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Joy to You and Me

Key References: Luke 2:1-20; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 4, pp. 43-49; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 27-42; Our Beliefs, nos. 4, 3, 10















powertext

"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told" (Luke 2:20).

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 89.

powerpoint



We worship God when we accept the gift of His Son.

Think of a time you heard some really good news. How hard was it to keep it to yourself? How did you share it with your friends and family? Read on to find out how angels and shepherds shared the good news they heard. When you have finished the story, think how you can spread the same good news today.

No doubt the whole town was buzzing with the news. The emperor Caesar Augustus had issued a decree that there should be a census of all the countries in the Roman Empire. Everyone who came into Joseph's workshop was talking about it. The older customers moaned and groaned; the younger ones thought it would be great fun to make a journey back to where their families had come from, meeting distant cousins and making new friends.

That evening Joseph gently broke the news to Mary; they would have to make the journey to Bethlehem, since they were King David's descendants. Everyone had to go back to the place that their family had come from.

In a few days everything was packed and ready to go. They would make the journey slowly, camping along the way. Mary couldn't walk the 80 miles, and even riding on a donkey was uncomfortable. However, Joseph did his best guiding the donkey to avoid the bumps in the road.

It was evening, many days later, when they finally arrived in Bethlehem. All the inns were full. They trudged from one inn to the next, but no one had any room for them. The innkeepers were sorry, but

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Sunday

READ Read Luke 2:20 and this week's story, "Joy to You and Me."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Luke 2:20.

PRAY Pray that God will help you find something new in this familiar story.

Monday

READ Read Micah 5:2 and Luke 2:1-7.

THINK How was the prophecy about the place of Jesus' birth fulfilled?

SING Sing, hum, or recite the words to your favorite song about the birth of Jesus.

PRAY Praise Jesus for being born to save you.

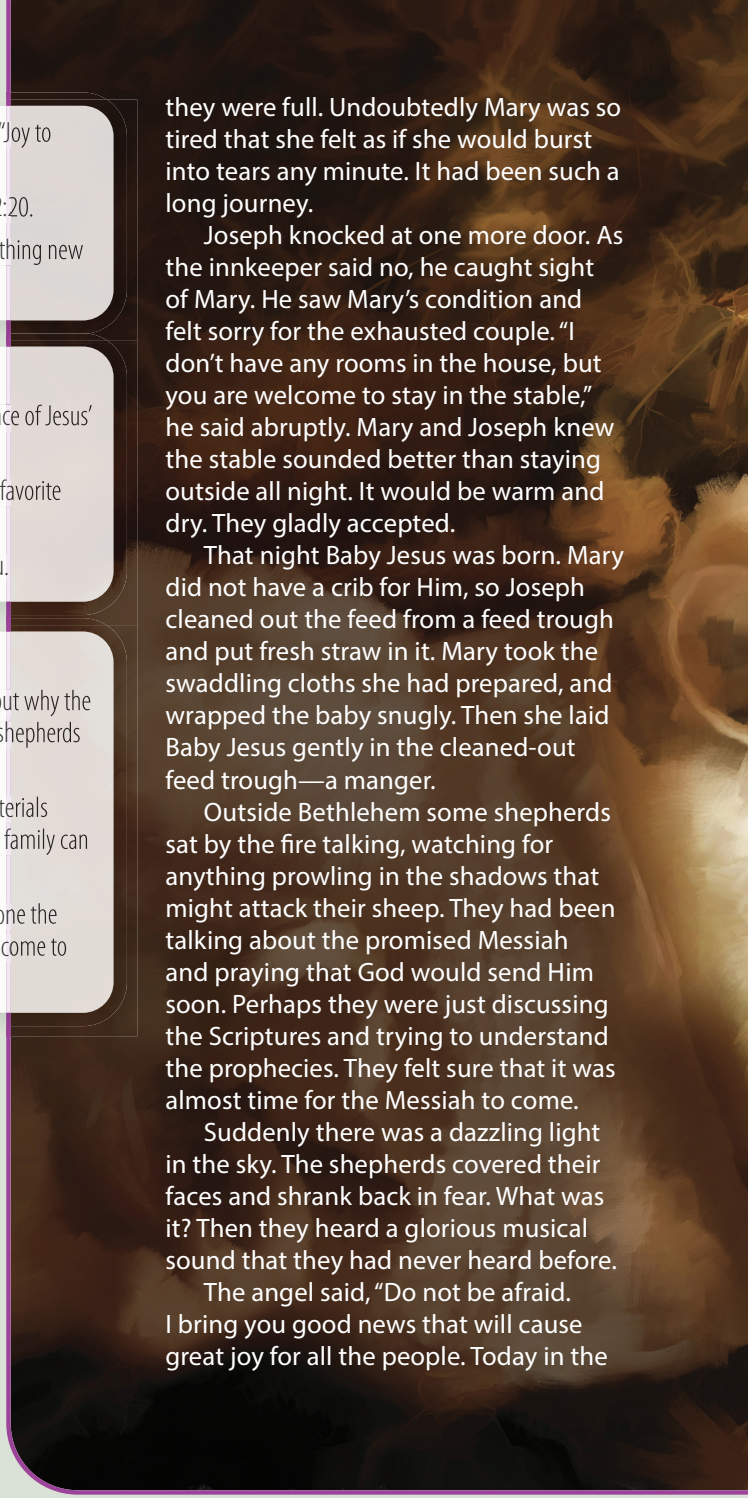
Tuesday

READ Read Luke 2:8-14.

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write about why the announcement brought by the angels to the shepherds was news of great joy for all people.

CREATE Construct a Nativity scene using materials found around your home. Place it where your family can see it.

PRAY Ask God to help you share with someone the great news about the birth of Jesus, who has come to save us.



they were full. Undoubtedly Mary was so tired that she felt as if she would burst into tears any minute. It had been such a long journey.

Joseph knocked at one more door. As the innkeeper said no, he caught sight of Mary. He saw Mary's condition and felt sorry for the exhausted couple. "I don't have any rooms in the house, but you are welcome to stay in the stable," he said abruptly. Mary and Joseph knew the stable sounded better than staying outside all night. It would be warm and dry. They gladly accepted.

That night Baby Jesus was born. Mary did not have a crib for Him, so Joseph cleaned out the feed from a feed trough and put fresh straw in it. Mary took the swaddling cloths she had prepared, and wrapped the baby snugly. Then she laid Baby Jesus gently in the cleaned-out feed trough—a manger.

Outside Bethlehem some shepherds sat by the fire talking, watching for anything prowling in the shadows that might attack their sheep. They had been talking about the promised Messiah and praying that God would send Him soon. Perhaps they were just discussing the Scriptures and trying to understand the prophecies. They felt sure that it was almost time for the Messiah to come.

Suddenly there was a dazzling light in the sky. The shepherds covered their faces and shrank back in fear. What was it? Then they heard a glorious musical sound that they had never heard before.

The angel said, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the



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Wednesday

READ Read Luke 2:15, 16.

WRITE What great news about what Jesus has done for you can you share with someone who does not know Him personally? Write about that experience in your Bible study journal.

SHARE With your parents' permission, think of someone you can invite for Friday dinner and family worship to share the good news about Jesus' birth.

PRAY Ask God for the desire to experience Jesus with the same excitement as the shepherds did.

Thursday

READ Read Luke 2:17-20 and Isaiah 40:9 and 52:7.

IMAGINE Imagine the shepherds running throughout Bethlehem in the middle of the night shouting the good news. What do you see, hear, feel, smell?

REWRITE Rewrite the power text on an outline of a foot, using your name in place of "shepherds" to describe an experience you've had telling someone about Jesus.

PRAY Ask God to give you ideas of how to tell the story of Jesus as joyfully as the shepherds did.

Friday

SING For family worship, sing Christmas carols.

READ Read Luke 2:1-20.

GIVE Present the Nativity scene to the guest you invited on Wednesday.

PRAY Thank God for your guest and praise Him for the joy of the good news about His Son's birth.

town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

The sky blazed even more brightly and filled with angels singing praises to God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests" (Luke 2:10-14).

No doubt the shepherds looked on, speechless. They had never seen or heard anything so beautiful. Then, just as suddenly, the angels disappeared.

Everything seemed very dark and quiet. Likely no one dared to say anything, as no one wanted to break the wonder of the moment. Then they all began to speak: "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened" (verse 15). They left their sheep and started toward the town. At first they walked, then jogged, and then they ran down the hillside as fast as they could go. They had to be sure that this was not a dream.

They found the family just as the angel had described. Mary and Joseph sat admiring their baby Son as He lay in the manger. The shepherds knelt and worshipped the Baby. They praised God for His amazing gift.

As they went back to the hillside, they told everyone they met about the angels and the Baby who had come to save all people. From that day on they kept praising God for sharing the good news of His wonderful gift with everyday people.



JOYFULLY, WE ADORE THEE

Instructions: The following Bible verse has five words missing. Can you discover them from the clues below and fit them into the grid? Then rearrange them to fit into the Bible verse. When you're finished, you will discover what we give God because we share in the inheritance of the saints.

"For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving _____ _____ ____ ____ _____, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light" (Colossians 1:9-12).

6 letters:

1. a word beginning with the letter F that means a person's grandfather's son.
2. a word beginning with the letter J that means happy
3. a word beginning with the letter T that means gratitude

3 letters:

4. a word beginning with the letter T that is a definite article

2 letters:

5. a word beginning with the letter T that rhymes with "dew"

