

## The Birth of the King

*The journey can be adventurous, and we should enjoy it.  
But let's be honest, there is something nice about finally arriving!*

### Introduction

From all over the United States and beyond people visit the Grand Canyon in Arizona so they can feast their eyes on one of the most amazing natural wonders on the face of this planet.

The thing about the Grand Canyon is that snapshots and videos simply don't do justice to its grandeur. Friends can try to describe it and artists can paint pictures, but nothing compares with actually breathing in the beauty and breathtaking majesty of it all.

If you have made this pilgrimage you might have vivid memories of kids in the backseat asking, for the hundredth time, "Are we there yet?" Then, finally, as the moment arrives, all the hours of travel seem like nothing as you stand on the edge of the sheer drop-off and your eyes span the chasm. An almost holy hush falls over those you have traveled with ... you stand in awe!

For the past 21 chapters of *The Story* we have been on the journey, wondering when we will get there. Today we have arrived. We look into the manger and behold the Lord of Glory, "God with us," the long-awaited Messiah.

Let a holy hush fall over your heart. Look closely. This is the One who made the Grand Canyon, the heavens and the earth ... and everything in them. God in a manger. We have arrived!

### Talk About It

Tell about a time you traveled a long way to see someone or something and describe how it felt when you finally arrived.

**DVD Teaching Notes**

As you watch the video segment for session 22, use the following outline to record anything that stands out to you.

Lower Story: scandalous beginnings

Upper Story: God's solution to our scandalous beginnings

God comes down to bring us back to himself

The fulfillment of many prophecies

**DVD Discussion**

1. Do you remember the first few words of the first chapter of *The Story*? If not, turn back and read them ... then, read the start of this chapter. The Jews in Jesus' day had read and heard the story over and over through their lives. What would have come to their minds when the story of Jesus (the solution to all our problems) began with the same words that started *The Story*, back before there was any sin in the world?
2. Various titles and descriptions of Jesus are included in his story (John 1:1 – 14; *The Story*, pp. 309 – 310). Pick one of the following and explain what you think it means and how you have experienced this to be true of Jesus:
 

<b>Jesus:</b> The Word	<b>Jesus:</b> The Light
<b>Jesus:</b> Is God	<b>Jesus:</b> The one and only Son
<b>Jesus:</b> The Maker of all things	<b>Jesus:</b> The one who brings grace and truth
<b>Jesus:</b> The Life	
3. God spoke to both Mary and Joseph through angels (Luke 1:26 – 38; Matthew 1:19 – 24; *The Story*, pp. 310 – 312). What was the angel's message and how did Mary and Joseph respond to this heavenly messenger?

*Jesus' birth is not the result of a scandal ...  
but a solution to our scandal—our sin.*

4. Pause to remember that Mary and Joseph were real people living in a real small town. How might Joseph's family and the townspeople have responded when Mary turned up pregnant before the wedding day? How might they have reacted to the "An angel told me that God would make me pregnant, but Joseph and I are still virgins" story?

Tell about a time that God called you to live for him or follow him in a way that others did not understand. How did you hold to your faith during this time?

5. Jesus was born of a virgin and was conceived without sin. Why does this matter?

*From the Lower Story it looked like this baby would be born in sin, but from the Upper Story we see that Jesus was born without sin.*

6. In the Lower Story Joseph and Mary had to go to Bethlehem to be counted in the census; it was a hard three-day journey for someone nine months pregnant. In the Upper Story God was getting them to Bethlehem because that is where the Messiah was to be born. Recall an event in your life that seemed inconvenient and unnecessary, only to later look back and realize God was doing something greater than you knew at the time.

7. After Jesus was born, the shepherds hurried off and told everyone what they had seen and heard. Share a brief testimony about a time you really saw or heard Jesus move in your life. How might you share this story (and others like it) outside your small group ... with people who are not yet followers of Jesus?

8. Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23; *The Story*, p. 312). As you walk with Jesus your Savior, how does it help you to know that he is God and that he is with you ... all the time?

In what situation do you need to be reminded that God is with you? How can your small group members pray for you as you walk through this season of your life?



9. Read movements 1–5 of *The Story* (pp. 10–11 of this participant's guide). How do you see God's compassion and justice at work as you grow to understand the scope of his story?