

Sample Pages from

# Celebrate the Savior

by Charlene Notgrass

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# How to Use *Celebrate The Savior*

Christmas brings to mind a mixture of Bible truths about Jesus, family and cultural traditions, and legends about Santa Claus, elves, and reindeer. Because of this mixture, many families are confused. What traditions should we keep? Is Santa Claus a friend or foe to faith? How should we celebrate Christmas? Should we even celebrate it at all? To answer those questions, parents must seek God's will, and they must follow their own consciences. The purpose of **Celebrate The Savior** is to tell the beautiful story of the Savior's birth and to share the history of some Christmas traditions and carols.

## **What's included in *Celebrate The Savior*?**

**Celebrate The Savior** is a unit study. It begins with a detailed study of the birth of Jesus and then explores the history of the celebration of Christmas. Students learn to separate the facts revealed in the Bible from the traditions and legends created by men. Lessons include Bible study, history, geography, science, art, poetry, grammar, and stories of Christmas carols. Students will:

- ♦ Study fifteen lessons that chronicle Jesus' birth and childhood, teach how the celebration of Jesus' birth began, and tell about Christmas traditions and legends from many lands.
- ♦ Complete "A Baby Book for Jesus."
- ♦ Create a "Christmas Traditions Around the World" booklet.
- ♦ Write five essays about Jesus and about following Him.

## **What are the learning objectives in *Celebrate The Savior*?**

Like all of us, children learn best by doing. In this unit study, children read information, do writing activities based on the information, create artwork related to their studies, and write creatively. The truths of Jesus' coming become more real as children explore the history, science, and geography related to His birth. Students learn the truth of Jesus coming while appreciating legends and traditions for what they are: simply stories created by people of many cultures over many years.

## How many copies of *Celebrate The Savior* do I need for my family?

Your family will need one copy per child. Students learn as they read and complete activities in the lessons. They also work directly in the book to create “A Baby Book for Jesus,” a “Christmas Traditions Around the World” booklet, and five essays.

## How long does it take to complete this curriculum?

**Celebrate The Savior** has fifteen lessons. Plan on spending an hour or more to complete each lesson. Lessons can be completed in one day or spread out over two days. Your family may want to make this the core of your curriculum for the month of December and the first week of January. Those weeks are filled with teachable moments, and **Celebrate The Savior** can be a useful tool during an often hectic time of year.

## What do we do to complete a lesson?

**Lessons and Written Work.** Each basic lesson is four pages long. Lessons may be read silently or aloud. Each lesson includes some form of written work, such as puzzles, words to unscramble, or drawings. The written work is to be completed in this book, although it is a good idea for sentences and paragraphs to be written on notebook paper first before being copied into this book. See box below.

Many lessons include Bible passages to read, and many include one or more additional activities which are found in the back of the book. When you see the Creative Writing scroll, Baby Book frame, or Christmas Craft cottage, turn to the page(s) indicated on the symbol and complete that page(s) before beginning the next lesson.

**Creative Writing.** Students will complete creative writing assignments as

### **A Note About Writing Assignments**

Some lessons include short writing assignments and others include one-page essays. Children should follow these steps in all of their writing.

1. Write the assignment on notebook paper first.
2. Proofread their writing.
3. Ask parents to check their writing.
4. Make corrections or rewrite the assignment, if needed (also followed by proofreading, a parent check, and corrections).
5. Copy their writing into the **Celebrate The Savior** workbook.

## Symbols for Assignments in the Back of the Curriculum



described in the box, copying them onto pages in the back of this book.

**A Baby Book for Jesus.** Students will complete "A Baby Book for Jesus." It will contain pages similar to the baby books some mothers keep for their babies today. When a particular page is assigned in a lesson, the student will cut the assigned page out of the back of this book. The student will then cut out certain objects from that page, glue them onto a piece of construction paper, and then embellish the page as described in the directions. Make sure the child leaves room on the left side so the page can later be bound into a book. Keep the completed pages in a folder or a notebook until the whole baby book is finished.

**Christmas Traditions Around the World.** Students will complete a booklet of "Christmas Traditions Around the World." When a particular page is assigned in a lesson, the student will cut the assigned page out of the back of this book and complete it in the same way he or she completed the baby book. Keep the completed pages in a folder or a notebook until the whole craft book is finished.

**Craft Supplies.** On the following page, you will find the list of craft supplies needed for the two booklets. I recommend that you gather all the craft supplies before you begin and put them in a box or basket, so they are handy. All are inexpensive and you probably have most of them in your home already.

**Binding the Baby Book and Christmas Traditions Pages.** When all the craft pages are completed, help your child bind the pages together. You can place them in a three-ring binder or bind them with ribbon or yarn.

## Craft Supplies Needed

Basic Supplies	Miscellaneous Special Items
<p>Scissors for cutting paper                      Scissors for cutting fabric                      Liquid craft or school glue                      Crayons                      Colored pencils                      Hole punch                      Construction paper - 28 sheets per child for book pages, plus a few pieces of a variety of colors                      Fine-line black felt-tip marker</p>	<p>Twigs or craft sticks                      Cotton balls                      Yellow or light brown yarn                      Bits of hay or dry grass (optional)                      White glitter                      Green glitter (or shiny green paper)                      Shiny Christmas wrapping paper                      Shiny gold paper                      One small sheet of sandpaper per child                      ½ of a paper towel tube per child (optional)                      2 feet of fabric ribbon per child                      1 Christmas card per child (optional)                      ½ cup candy per child (optional)                      18 inches white rick rack per child (optional)                      sequins (optional)                      colored or silver paper clips (optional)                      2 yards curling ribbon per child                      small package of colored tissue paper</p>
<p><b>Fabric</b>                      Fabric is optional, but it will make the craft projects more fun.</p>	
<p>Shiny white - 6-inch square per child                      Plain white - 6-inch square per child                      Six colors of plain woven, 6-inch squares per child                      Four colors of shiny, fancy, 6-inch squares per child</p>	

### How can I make the study even more memorable?

The Christmas season offers many precious read-aloud opportunities. You might enjoy the poem “A Christmas Prayer” by Robert Louis Stevenson and the novel **A Christmas Carol** by Charles Dickens. You might want to join Laura Ingalls Wilder and her family as they celebrate Christmas in **Little House in the Big Woods** (chapter 4), **Little House on the Prairie** (chapter 19), **On the Banks of Plum Creek** (chapters 13, 31, 41), **By the Shores of Silver Lake** (chapters 19-21), **The Long Winter** (chapters 18, 32, 33), **Little Town on the Prairie** (chapters 19, 25), and **These Happy Golden Years** (chapter 25). Another option is chapter 2 of **Little Women**, entitled “A Merry Christmas.”

## Keeping First Things First

**Celebrate the Savior** explores the truth of Jesus as revealed in the Bible and then explores the legends and traditions of people. Before you begin, look up these words in a dictionary: truth, legend, tradition. Share their meanings with your children. As you enjoy **Celebrate The Savior**, keep those meanings in mind and help your children discern the difference.

My prayer is that your family will grow in faith as you enjoy this study together.

*Charlene Notgrass*

### A Note About the Photographs of Bible Lands



The American Colony was a Christian utopian community founded in 1881 in Jerusalem by Horatio and Anna Spafford. Horatio Spafford is the author of the beloved hymn, "It is Well with My Soul." While Anna and their four daughters were sailing to Paris in 1873, their luxury steamer was rammed by an iron British sailing ship. The steamer sank and the four girls were drowned. On his way across the Atlantic to join his

rescued wife, Spafford passed over the spot where his daughters drowned. This experience inspired him to write the words to the hymn.

Most of the photographs of the lands of the Bible in this curriculum were taken by the American Colony Photographic Department and its successor, the Matson Photo Service. Most of the photographs were taken between 1898 and 1946. In 1978 the collection was donated to the Library of Congress.

# The Geography of Palestine

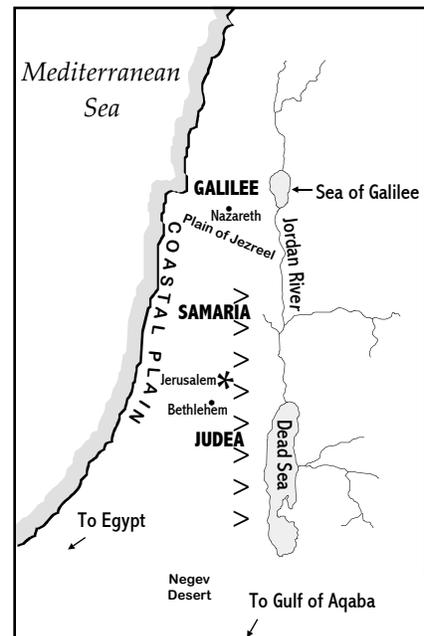
On pages 12 and 13 some of the words are scrambled. Here is a list of those words spelled correctly. Find the correct word to fill in each blank. When you have finished filling in the blanks, read the pages again.

JEZREEL      AQABA      PALESTINE      DESERT      DEAD  
 JERUSALEM      PLAIN      JORDAN      SAMARIAN      NEGEV  
 JUDEAN      MEDITERRANEAN      GALILEE      NAZARETH

The geographic region of ANEIEPTSL \_\_\_\_\_ lies on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Today it includes the modern country of Israel and many areas that are claimed by both Palestinians and Israelis. At the time of Jesus' birth, the area was controlled by the Roman Empire and included Galilee, Samaria, and Judea.

Palestine has five major geographic regions (find each of them on the map to the right):

- AIEEGLL \_\_\_\_\_, a mountainous region in the north.
- The Plain of ELEJRZE \_\_\_\_\_ (or Eshdraelon), a fertile region just south of Galilee.
- The RASIANAM \_\_\_\_\_ and UNEJAD \_\_\_\_\_ Hills running north and south.
- The Coastal LNPIA \_\_\_\_\_ extending from north to south along the Mediterranean Sea.
- The EVNEG \_\_\_\_\_ EETDRS \_\_\_\_\_, a triangular-shaped region running from the Mediterranean Sea to the southern tip of the Dead Sea and extending south to the Gulf of Aqaba.



Map of Palestine, showing major geographic regions. The ^ symbols show the general area of the Samaritan and Judean hills.



The main bodies of water in Israel are the **EMAATENNRREID** \_\_\_\_\_ Sea, the Sea of Galilee, the **ODJNRA** \_\_\_\_\_ River, the **EDDA** \_\_\_\_\_ Sea, and the Gulf of **QBAAA** \_\_\_\_\_ (find each of these on the map on page 12).

Mary lived in Galilee when she was visited by the angel. She lived in the town of **AHATNERZ** \_\_\_\_\_. Evidently Joseph lived there, too (Luke 2:4). Today about 58,000 people live in Nazareth. The city is on a hill about 80 miles north of Jerusalem. Nazareth is the largest Arab city within the country of Israel. About half of the population is Christian and about half is Muslim.



After the angel spoke to Mary, she traveled from Nazareth into the hill country of Judea where she visited with Elizabeth (trace your finger from Nazareth to the hills of Judea).

When Zechariah heard the news that he and Elizabeth would have a baby, he was at the temple in **ESLJEAUMR** \_\_\_\_\_ (find Jerusalem on the map). It was the capital of the Jewish nation at the time of Jesus' birth and it is the capital of Israel today.



*Top photo: The Judean Hills photographed in 1932. Mary went to visit Elizabeth in the hills of Judea.*

*Middle photo: A woman carrying a baby and a jar with Nazareth in the background.*

*Lower photo: An old street in Nazareth, photographed before 1950.*

# Plant Carols of Christmas

*"The Holly and the Ivy" is a three-hundred-year-old folk song from the Gloucestershire region of England.*

## The Holly and the Ivy

The **holly** and the **ivy**,  
When they are both full grown,  
Of all the trees that are in the **wood**,  
The holly bears the crown.

*Refrain:*  
*The rising of the sun*  
*And the running of the deer,*  
*The playing of the merry organ,*  
*Sweet singing in the choir.*

The holly bears the **blossom**,  
As white as the **lily flower**,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
To be our sweet Savior.

The holly bears a **berry**,  
As red as any blood,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
to do poor sinners good.

The holly bears a **prickle**,  
As sharp as any **thorn**,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
On Christmas Day in the morn.

The holly bears a **bark**,  
As bitter as any gall,  
And Mary bore sweet Jesus Christ  
For to redeem us all.

*"O Christmas Tree" is a translation of the German song, "O Tannenbaum." A tannenbaum is a fir tree or a Christmas tree. The tune is an old folk song. One of the many English versions is printed below.*



## O Christmas Tree

O Christmas **Tree**, O Christmas Tree,  
How steadfast are your **branches!**  
Your boughs are **green** in summer's clime  
And through the snows of wintertime.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
How steadfast are your branches!

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
What happiness befalls me  
When oft at joyous Christmastime  
Your form inspires my song and rhyme.  
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
What happiness befalls me.

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,  
Your boughs can teach a lesson:  
That constant faith and hope sublime  
Lend strength and comfort  
through all time.  
O Christmas Tree,  
O Christmas Tree,  
Your boughs can teach  
a lesson.



The origin of "Deck the Halls" is uncertain. It may have originated in Wales or England. The first printing of the words may have been in New York in the late 19th century, but the melody was included in a violin piano duet written by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, who lived from 1756 to 1791.

The "blazing yule" in "Deck the Halls" refers to the European custom of burning a yule log during the Christmas season. Some families keep the yule log burning from Christmas Eve until Epiphany. "Yuletide" refers to the Christmas season. After reading all three carols, notice the plant words that are underlined and find them in the puzzle below.

## Deck the Halls



Deck the halls with boughs of holly,

Fa la la la la, la la la la;

'Tis the season to be jolly,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Don we now our gay apparel,

Fa la la, la la la, la la la;

Troll the ancient Yuletide carol,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

See the blazing yule before us,

Fa la la la la, la la la la;

Strike the harp and join the chorus,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Follow me in merry measure,

Fa la la, la la la, la la la;

While I tell of Yuletide treasure,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Fast away the old year passes,

Fa la la la la, la la la la;

Hail the New Year, lads and lasses,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

Sing we joyous, all together,

Fa la la, la la la, la la la;

Heedless of the wind and weather,

Fa la la la la, la la la la.

P A B L O S S O M B  
 R P O E G R E E N R  
 I P U L Y O I N B A  
 C L G M U F V M I N  
 K E H O L L Y A R C  
 L A S A E F A P C H  
 E T B S P L I L Y E  
 T R E E I O A E H S  
 H E R P N W O O D P  
 O L R E E E A O F I  
 R M Y B A R K A I N  
 N C E D A R A K R E



"Grandpa's Visit Christmas Morning"  
 by Griffith and Griffith of Philadelphia, 1897

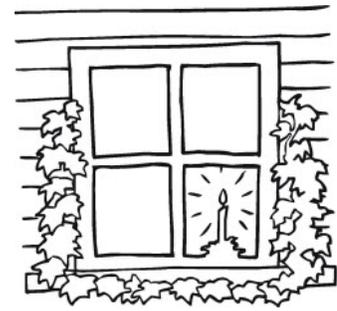
Lesson 15 – Traditions, Character, Spelling

# The Lights of Christmas

On the first day of Creation, God made light. Jesus is the Light of the world. The Christmas season past and present has had many light traditions. Remember not to try any of these traditions without the help of a parent.

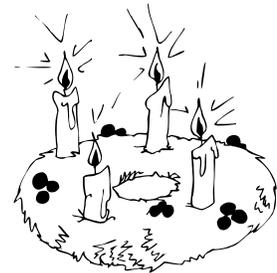
## Candles

In an Irish tradition people remember the needs of Mary and Joseph 2,000 years ago and place candles in their windows. They want to be available for anyone who might need a place to stay and something to eat.

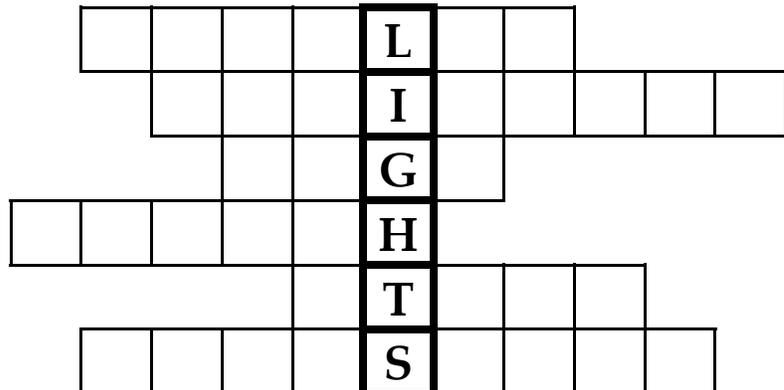


Sweden’s Saint Lucia tradition involves candles. Saint Lucia girls wear seven lighted candles on their heads, and something to keep the candle wax off, too. Besides the private observance of Saint Lucia in homes, Swedes enjoy watching a public Saint Lucia going from place to place.

Many believers in the United States, Germany, and England light candles on an advent wreath. They light a candle on each of the four Sundays of Advent. In Spain people put candles above their doors on Christmas Eve. Some Christmas trees are lighted with candles.



*Read the paragraphs and write the underlined words on pages 58 and 59 in the puzzle at right.*



## Luminaria

In New Mexico and west Texas people set up **luminaria** at Christmas time. Families put sand in the bottom of paper bags, insert a candle in each, and light the candles. The practice has spread to other parts of the country.



## Stars

In Poland, Spain, Italy, Iran, and Russia, Christmas begins on December 24 when the first star appears in the sky.

Filipinos hang a *parol* or Christmas star in their windows. It is a lantern made of bamboo, paper, and yarn.

Swedes have a tradition of star boys who wear cone-shaped hats with stars on them.

Cookies and tree ornaments shaped like **stars** remind us of the star of Bethlehem that the **magi** saw long ago.



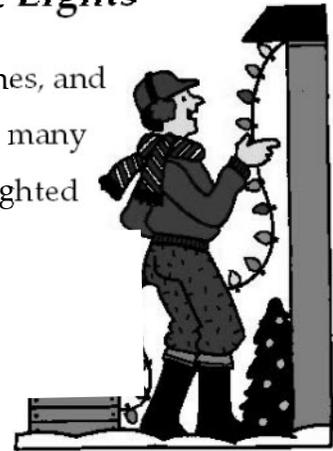
## Bonfires

Iraqi Christians have a tradition of building bonfires of thorns in their courtyards. Mexican-Americans in New Mexico build bonfires, too.



## Electric Lights

Trees, homes, and businesses in many countries are lighted with electric "Christmas lights."



## Fireworks

In Italy, Mexico, the Philippines, and the southern United States fireworks light the sky on Christmas Eve or **Christmas** Day.

