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An introduction to the *Salvation* syllabus, including hints and tips for running lessons, can be found in the file 'Salvation introduction.pdf' on the *Teaching Little Ones: Salvation* CD-ROM.

A list of all activity materials, including photographs, can be found in the file 'Activity materials.pdf' on the *Teaching Little Ones: Salvation* CD-ROM.

More information about teaching Sunday School to young children can be found in Stephanie Carmichael's book, *Their God is so BIG*, available from Matthias Media. For more details visit www.matthiasmedia.com.au.

The Saviour is born

Bible reference...

Matthew 1:18-25

Lesson aim...

To talk about Jesus being born and to look at it a bit differently, especially focussing on the angel's words to Joseph about Jesus.

The words the angel says are key in understanding why Jesus came—to 'save his people from their sins'. This concept has been talked about in Unit 6. Try to make sure that the children in your class understand this concept. You may need to give a fuller explanation in the lesson, or even refer back to material you covered in Unit 6.

Main message...

Before Jesus was born, the angel said that Jesus would save his people from their sins.

Memory verse...

Psalm 100, verse 3, 'He made us, and we belong to him'. See page 147 for actions and page 148 for a copy of the verse.

Vocabulary...

angel—a messenger from God. What an angel says is a message from God.

'he will save his people from their sins' (Matthew 1:21)—in brief it means that Jesus saved us from the punishment (for our sin) that should have been for us. This is expanded on in the *Story* and is something that we continue to learn about for the rest of our lives.

Story preparation...

For the *Introduction* bring in some popular children's books. For the *Story*, print pages 150-152. Tape the left hand side of page 151 overlapping the right hand side of page 150 (to make one long sheet out of the two). Colour and cut out the pictures on page 152 and tape them on as flaps over the rectangles on pages 150-151 matching the lower edge of each flap with the lower edge of the boxes on pages 150-151. Lift each flap where indicated as you tell the story.

Introduction...

[*Show some popular children's books and talk about the fact that even when you have heard or read a story lots of times, there can be new things to learn when you read it again. Give an example using one of the books you brought in, saying something like this...*]

"Here's a book which was one of my favourites when I was a child. My Mum read it to me lots of times and then, when I could read, I read it lots of times. But even though I knew

it quite well, there were still new things for me to learn, like on this page... [*give an example of something you realised after reading the book often—something you didn't know to begin with*].

“You have probably heard today’s story lots of times before, so we’re going to look at it a bit differently today. Let’s see if we can learn some new things today.”

Story...

“The Christmas story of Jesus being born is real, it’s true. It really happened and we can read about it in Matthew chapter 1 which is the very beginning of the New Testament part of the Bible [*show in the class Bible*]. Let’s see the interesting things that Matthew chapter 1 tells us about the people in the Christmas story.

[*lift flap over Mary*]

Mary

—was going to marry Joseph

—she was going to have God’s Son

—this was promised in the Bible hundreds of years before it happened

[*lift flap over Joseph*]

Joseph

—was a man who always did what is right

—he was related to King David (which means that King David is his great, great and lots more greats, grandfather).

—an angel spoke to him

—he married Mary

[*lift flap over the angel*]

The angel

—spoke to Joseph in a dream

—told Joseph to marry Mary

—told Joseph he would have a son called ‘Jesus’

—told Joseph that his name will be Jesus ‘because he will save his people from their sins’

[lift flap over Jesus]

Jesus

—will save his people from their sins.

—will also be called ‘Immanuel’, which means ‘God with us’ (because he is God’s Son)

Please note: when I wrote this story, it did strike me that I hadn’t realised before what the angel said in verse 21. I can’t tell you how many times I’ve read Matthew 1:18-25, but there you are. So the following is true for me.

“I wonder if any of you heard something just now about Jesus being born that you didn’t know before? I’m going to tell you what I learnt from Matthew chapter 1. I didn’t know that the angel told Joseph that ‘Jesus...will save his people from their sins’.

“Now let’s talk about what it means to ‘save people from their sins’. A while ago we talked about sin and how we all sin, or disobey God. Then we talked about the punishment for disobeying God. The punishment for sin is death and being away from God forever. But Jesus died in our place—he was punished by God instead of us. That is what it means by ‘save people from their sins’. It means Jesus saved us from the punishment that should have been for us. Just like someone being saved from a fire, or saved from a sinking boat [or any relevant examples to the children in your class], we are saved from the punishment that should have been for us. We are saved from being kept out of heaven and instead we can be forgiven and be God’s friends and live in heaven with Jesus forever. Because Jesus saves us he is called our ‘Saviour’—we’ll hear more about that next week.

“So why did the angel say before Jesus was even born that he ‘will save his people from their sins’? Because that is why Jesus was born in our world. He came to ‘save his people from their sins’.”

Conclusion...

“When Jesus was born, Joseph did name him Jesus just like the angel said. God’s Son was named Jesus because he was going to ‘save his people from their sins’.

What about us?...

“We’ve just read that the angel said Jesus ‘will save his people from their sins’. The angel didn’t say that Jesus will save everyone from their sins. Jesus could save everyone, but not everyone wants Jesus to save them. The sad thing is that even though Jesus gave up living in heaven for a time and came to live on earth and then die, even though Jesus did all that, many people don’t want to know about it. Instead of thanking Jesus, many people say ‘no’ to Jesus—they don’t want Jesus to save them.

“God wants us to say ‘thank you’ for Jesus. God wants us to say ‘sorry’ for our sins and ask God to forgive us. This isn’t something that we say once and forget about it. God wants us to say ‘sorry’ and ‘thank you’ lots of times—we have so much to thank God for. We can especially thank God for sending Jesus so we can be God’s friends.”

Pray...

Thanking God that Jesus came so that we could be friends with him, saved from our sins.

Activity suggestions...

1. *Picture page*

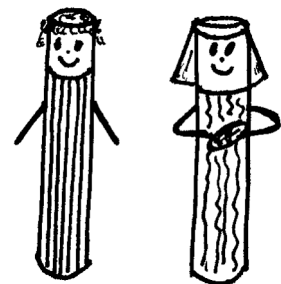
Before the lesson, print page 153 for each child. In the lesson, read the caption and talk about what the children could draw. The children then draw a picture.

2. *Flap page*

Before the lesson, print pages 150-151 for each child, and tape the ends together (with the left hand side of page 151 overlapping the right hand side of page 150). Cut out the pictures on page 152 and place them in an envelope for each child. In the lesson, the children colour the pictures. Then the children, with the teacher’s help, tape the pictures on as flaps over the rectangles on pages 150-151 matching the lower edge of each flap with the lower edge of the boxes on page 150-151.

3. *Cardboard roll puppets*

Each child will need two cardboard rolls (or polystyrene cups or yoghurt pots) to make Mary and Joseph. Before the lesson, you will need to gather together fabric scraps, coloured paper, wool, pipe cleaners, doilies, patty cases, and whatever else you can think of that would be useful, and print page 149 and cut out a caption for each child. In the lesson, the children use their imagination and the materials provided to turn one roll into Mary and one into Joseph. One or two pipe cleaner/s need to be taped onto Mary as her arms and then baby Jesus is attached to her arms. For baby Jesus, roll a tissue or paper towel into a tight ball, secure with cellotape and then either curl the pipe cleaner around the ‘baby’ or tape the ‘baby’ onto the pipe cleaner. Attach the caption onto the back of Mary.



4. Musical instruments

This activity is suitable for younger children with teacher direction. This can be a fairly free activity, or you could choose one 'instrument' for the children to all make in a more directed way. Before the lesson print page 149 and cut out a caption for each child. For the lesson, you will need a variety of recycled containers including plastic take-away containers, plastic drink bottles (with lids), small cream cartons or plastic bottles, small boxes from packaging like toothpaste boxes, tissue boxes, cardboard rolls etc. You will also need an assortment of 'things' like string, rubber bands, paper and cardboard scraps and paper plates, as well as a packet of dried beans or rice to use inside shakers.

In the lesson, the children each design and make their own musical instrument. Probably the most common will be variations of a shaker, or an elastic band guitar and a drum. You will have to warn the children of the time available before they begin their creations. The fast workers can decorate their creations, while the slower workers can just try to finish in time.

You could have stickers for them to add to their instruments. You could give each child a page of blank computer labels to 'scribble on' (for young children) or draw patterns or stripes (for older children). Once decorated, the labels could be attached to the instruments. Finally, add the caption on page 149 to each instrument.

Memory verse...

Psalm 100, verse 3, 'He made us, and we belong to him'.

Actions to accompany verse:

He	<i>point up with right hand</i>
made	<i>point up with left hand</i>
us	<i>point to self with both hands</i>
and we	<i>point twice (once on each word) to self again</i>
belong to	<i>point up with right hand</i>
him	<i>point up with left hand</i>



Psalm 100, verse 3,

'He made us, and
we belong to him.'

Caption for activity #3:

Mary 'will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.' Matthew 1 verse 21	Mary 'will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.' Matthew 1 verse 21	Mary 'will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.' Matthew 1 verse 21	Mary 'will have a son, and you will name him Jesus—because he will save his people from their sins.' Matthew 1 verse 21
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Caption for activity #4:

Thank you God for Jesus and that he came to 'save his people from their sins'. Matthew 1, verse 21	Thank you God for Jesus and that he came to 'save his people from their sins'. Matthew 1, verse 21	Thank you God for Jesus and that he came to 'save his people from their sins'. Matthew 1, verse 21
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Who's who in the story of

Mary

- was going to marry Joseph
- she was going to have God's Son
- this was promised in the Bible hundreds of years before it happened

Joseph

- was a man who always did what is right
- he was related to King David
- an angel spoke to him
- he married Mary

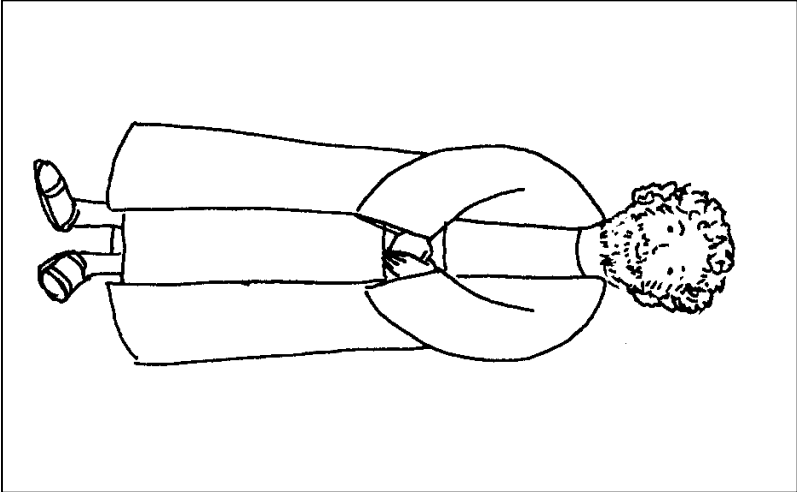
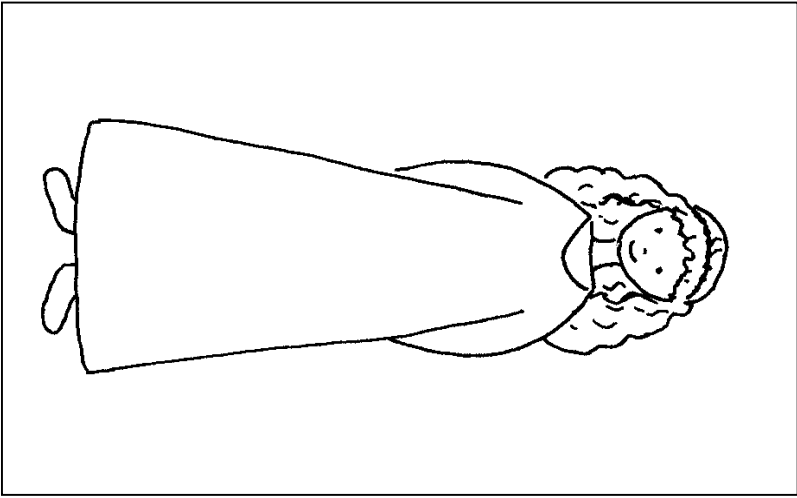
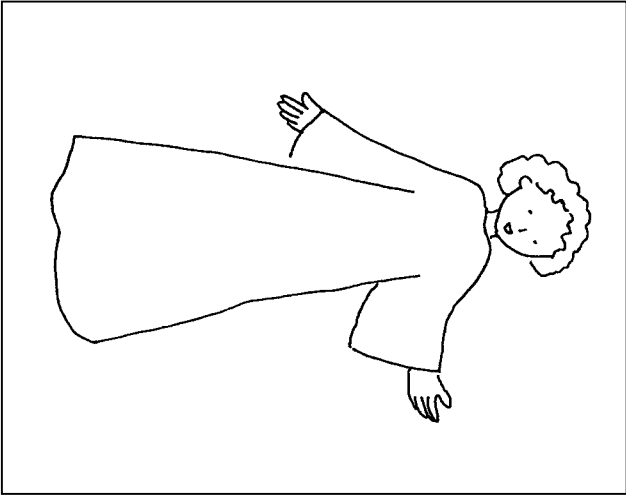
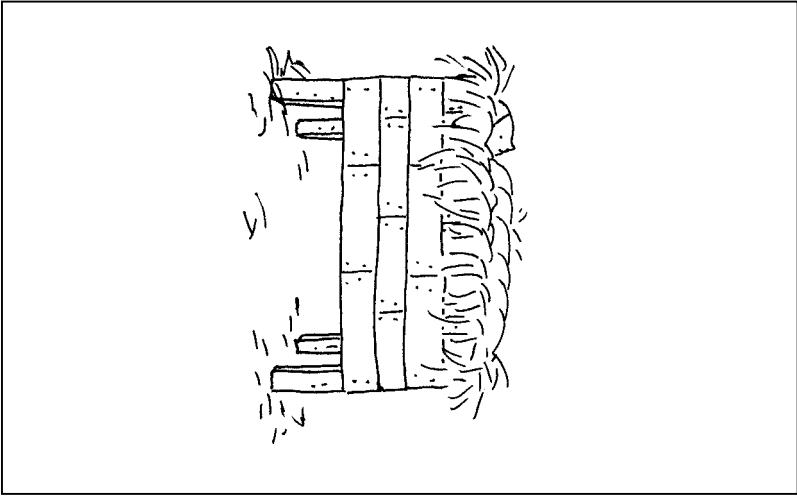
Jesus' birth. Matthew 1 verses 18-25

The Angel

- spoke to Joseph in a dream
- told Joseph to marry Mary
- told Joseph he would have a son called 'Jesus'
- told Joseph that his name will be Jesus 'because he will save his people from their sins'

Jesus

- will save his people from their sins
- will also be called 'Immanuel', which means 'God with us' (because he is God's Son)



Today we heard about the Christmas story from Matthew 1, verses 18-25.

We heard that the angel told Joseph,
"Mary will have a son and you will name him Jesus—
because he will save his people from their sins."