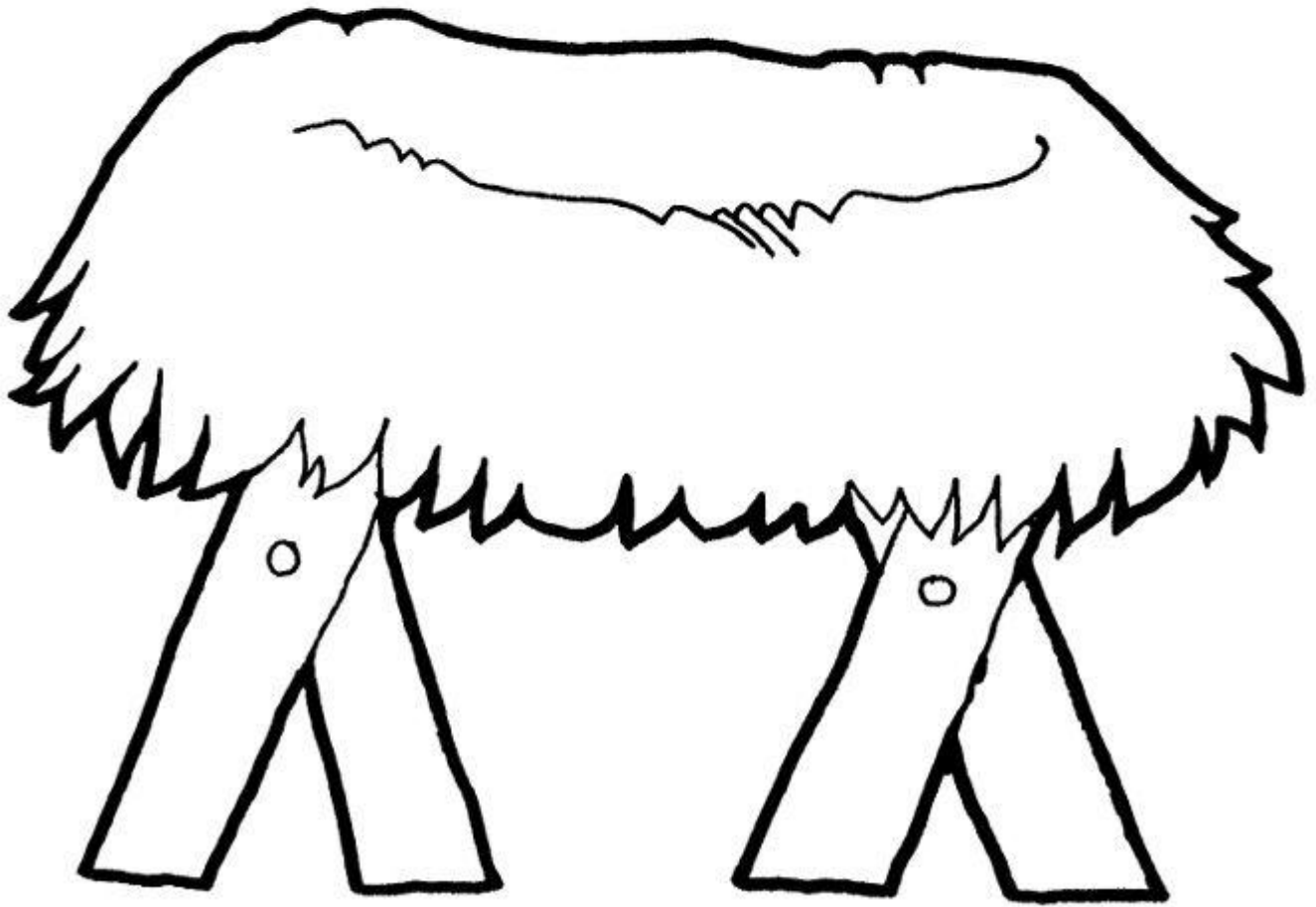
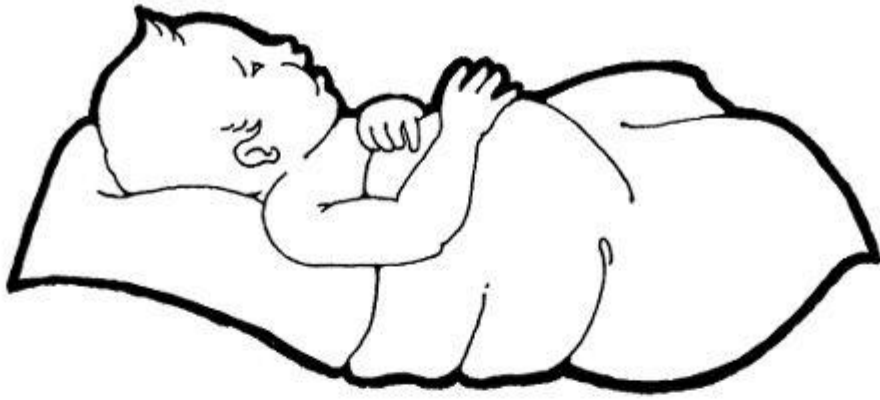


<https://www.pinterest.com/eugeneborg/bible-nt-mary-joseph/?lp=true>





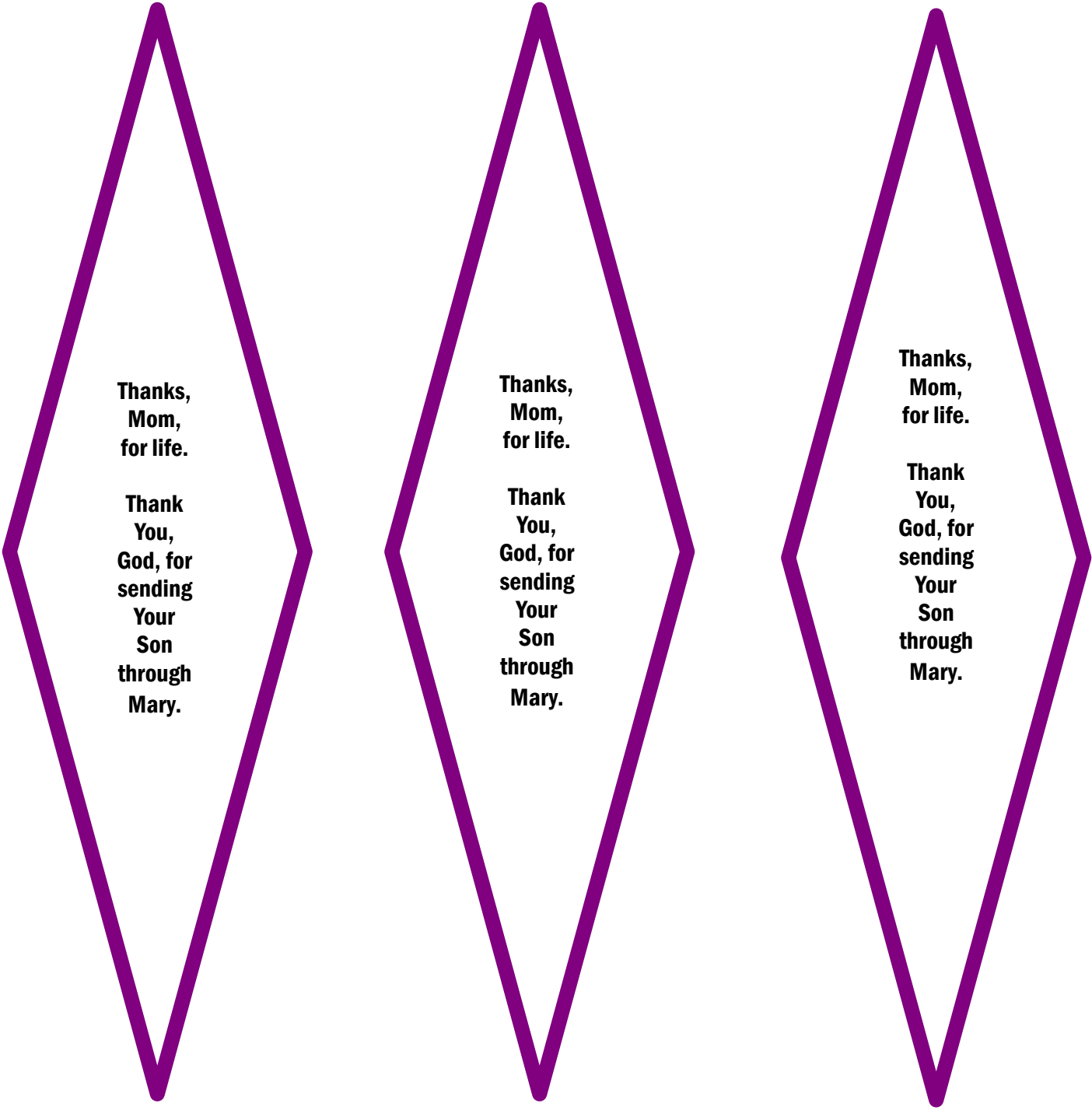
https://www.tes.com/lessons/yFE0eum_eQ5fXg/matthew-s-story-of-the-birth-of-jesus





<http://www.preschoolactivities.us/flower-craft-idea-for-kids/cupcake-liner-flower-craft/>

Handwork illustration



**Thanks,
Mom,
for life.**

**Thank
You,
God, for
sending
Your
Son
through
Mary.**

**Thanks,
Mom,
for life.**

**Thank
You,
God, for
sending
Your
Son
through
Mary.**

**Thanks,
Mom,
for life.**

**Thank
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