

Herod the Grinch

Theme

How Herod tried to steal the first Christmas.

Object

Book or Video — "How the Grinch Stole Christmas"

Scripture

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."
Matthew 2:13 (NIV)

I'm sure that most of you have read the story of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas." If you haven't read the story, perhaps you have seen the movie. If so, you will remember how everyone in Who-ville loved Christmas. Everyone, that is, except the Grinch. The Grinch hated Christmas and made up a plan to spoil the joy of Christmas in Who-ville. His plan was to dress up as Santa Claus and go into Who-ville and steal all of their Christmas presents, all of their Christmas trees, and even the food for their Christmas dinner.

What a terrible thing to do! Do you know why the Grinch hated Christmas so much? Well, according to the story, it was because his heart was too small! He was so selfish that he hated to see anyone else who was happy and enjoying themselves. But, as you know, the Grinch's plan did not work. Why? Because the people in Who-ville knew that the real joy of Christmas does not come from the presents, decorations, and food -- it comes from a heart filled with love.

The story of "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" is not a true story, but this morning I want to tell you a true story of another "Grinch" who tried to steal Christmas. In fact, he tried to steal the very first Christmas. This "Grinch" was a king by the name of Herod.

After Jesus was born, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem and asked where they could find the child who had been born to be the king of the Jews. "We have seen his star in the sky and want to worship him" they said. When Herod heard about this, he told the men that when they found the child, they should come back and tell him where the child was so that he could worship him too. The truth is, Herod didn't really want to worship Jesus, he wanted to kill him. Why? Perhaps his heart was too small! Herod was so selfish that he was afraid Jesus would become more popular than he was and perhaps even take over his kingdom.

Well, Herod's plan to kill Jesus didn't work. After the wise men found Jesus and gave him gifts, an angel told them about Herod's plan and they went back home without telling Herod where they had found Jesus. An angel also appeared to Joseph and warned him of Herod's plan and told him to take Mary and the baby Jesus to Egypt where they would be safe.

And so, we see that since the very first Christmas, Grinches have been trying to steal the joy of Christmas. There may be some "Grinches" that are trying to steal your Christmas joy. It will never work -- unless your heart is too small. Make sure that your heart is big enough to share the love and joy of Christmas with everyone you meet -- not just at Christmas -- but all year long.

Dear Father, we thank you for the joy that Jesus brings. Help us to share that joy with everyone we meet. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Sermon Title: "Herod the Grinch"

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:13-23

GRAB THE GIFT:

Children can be divided into two teams and assign each child a number. Play this game similar to the old game called "STEAL THE BACON". Children will line up facing each other about 10 feet apart. Place a wrapped gift (book or ball, etc) in the middle of the two lines. When the teacher says for "children with the number 5, GO!" The children that were #5 when they counted off in teams will both run to the middle and try to GRAB the GIFT and run back to his line without being caught or tapped by the opponent. The teacher will continue to call out numbers. The team that gets the gift to his own team line the most times during play time is the winner. (For extra fun toward the end, the teacher may call out 2 or more numbers at the same time for all those children to run to the middle and try to GRAB the GIFT to return to his own line).

CHRISTMAS DRESS UP:

Divide the children in teams. The teacher will have a bag of Christmas apparel items for the children to run to the DRESS UP LINE and grab one item, put it on and run back to the team, for the next player to do the same. Make sure to take pictures of each team or everyone all together wearing bells, Santa hats, red or green clothing, Christmas socks, ribbons and bows, etc.

WISE MEN GIVE GIFTS:

Let children wrap a gift that the teacher gives them (such as a Christian book, Bible verse on construction paper, Bible game, star, jingle bell, candle, Christmas song book, etc). While the children sing a Christmas song such as Away in a Manger or Silent Night, the children will gather around a "manger" made of wood or a cradle, and place their wrapped gifts in the manger.

JOY LETTERS:

Provide the children with construction paper, markers, glitter and sequins. The children will cut out large traced letters of J-O-Y. Let the children decorate the letters and glue them to another piece of construction paper. Pass the JOY lettered paper to the person to their right and SHARE THE JOY!

HAPPY HEARTS:

The teacher will have 4-5 hearts traced for children to cut out. Each heart will be a different size, ranging from small to large. Have the children can tape the hearts on top of each other from the largest to the smallest and attach a ribbon to hang as a decoration on a Christmas tree. Children can write words from our lesson today or SHARE CHRIST'S LOVE AT CHRISTMAS!

CHRISTMAS CHAIN LOOPS:

Let the children make a Christmas loop chain with green and red strips of cut out construction paper. On each loop, encourage the children to write an important word from today's lesson such as JOY, STAR, SHARE, HEART, WORSHIP, or JESUS on each loop before gluing each loop inside the next loop. When all

the loops are completed, hook all the loops together and hang the chain on the classroom wall for decoration.

SNOWMAN LOVE:

Let the children cut out 3 white circles, each one bigger than the first. Glue the "snowballs" one above the other on a piece of red or green construction paper. Give the children a piece of cloth for a scarf, orange triangle for a carrot nose, black sticks cut out of construction paper for the arms, cut out colored hat to complete their snowman. Encourage children to write JESUS LOVES ME "SNOW" MUCH above or underneath the snowman.

SING A SONG:

"We Three Kings of Orient Are" and "Angels Watching Over Me"

SHARE A SNACK:

The teacher can wrap up a cupcake or a candy bar in Christmas wrapping paper for the children and give out as a gift as the children leave.

Song: "We Three Kings" - John H. Hopkins, Jr.

Song Sheet (PDF)

Piano Accompaniment (MP3)

Song: "Angels Watching Over Me" - Black Spiritual

Lead Sheet (PDF) - Vocal part and text

Piano Accompaniment (MP3)

Escape to Egypt

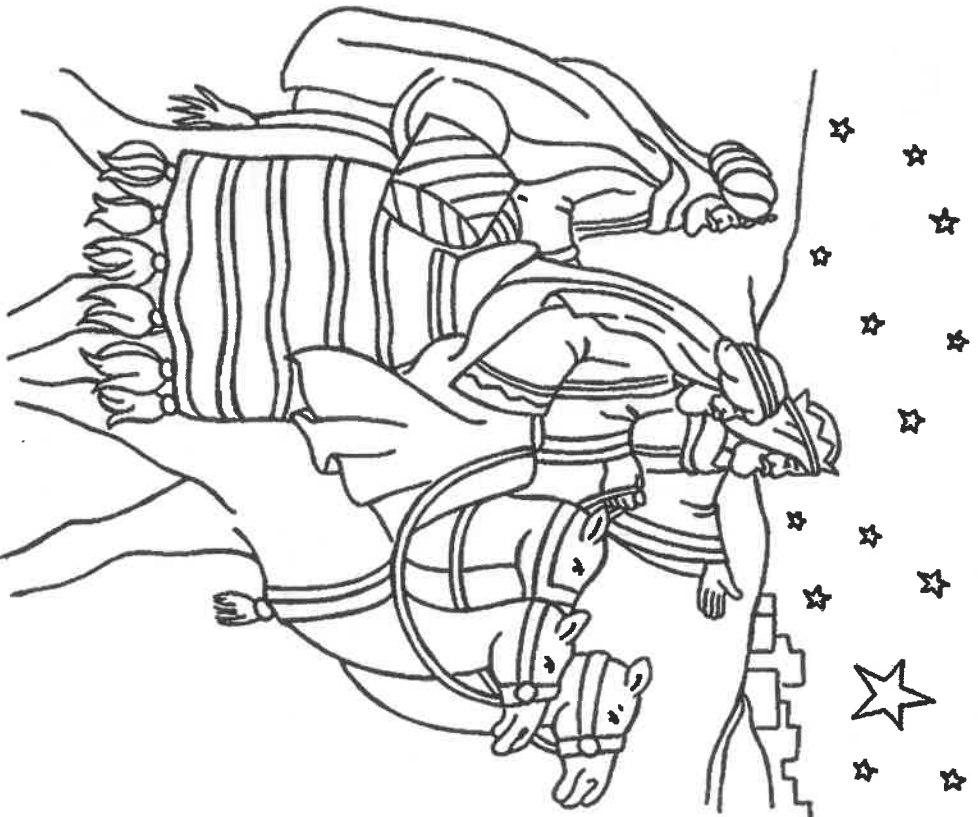
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F R D U K B U B G L N S I P J
 J W P N T P E N A Z A R E T H
 D E C N N T T P E T M N F S R O A
 Y E S C A P E K H O C X F Q P
 I S Q J Y U S L R L T K F W P
 F V X G G Z L E H M E H B D E
 M F E U X I O C X E O H E Y A
 J A H Q K O I E F M R X E R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

LORD	KILL	JOSEPH	APPEAR	MAGI
NAZARETH	ESCAPE	HEROD	MOTHER	EGYPT
ANGEL	BETHLEHEM	SEARCH	NIGHT	CHILD

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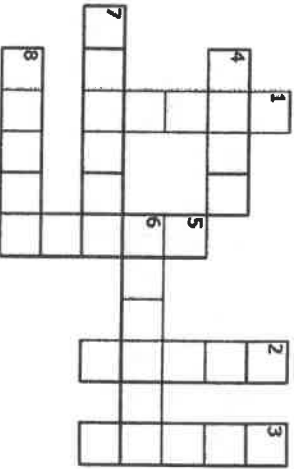
Wise Men Worship Jesus
 Matthew 2

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Escape from Egypt

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Based on Matthew 2:13-23



ACROSS

- To cause someone to die
- To run away from someone or something; break loose; get free
- A female parent
- A person from the time of birth until he or she is fully grown

DOWN

- The part of every twenty-four hour period when it is dark
- To see images and hear voices in your mind while sleeping
- A heavenly servant of God
- The king of Judea who tried to kill baby Jesus

CHILD	KILL	NIGHT	MOTHER
ESCAPE	DREAM	HEROD	ANGEL

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Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



A	H	K	V	W	E	U	C	Y	L	D	X	G	Q	I	T	O	R	J	P	Z	B	M	N	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

- 1-24-13-6-10 _____
- 11-18-6-1-23 _____
- 2-6-18-17-11 _____
- 3-15-10-10 _____
- 6-26-8-1-20-6 _____
- 8-2-15-10-11 _____
- 23-17-16-2-6-18 _____
- 24-15-13-2-16 _____

KILL	DREAM	NIGHT	ESCAPE
MOTHER	HEROD	CHILD	ANGEL



**Wise Men Worship Jesus
Matthew 2**

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