

## THE ISLAND

LEADER	DATE (am) 07 December 08
HELPERS	TIME (mins) 40 minutes
PUPPETEER	No. of KIDS (m/f)

- **SERIES / LESSON:** Christmas Traditions / Jesus is born
- **SCRIPTURE REFERENCE:** Luke 2:1-7
- **CONCEPT:** God always keeps His promises

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To help kids realise that God always keeps His promises by recapping the fulfilment of the prophecy of the Saviour being born in Bethlehem.
- To challenge kids to imagine the reality of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and the birth of their baby in the stable.
- To lead kids into a prayer time and help them understand that God listens.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Table or desk
- ✓ Large sheet of paper, printed with The Island logo, on which to record your census (included in materials)
- ✓ A fun pen for recording the census
- ✓ DVD player / laptop / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Song DVD
- ✓ Treasure chest with angel cake inside (from last week's story)
- ✓ Map of Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem (use a map in your Bible, or make your own large-scale map – be creative! See photos below.)
- ✓ Graphic – baby Jesus in the manger
- ✓ A new mother from your congregation with her baby and the baby's bag of essential items – for the kids to look at and discuss
- ✓ Prayer Net
- ✓ Prayer cards and pen
- ✓ Name tag box

<b>A. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b>	<b>10 minutes</b>	<b>You'll need ...</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Set up a desk/table at the entrance to your room. Sit (or have an adult helper sit) behind the desk with a large sheet of paper marked with The Island logo, and a fun pen. As the kids arrive, have them stop one by one at the desk. Ask them, in an official manner, for their name, the town where they live, and how many people live in their house. Note down the information as if you are taking a census of The Island. Remember to ask Rocky too! Usher kids into the room once they have given their information. When the 'census' is finished, push the table to the side and continue with the usual programme as if nothing strange has happened. The activity will be explained following the worship time.</li><li>2. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing.</li><li>3. Sing 2 songs together (<b><i>I Am Not Forgotten / Everyday</i></b>).</li><li>4. Open in prayer.</li><li>5. Ask kids to lift a mat each and sit down.</li></ol>		<i>Table/desk</i> <i>Large sheet of Island paper</i> <i>Fun pen</i>  <i>DVD player / projector</i> <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i>
<b>B. Message</b>	<b>15 minutes</b>	<b>You'll need ...</b>
<b>1. Recap</b> Ask a child to help you open the treasure chest and take out the angel cake you put there last week. Ask for someone to explain what the angel cake should remind us of. Ask a few follow-up questions to recap last week's story of the angel Gabriel appearing to Mary with the message that she was going to have a baby boy called Jesus, as well as the fulfilment of God's promise to send a Saviour.  Finish by eliciting the Bible concept: God always keeps His promises.  <i>You could also ask if anyone remembers last week's memory verse and have them recite it, individually and as a group. Or refer kids to the verse if you displayed it following the last session – "For nothing is impossible with God." Luke 1:37</i>  <b>2. Set the scene</b> In those days, the ruler of the kingdom was Caesar Augustus. Caesar made a new law saying that everyone in his kingdom must be counted. So everyone went to their own town to register their names on Caesar's list. This was called a census. In our country, there is a census every four years. Your mummy and daddy have to fill in a form saying how many people live in your house so that the government know how many people altogether are living in our country. And this morning, when you arrived on The Island, I took a census of all the Islanders. Let's look at our census and count how many people live in The Island homes! <i>Get your 'census' sheet, let the kids help you count up the figures you recorded and produce a total figure.</i>  <b>2. Tell the story</b> Everyone went to their own town to register their names in Caesar's census. Remember Joseph? He lived in Nazareth, not		<i>Treasure chest with angel cake inside</i>  <

far away from Mary. As we learnt last week, Joseph was from King David's family tree. That meant that Joseph had to go to David's home town to register his family. Do you remember where David lived? *Bethlehem*. So Joseph and Mary packed up their belongings and travelled 70 miles to Bethlehem. What a long journey that was! Let's take a look and see exactly where they had to go. *Show kids a map – in an atlas, in the back of your Bible, or you could make a large-scale simplified map of the journey to Bethlehem. Explain the distance by substituting place names that are local to your kids. (If you use a large-scale map, you could hang it on the wall as a reference point for the kids.)* And don't forget, Joseph didn't have a car or a motorbike. There were no buses or trains in those days either. They didn't even have bicycles. And to make the trip even more tiring ... Mary was pregnant!

*Map of the journey to Bethlehem*

Finally, they saw the rooftops of Bethlehem! How relieved must Joseph, and Mary especially, have felt when they arrived in the town. But the relief didn't last for long. Matters were about to get worse, not better. Joseph was looking for somewhere for them to stay – a little hotel, a bed and breakfast, just a room with a comfortable bed would have been enough. You see, it was almost time for Mary's baby to be born. Joseph saw a sign for an inn, a little hotel in the town centre. He knocked on the door and spoke to the manager. The manager told him there were no free beds. "What?" said Joseph. Again, the manager of the inn said there were no spaces, no room, zilch, nada, zip, nothing. "You can't be serious", said Joseph, "look at Mary. She's about to have a baby! We need somewhere to rest. Please help us!" The manager looked at Mary and could see that she needed somewhere to lie down and rest as quickly as possible. He really didn't have any spare rooms inside, but he did have somewhere else in mind ...

Out the back, the manager kept his animals in a stable. There were no beds and there was no furniture but there was straw on the floor and the animals would keep the place warm. The manager said, "Joseph, if you want it, you are welcome!" What was poor Joseph thinking? "My Mary, about to have her baby and this is all I can find ... That angel said that this baby would be the Son of God, a King, the Messiah, and this is the best I can offer Him." Joseph had no choice. He accepted the manager's offer and he and Mary went into the stable to rest.

Soon, Mary's baby was born. A lovely, healthy baby boy, just like the angel had told Mary. There in the stable, Mary wrapped up her new baby in cloths. She and Joseph were so happy and excited to see their new son. Mary didn't have a nice cot for him, so she put him to sleep in the animals' feeding trough – what we call the manger. *Show picture of the baby Jesus in the manger.*

*Graphic – Baby Jesus in the manger*

*At this point, you could invite a new mother to bring her baby and visit the kids on The Island. Allow the kids to ask her questions about the contents of the baby's bag – e.g. nappies, cream, wipes, bottles, food, blankets, etc. Talk about how much care a baby needs – ask the mother how she takes care of her baby at*

*Mother with baby and baby's bag of supplies*



home: what time the baby wakes up at in the morning; what the baby eats; what happens if the baby is too warm or too cold; how the baby is bathed and gets ready for bed, etc.

### 3. Explain

Boys and girls, Mary didn't have any of those nice things to look after her baby boy. She didn't even have a soft pillow and a cot for him to sleep in. Joseph couldn't even find a decent room for the baby to be born in. But Mary and Joseph knew that God was with them, and they trusted Him for help even though they were afraid and worried about what was going to happen to them. They knew that God was in control ... and His promise was already starting to come true. Remember God's promise from hundreds of years before that? God would send someone from David's family tree. Remember God's promise of where the baby would be born? Joseph had to take Mary on that long journey and the baby was born in Bethlehem, not in Nazareth where they were living, but in Bethlehem, just like God's promise said.

God always keeps His promises. That's what we have to remember from this Christmas story. Even when we are worried and scared about something – at home, at school, maybe even here at church – God wants to help us. He promises that He will never leave us, that He will always be with us, and that is a promise we know is *always* true.

Let's put our Island census into the treasure chest – this should remind us next week of the reason why Joseph had to take Mary to Bethlehem.

*The Island census  
Treasure chest*

### C. Prayer Net

**10 minutes**

1. Ask a child to explain what it means when we *pray* – We talk to God and He listens.
2. Explain that prayer / talking to God is very important because that's how we get to know Him.
3. Choose a child to retrieve the prayer net. Lift out the prayer cards you put there last week. Ask the kids for updates on those situations.
4. Explain that when we have worries or things to be thankful for, like Mary and Joseph, we need to tell God about those things.
5. Tell kids that we are going to make a note of some special prayers today and put them in the prayer net. Next week they will tell us what happened in those situations.
6. Ask a few kids if they have a prayer to put into the net. As they tell you, write their name and the topic of their prayer on a small card. Ask the child to say a prayer aloud (help them to do so) before they place their card into the prayer net.
7. Finish by leading a prayer for the whole group.

### You'll need ...

*Net (with last week's prayer cards)  
Small cards / postcards  
A pen*

### D. Conclusion (with puppets)

**5 minutes**

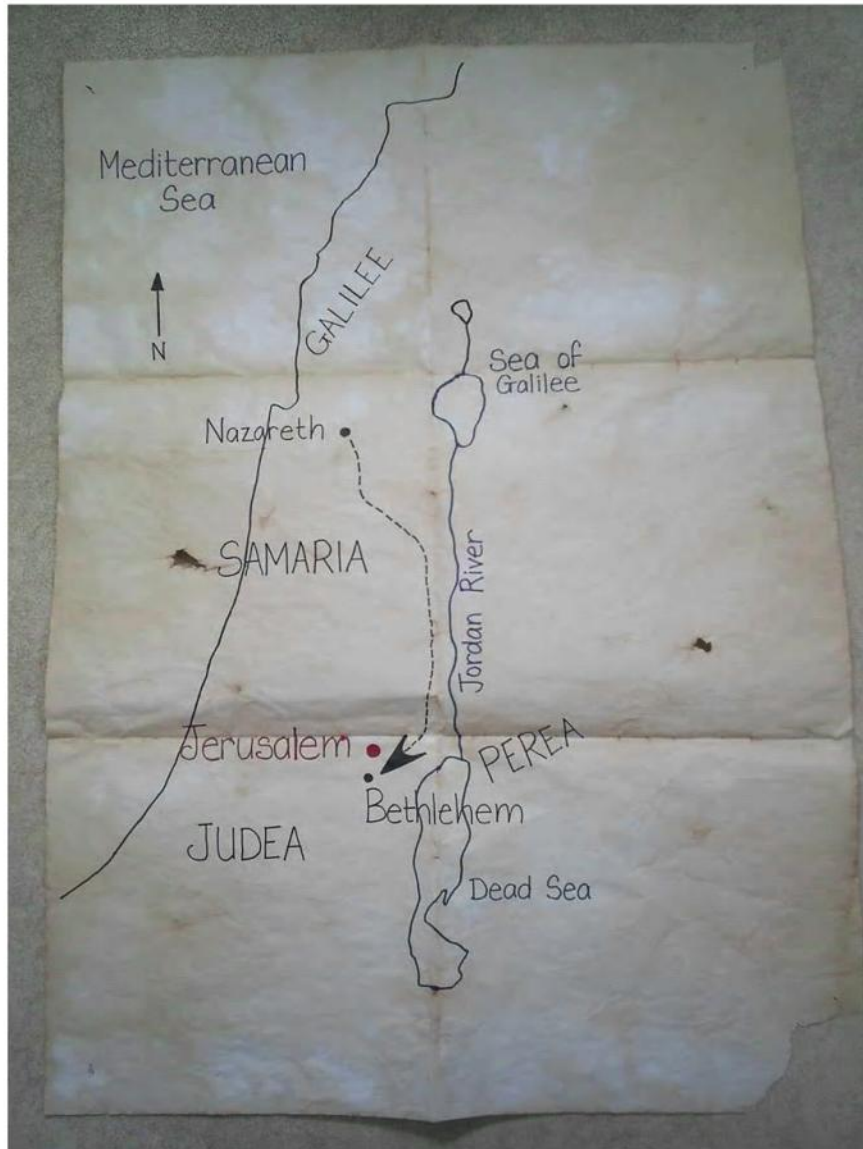
1. Challenge kids to remember to be like Mary and Joseph –

### You'll need ...

*DVD player / projector*

<p>ready to believe and trust God's promise never to leave us.</p> <p>2. Remind kids to come back this evening.</p> <p>3. Sing a closing song. <b>(Everyday)</b></p> <p>4. Ask kids to put their mats away and put their name tags in the box before they leave.</p>	<p>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</p> <p>Name tag box</p>
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## THE ISLAND cont'd

LEADER	DATE (pm) 07 December 08
HELPERS	TIME (mins) 40 minutes
PUPPETEER	No. of KIDS (m/f)

### GOALS:

- To encourage kids to engage in worship through singing.
- To reinforce today's Bible concept by learning a related Scripture verse.
- To consolidate today's Bible story and concept by making their own map of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

### MATERIALS NEEDED:

- ✓ Song DVD / laptop / DVD player / projector / screen, etc.
- ✓ Memory Verse Slide (Isaiah 9:6)
- ✓ Activity – Tables
  - Map of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem  
(see photos below)
  - Sheets of dried, tea-soaked A4 paper (one for each child)
  - Pens and pencils
- ✓ Small prizes (selection of bookmarks, stickers, pencils, etc.)
- ✓ Name tag box

<b>E. Worship through Music (with puppets)</b> <b>10 minutes</b> 1. Welcome kids and invite them to praise God by singing. 2. Sing 2 songs together. ( <b><i>This is the Day / Supernatural</i></b> ) 3. Open in prayer. 4. Kids should remain standing for the following activity.	<b>You'll need ...</b> <i>DVD player / projector</i> <i>Song DVD (Hillsong Kids – Supernatural)</i>
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<p><b>F. Memory Verse (with puppets)</b> <b>10 minutes</b></p> <p><i>"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."</i> Isaiah 9:6</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask a few questions to recap this morning's story: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where did Joseph and Mary live? <i>Nazareth</i></li> <li>Why did they have to leave and go to Bethlehem? <i>Caesar made a law that everyone had to go to their home town to be counted.</i></li> <li>Why did they go to Bethlehem when they lived in Nazareth? <i>They were from David's family tree – David had lived in Bethlehem many years earlier.</i></li> <li>How far was the journey? <i>About 70 miles.</i></li> <li>Where was Mary's baby born? <i>Probably in a stable, in Bethlehem. Mary laid him to sleep in the animals' feeding box or manger.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li><i>Explain:</i> This was a new baby boy, but He was very special. Remember, God had promised this baby to Mary. What did the angel Gabriel tell her? – He would be called Jesus; He would be great and be called the Son of God; He would be a king and He would reign over His kingdom forever! Not just a baby – this little Jesus was the King of kings, the Lord of lords, the Son of the Mighty God! Wow!</li> <li>Look at what Isaiah wrote hundreds of years before Jesus was born. <i>Show kids the memory verse on the screen. Read the verse together. Repeat it a couple of times.</i></li> <li>Talk about what the verse means – Jesus is the Son born to Mary and Joseph, and to the people of the world. The government will be on His shoulders – means that Jesus is the Ruler of the world. He is in control. Talk about what the names of Jesus mean: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a counsellor is someone who listens and gives advice – Jesus is a wonderful counsellor;</li> <li>Jesus is God's Son, and He has the power of God in Him – Jesus is mighty;</li> <li>Even though Jesus was born as a baby, He grew up and still lives now. He is like a father or a daddy to us, wanting the best for us and loving us even when we make mistakes, and He will <i>always</i> be there, forever and ever!</li> <li>Jesus is part of David's family tree, King David. That means it's a royal family tree, so Jesus could be called a prince – the Prince of peace. Jesus wants to bring peace to your heart and mine – love, joy and peace.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Repeat the verse with actions. Leave the verse on the screen as it is long and perhaps more difficult for the kids to remember. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For to us a child is born – <i>rock a baby in your arms action</i></li> <li>To us a son is given – <i>hold out hands, palms up, as if giving something</i></li> <li>And the government will be on his shoulders – <i>pat shoulders</i></li> <li>And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor – <i>start with both</i></li> </ul> </li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Memory verse slide (Isaiah 9:6)</i></p>
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<p><i>hands around mouth, and reach up with hands in the air</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mighty God – <i>hold arms up to show muscles</i></li> <li>- Everlasting Father – <i>with hands at the heart, stretch out sideways to show infinity</i></li> <li>- Prince of Peace – <i>hold up two fingers and make a peace sign</i></li> </ul> <p>6. Repeat a few times, individually and as a group. Finish with a group repetition of the verse with actions.</p> <p><b>Idea:</b> After the session, you could write the memory verse onto a sheet of card to make a poster for your room. This will add to your decoration as well as reminding kids of the Bible concept. Then you can also refer to it in later sessions of this series.</p>	
<p><b>G. Activity</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>15 minutes</b></span></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arrange tables in your room as a workspace for the children to stand around.</li> <li>2. Show kids a map of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem – a large map would be best (you could use the map you used this morning), perhaps stuck on the wall, marked or folded into six squares. The kids are going to draw their own map by copying the contents of each square.</li> <li>3. Give each child a sheet of A4 paper which has been pre-soaked in tea and dried to give it an old-style 'papyrus' effect.</li> <li>4. Show kids how to fold their page into six squares – fold in half lengthways; fold in thirds; open out the sheet and there should be six squares.</li> <li>5. Instruct kids to start at the top left square and copy the lines and markings from the map on the wall.</li> <li>6. Provide enough pens and pencils for kids to draw with. Make sure they write their names on the map too.</li> <li>7. You could hang the kids' maps on the wall as a display for the weeks leading up to Christmas before they take them home.</li> <li>8. Remind kids of the long journey to Bethlehem and how this was part of the story of how God's promise of a Saviour started to come true.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Tables</i></p> <p><i>Map of the journey to Bethlehem</i></p> <p><i>Sheets of tea-stained paper</i></p> <p><i>Pens and pencils</i></p>
<p><b>H. Conclusion (with puppets)</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>5 minutes</b></span></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask one boy and one girl if they can recite the memory verse. The puppets / another leader will judge if they deserve a prize. Award the prizes.</li> <li>2. Ask kids to hold hands and sing <i>Jesus Loves Me</i> (first verse and chorus) <i>a cappella</i>, or with an instrument if preferred.</li> <li>3. Close in prayer. Remind kids to come back next week!</li> <li>4. Make sure kids leave their name tags in the box before they leave.</li> </ol>	<p><b>You'll need ...</b></p> <p><i>Small prizes</i></p> <p><i>Name tag box</i></p>

