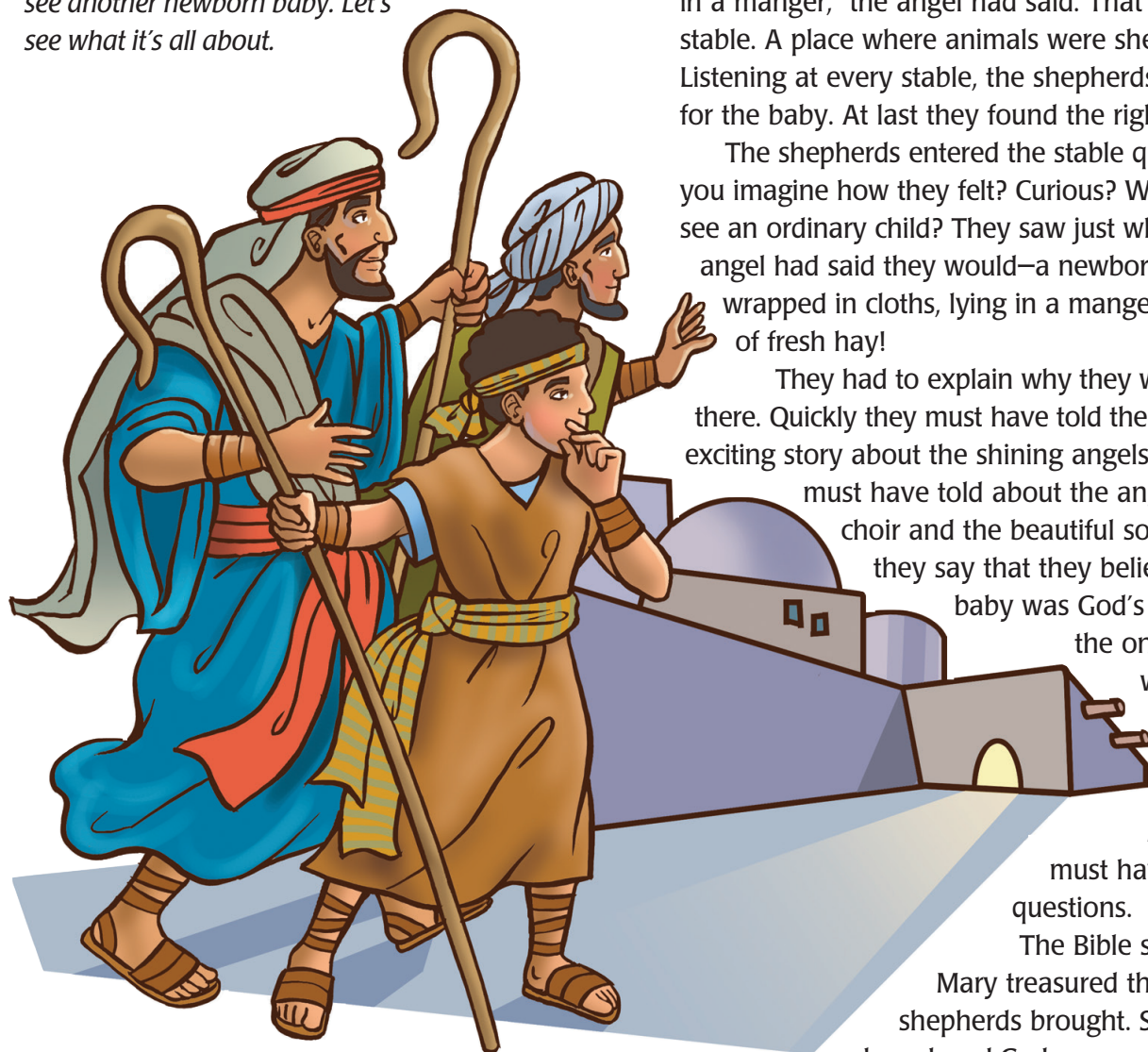


Spread the Joy

Luke 2:15-20; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 47, 48

One night Grandma was telling Sabine about the day Sabine was born. "When you were born, I lived far away from your mom and dad. When your dad phoned me and said, 'You have a new granddaughter!' I was so excited. I wanted to get on a plane and come to see you right away. I couldn't wait!"

In our Bible story some people couldn't wait to see another newborn baby. Let's see what it's all about.



The bright choir of angels had faded into the distance. The shepherds were in the dark again, alone with their sheep. They looked at each other. All thoughts of being with the sheep were gone. Such wonderful news! With angels telling them to find Baby Jesus, they had to go now!

The shepherds hastened to Bethlehem. "Lying in a manger," the angel had said. That meant a stable. A place where animals were sheltered. Listening at every stable, the shepherds searched for the baby. At last they found the right place.

The shepherds entered the stable quietly. Can you imagine how they felt? Curious? Would they see an ordinary child? They saw just what the angel had said they would—a newborn baby wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger, on top of fresh hay!

They had to explain why they were there. Quickly they must have told the exciting story about the shining angels. They must have told about the angel choir and the beautiful song. Did they say that they believed this baby was God's Son, the one who was their Savior? Mary and Joseph must have had questions.

The Bible says that Mary treasured the news the shepherds brought. She must have loved God even more for His

The Message

I worship God when I joyfully tell others about Jesus.

Memory Verse

“When they had seen him, they spread the word”

(Luke 2:17, NIV).

way of encouraging her. The shepherds’ story must have helped Joseph believe God’s word too.

Do you think the shepherds wanted to touch this special baby? Maybe they held their hands up to their faces in awe. Or maybe they slapped each other on the back as they smiled at the baby. They must have realized how blessed they had been to be visited by angels.

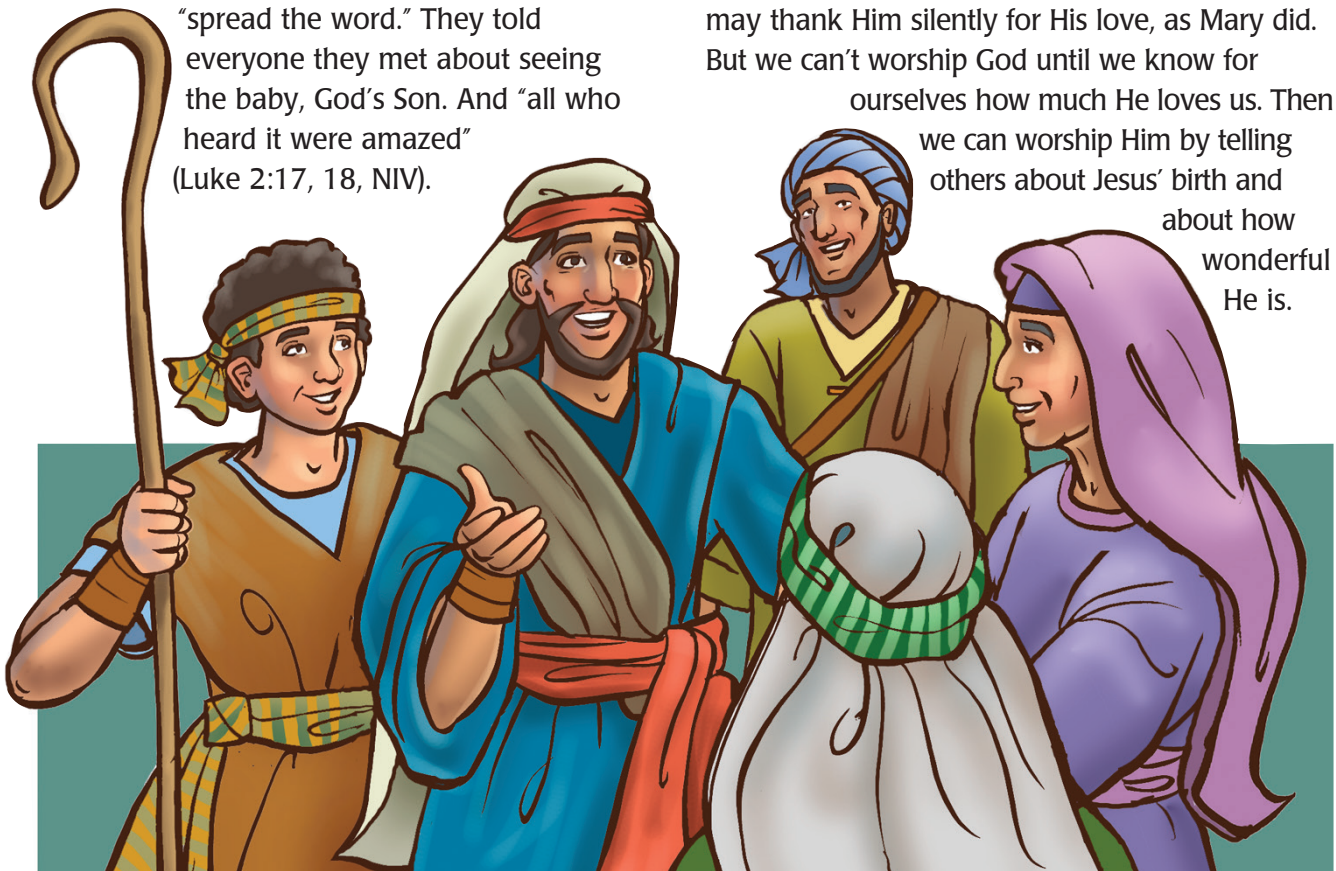
We don’t know how long the shepherds stayed in the stable. But we do know that they bowed down and worshipped Baby Jesus. They knew He was their Savior!

Perhaps they left Bethlehem a little before dawn, as people were beginning to move about. Or perhaps others were finishing a night’s work of some kind. The Bible says the shepherds “spread the word.” They told everyone they met about seeing the baby, God’s Son. And “all who heard it were amazed” (Luke 2:17, 18, NIV).

The shepherds returned to their sheep, praising God. They had seen the Messiah, just as they had been told.

And what of Mary and Joseph? How did they feel? “Mary treasured . . . all these things” and thought of them often (Luke 2:19). What would the future hold? How would she and Joseph raise this child—the Son of God?

To worship God may mean that we tell others about Him, as the shepherds did. Or we may thank Him silently for His love, as Mary did. But we can’t worship God until we know for ourselves how much He loves us. Then we can worship Him by telling others about Jesus’ birth and about how wonderful He is.



S A B B A T H

DO If possible, with your family visit a place where animals are kept. Find a place to sit and read your Bible story together.

READ Read Luke 2:17 together. What “word” did the shepherds spread? Have you “spread the word”?

SING Sing “Now Is Born the Divine Christ Child” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 78). Then, thank God for Jesus’ birth.

M O N D A Y

DO Make a megaphone by rolling a piece of paper into a cone. Decorate it with angels. Use it to call your family to worship.

READ With your family, read Luke 2:15, 16 again.

DO Share with a friend Jesus’ birth announcement that you made in Sabbath School. Tell what Jesus’ birth means to you. (Or make a card about Jesus’ birth. It should include: Who was born, where, when, and why.)

DO Teach your memory verse to your family. Then, thank God for each person.

W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE Make a tambourine to help you praise God. Place two paper plates together and punch holes around the edges. Weave some ribbon or yarn through the holes, leaving a small space. Pour in some dry beans. Then finish weaving and tie the ribbon.* Write “Praise God!” on your tambourine. Decorate it with angels and glitter.

DO Say your memory verse; then play your tambourine and sing about Jesus’ birth.

*Adapted from *Bible Story Crafts and Projects Children Love* (Loveland, Colo.: Group Publishing, 1995), p. 62.

S U N D A Y

READ Together with your family, read and discuss Luke 2:15, 16.

DO For Part 2 of your “TV newscast,” make more pictures covering Jesus’ birth. Today, draw and color pictures of the shepherds (1) traveling to Baby Jesus; and (2) at the stable. Write “The shepherds are looking for Jesus.” on the first picture and “The shepherds find Baby Jesus.” on the second. Glue or tape your pictures to the picture strip that you made last week.

DO Say your memory verse without help.

SING Sing “Away in a Manger” (*Sing for Joy*, no. 73 or 74). Ask Jesus to help you tell others about Him.

T U E S D A Y

READ During family worship, read and discuss Luke 2:17-19.

DO Make a picture for your “TV newscast.” Show the shepherds praising God and telling everyone about Baby Jesus. Write your memory verse on it. Join the picture to those made Sunday.

DO Thank God for Bible stories about Jesus.

T H U R S D A Y

READ Read Luke 2:20 for family worship.

DO For worship, show your “TV newscast” about Jesus’ birth, Part 2. You can review last week’s pictures and finish with this week’s pictures. Have soft music playing as you do your newscast.

DO Say your memory verse together, then, thank Jesus for His love.

F R I D A Y

DO With your family have a birthday party for Jesus. Invite a friend who might not know Jesus. Decorate a birthday cake with "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" Sing "Happy Birthday to You" to Jesus. Read Luke 2:8-16.

DO Take turns telling what Jesus' birth means to you.

SING Sing "Silent Night, Holy Night" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 76). Say your memory verse. Then pray that Jesus will come again soon.

SING If possible, sing Christmas carols to your neighbors and give them a small gift from your family.



Caves were used as stables for animals, so Jesus was probably born in a cave.

Spread
the Joy

PUZZLE

Directions: Help the shepherds find Baby Jesus. Start in the field with sheep and trace a route to the manger in Bethlehem.

