



Advent 4: Shepherds See God's Promised Son

Lesson Aim: To praise God as the shepherds did
when they saw baby Jesus.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God of Peace

THE WORD

Bible Story: Luke 2:8-20

What He Has Done: God sent the angels to tell the shepherds about Jesus, the promised Savior.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good." Psalm 118:1a

Unit 10: The Promised One			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
48	Advent 1: Isaiah Tells of the Promised Child, Isaiah 9:2-3, 6	God told Isaiah the promise of the coming child.	To know God promised to send His Son to us.
49	Advent 2: God's Promise to Mary, Luke 1:26-38	God promised Mary that she would give birth to His Son, Jesus.	To know Jesus is the Son of God.
50	Advent 3: The Promised Son Is Born, Luke 2:4-7	God fulfilled His promise for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem.	To know God keeps His promises.
51	Advent 4: Shepherds See God's Promised Son, Luke 2:8-20	God sent the angels to tell the shepherds about Jesus, the promised Savior.	To praise God as the shepherds did when they saw baby Jesus.
52	Wise Men Knew God's Promise, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	God sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem where they saw God's promises fulfilled.	To know promises from God are found in the Bible.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Ephesians 2:14-18. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for the peace You brought us through Jesus. Fill us with Your Spirit that we might truly celebrate and praise You just as the heavenly host and shepherds did. Amen."

WHAT ABOUT SANTA?

Many cultures incorporate the story of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) into their family traditions at Christmas, but not every family includes Santa in their celebration. To honor parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) their family traditions, but to redirect children's focus to celebrate the reason for Christmas, the gift of God's Son.

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Welcome	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of a shepherd or sheep
		Coloring Center: The Shepherds See Jesus	Coloring pages of the shepherds and baby Jesus, crayons
		Play-Dough Center: For the Baby	Play-dough, Christmas cookie cutters, play-dough tools
		Bubble Center: Jesus Is Born!	Bubble solution, bubble wand
		Nativity Center: Act It Out!	Nativity set
	Up to 5	Prepare for Worship	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org. Additional Hymn Suggestions: "Away in the Manger" "Silent Night" "Joy to the World" Additional Supplies: Advent wreath (See GOT TIME?)	Praise music, optional: musical instruments Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Give Thanks to the Lord" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "His One and Only Son" "The Lord Is Faithful" "I Am with You" "Let Everything That Has Breath" "I Bring You Good News" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God"
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	<i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 10, Lesson 51
THE WORD	Up to 10	Watch the Word: Luke 2:8-20	Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:16 Visuals: Picture of the Bible story, candy cane
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: Heavenly Host and Shepherds	2 small paper cups (uncoated), 2 craft sticks, sturdy white paper, nativity person template (available on resourcewell.org), black pipe cleaner, 3 cotton balls, gold or silver glitter, 2 labels, glue, crayons
		Game: Good News Angel	None
		Game: Praise God!	None
		Snack: Shepherds' Sheep	Marshmallows or cotton candy
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10, Lesson 51
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Luke 2:8-20	None
	Up to 15	Craft: Advent Crown Wreath	See craft.
	Up to 10	Game: Pass the Gift	Wrapped gift box (with removable lid), baby Jesus doll, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"
	Up to 10	Game: Give Thanks Bubbles	Bubbles, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about celebrating Jesus' birth

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



The God of Peace

THE WELCOME

WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____. I'm glad you are here! Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a stamp or sticker of a shepherd (or sheep). **Let this stamp (or sticker) of a shepherd (or sheep) help you remember the angel and shepherds praised God because Jesus had been born.**

Teacher's Note: These activity centers are designed to reinforce the lesson through hands-on learning experiences either individually or in small groups with the guidance of the teacher. Choose the Bible Activity Centers that best suit the children in your class. Set up the activity centers around the room before children arrive. Allow children to move freely among them.

COLORING CENTER: THE SHEPHERDS SEE JESUS

SUPPLIES

Coloring pages of the shepherds and baby Jesus, crayons

DO

Children color the picture while talking about God's promise to us.

TALK ABOUT

Today, we will talk about the shepherds who ran to see baby Jesus. Where was baby Jesus when they found Him? (In Bethlehem, in a stable, in a manger.) **The shepherds were very happy to find Him because they knew God had kept His promise. Do you remember what a promise is?** (Children respond.) **A promise is something we tell someone we will do. Who always keeps His promises?** (God.)

PLAY-DOUGH CENTER: FOR THE BABY

SUPPLIES

Play-dough, Christmas cookie cutters, play-dough tools

DO

Children play with the play-dough while talking about baby Jesus. Encourage children to make gifts for baby Jesus with the play-dough.

TALK ABOUT

Talk with the children about some of the special Christmas cookie cutters. **Christmas is all about a special baby. What is that baby's name?** (Jesus.) **Jesus was God's gift to us. What can we give to baby Jesus?** Encourage the children to make gifts for baby Jesus with the play-dough.

THE WELCOME *continued...*

BUBBLE CENTER: JESUS IS BORN!

SUPPLIES

Bubble solution, bubble wand

DO

Blow bubbles. Each time a child pops a bubble, encourage them to say, "Jesus is born!"

TALK ABOUT

Mary, Joseph, the angels, and the shepherds all praised God when Jesus was born. All of creation praises God. We can praise God, too! Each time you pop a bubble, let's praise God for Jesus' birth by saying, "Jesus is born! Praise God!"

NATIVITY CENTER: ACT IT OUT!

SUPPLIES

Nativity set

DO

Children help tell the story of Jesus' birth with the nativity set.

TALK ABOUT

Let's help each other tell the story of Jesus' birth.

- An angel told Mary about Jesus' birth.
- Then, an angel told Joseph to name the baby Jesus.
- Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem.
- There was no room for them in the inn so they stayed in a stable.
- The stable was the home for many animals.
- Baby Jesus was born in the stable.
- Angels told the shepherds about baby Jesus.
- The shepherds came to see the baby.
- The wise men followed a star and traveled from far away to see the baby Jesus.

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

It's time for Praise Time. Let's sing a "Clean Up Song" as we put things away. Praise children as they help clean.

**Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE

(For visual demonstrations, see www.signingsavvy.com)

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good."	(thanks) Move open hands up and away, flicking fingers twice. (Lord) Make "L" shape with right index finger and thumb. Move "L" from left shoulder to right hip as a royal sash. (good) Palms up, move one hand from mouth to lay on top of other palm.
Psalms 118:1a	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.

Adding sign language or motions to the Bible Memory Verse helps children recall what they are learning.



The God of Peace

THE WORSHIP

Supplies: Praise music, optional: musical instruments

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" as children move to that designated area.



Let's start Praise Time with prayer. Who are we talking to when we pray? (God.) Have the children bow their heads and close their eyes. **Dear God, we praise You for sending Your Son Jesus to us. We praise You for everything You have done for us. Amen.**



The Bible says that every living thing should praise God. Let's praise Him right now! Sing: "Let Everything that Has Breath."

We praise God because of who He is. We thank Him because of what He has done for us. Let's thank Him now by giving Him our offering. Sing: "Give Thanks to the Lord" while collecting the offering.



"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good!" We can give thanks to Him by sharing His words with other people. Let's share our Bible Memory Verse with each other. Have children pair up and face each other as you say the Bible Memory Verse together with the motions.

"Give thanks to the Lord	(thanks) Move open hands up and away, flicking fingers twice.
for He is good."	(Lord) Make "L" shape with right index finger and thumb. Move "L" from left shoulder to right hip as a royal sash.
Psalm 118:1a	(good) Palms up, move one hand from mouth to lay on top of other palm.
	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.



The Lighting of the Christmas Candles: The Shepherds' Candle

Advent Wreath: 4 candles set in a wreath

We light the Christmas candles to get our hearts ready to celebrate Christmas. Today, we light the Shepherds' Candle to remember the shepherds praised the Lord for sending baby Jesus as He had promised. Light the four candles on the Advent Wreath.



Let's see if our friends Delbert and Lello know what the shepherds did when they heard the good news about baby Jesus. Perform The Adventures of Delbert and Lello puppet script or read storybook: Prophets & Promises Unit 10, Lesson 51.



Sing: "Silent Night" or a favorite traditional Christmas hymn.



The angels and shepherds praised God

THE WORD

Supplies: Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Luke 2:16, picture of the Bible story, candy cane

Before we begin our Bible Time, let's say our Classroom Promise with the motions.

With my eyes on my teacher;	Point to eyes.
My mouth quiet as can be,	Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.
I will listen to hear,	Cup hand around ear.
How God loves you and me.	Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Let's reach deep in our pockets and pull out our listening ears. Reach in your pocket and cup your hands behind your ears as if listening.

Today, I brought a candy cane with me. Candy canes have been around for a very long time. Sometimes we hang them on Christmas trees as decorations and other times we just eat them. But, did you know candy canes can help us remember the Christmas story? (Children respond.)

Hold the candy cane right side up. **If you look at the candy cane like this, it looks like a shepherd's staff which is a long stick that is curved on the end. Shepherds use them to keep the sheep from wandering away. In our story, we will hear about the shepherds who ran to see baby Jesus.**

Hold the candy cane upside down. **Can you tell me what letter the candy cane looks like when it is upside down?** (The letter 'J'.) **Jesus' name starts with the letter 'J.'** **When do we celebrate Jesus' birthday?** (Christmas.) **Next time you see a candy cane, let it remind you of the Christmas story. Then, you can tell others how the shepherds saw baby Jesus. Let's listen.** Handle the Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 2:16.



WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 2:8-20

Read the story below or retell the passage in your own words. To illustrate the story, show a picture of the Bible story from a children's Bible, the coloring page, or other source.

- **An angel announced to the shepherds,**
- **"Fear not, I bring good news.**
- **The baby you'll find in Bethlehem**
- **Is the Savior born for you!"**

- **The shepherds saw the heavenly host;**
- **Heaven's army in the sky.**
- **The heavenly host said, "Peace on earth"**
- **And "Glory to God on high!"**

- **The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem**
- **To see the baby born to save us.**
- **All the way home they praised the Lord,**
- **Who kept the promise that He gave us.**

Where did the shepherds find baby Jesus? (Lying in the manger.) **Who did the angels and the shepherds praise?** (God.)



Praising God for sending His Son

THE WAY

Teacher Tip: Craft and games can be presented at the same time in different areas or one at a time depending on class size and teaching style.

CRAFT: HEAVENLY HOST AND SHEPHERDS

Purpose: To remind children that God sent the angel to announce Jesus' birth to the shepherds.

Supplies: 2 small paper cups (uncoated), 2 craft sticks, sturdy white paper, nativity person template (available on resourcewell.org), black pipe cleaner, 3 cotton balls, gold or silver glitter, 2 labels, glue, crayons

Prepare: On sturdy white paper, print and cut out one person and one heavenly host for each child from the nativity person template. The same template can be used for lessons 49-52. For the shepherd, cut a black pipe cleaner in half. Cut a slit in the bottom of each cup large enough for the craft stick to fit through it. On one label, print:

**The Shepherds See God's Promised Son
Luke 2:8-20**

On another label, print:

**The Heavenly Host Say, "Glory to God!"
Luke 2:8-20**

Adaptation for Ages 2-3: This craft has been adapted from the curriculum for ages 4-5. A simplified template has been provided for ages 2-3. Another option would be to find a printable nativity template online for children to color.

Lessons 48-52 Craft: This craft is the fourth in a set of five crafts appearing in Lessons 48-52. Together, they will create a Nativity scene for each child. Remind the children to keep their crafts in a special place. In the coming weeks, they will add other people from Christmas story.

Directions:

1. Children color the shepherd and the heavenly host.

Shepherd:

2. Bend the pipe cleaner into a shepherd's staff with a hook on the end. Glue it to the robe.
3. Attach the **The Shepherds See God's Promised Son. Luke 2:8-20** label to the cup.

Heavenly Host:

4. Spread glue on the robes and sprinkle with a little glitter.
5. Glue cotton balls to the bottom of the robes.
6. Attach the **The Heavenly Host Say, "Glory to God!" Luke 2:8-20** label to the cup.

Both Figures:

7. Glue the shepherd and the heavenly host each to the top half of a craft stick.
8. Insert the craft sticks each into a cup through the slit so they stand up.

Craft Discussion:

- **The heavenly hosts are angels in the army of heaven. When they appeared to the shepherds, who did they praise? (God.)**
- **What did the shepherds do on their way home after they saw baby Jesus? (They praised God.)**

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: GOOD NEWS ANGEL

Purpose: Children will pretend to be the angel who delivered the news of Jesus' birth to the shepherds.

Supplies: None

Let's act out our story of the angel telling the shepherds Jesus has been born and the heavenly host, who are the angels in the army of heaven, praising God.

Directions:

1. Children sit in a half circle as the heavenly host.
2. Choose one child to be the angel. The angel stands in front of the children.
3. Choose three children to be the shepherds. The shepherds stand next to the angel.
4. The angel announces, **"I bring you good news!"**
5. Everyone in the heavenly host jumps up and shouts, **"Glory to God in the highest!"**
6. The shepherds clap and say, **"Praise God."**
7. Play again, choosing different children to be the angel, heavenly host, and shepherds.

GAME: PRAISE GOD!

Purpose: Children will praise God for each part of the Christmas story.

Supplies: None

The angel praised God. The heavenly host praised God. The shepherds praised God. They each praised God because Jesus was born. We can praise God for Jesus' birth, too!

Directions:

1. Children stand in a circle, holding hands.
2. Walk around in a circle as you chant:
We bring you good news, good news, good news.
We bring you good news. Jesus was born for you!
Everyone stands still.
Say, **"God kept His promise to send His Son!"**
Children raise their hands from their sides up above their heads as you lead the children in shouting, **"Praise God!!"**
3. Repeat step 2 several times. Each time, replace **"God kept His promise to send His Son!"** with one of the phrases below.
 - **God keeps all His promises!**
 - **The angel brought good news!**
 - **Jesus is God's one and only Son!**
 - **Jesus came to save us!**
 - **Jesus loves us very much!**
 - **This Christmas, we can praise God!**

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: SHEPHERDS' SHEEP

Purpose: Children will eat a snack while discussing how the angel, heavenly host, and shepherds' responded to Jesus' birth with praise.

Snack Suggestion: Marshmallows or cotton candy

Directions:

1. Serve the snacks and drinks.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or another familiar tune.
**God our Father, God our Father. Once again, once again,
Thank You for our blessings. Thank You for our blessings. Amen. Amen.**
3. Pray. Lead discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
 - **Our snack makes me think of fluffy sheep. The shepherds were watching their sheep when the angel came.**
 - **Who did the angel say had been born?** (Jesus.)
 - **The heavenly host are the angels in the army of heaven. Who did the heavenly host praise?** (God.) **Everyone in heaven was happy baby Jesus had been born.**
 - **The shepherds praised God after they saw baby Jesus. Can you praise God?** (Yes!)



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

Gather children in a circle sitting or standing and practice the words and motions.

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good." Psalm 118:1a	(thanks) Move open hands up and away, flicking fingers twice. (Lord) Make "L" shape with right index finger and thumb. Move "L" from left shoulder to right hip as a royal sash. (good) Palms up, move one hand from mouth to lay on top of other palm. Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.
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PRAY

Let's pray together. Say a closing prayer with the children.

PLAY

Allow children to play with selected toys or centers or choose a book to read to them.

DISMISSAL

Have children take home their coloring page, craft, and a copy of the Ponder, Pray & Play for 2-3's.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SAY & DO: LUKE 2:8-20

Purpose: This pantomime version of the Bible Story helps children remember the story details.

Supplies: None

Directions: With each phrase, the teacher says the phrase and leads the children in doing the hand motions.

- **An angel announced to the shepherds,** (Cup hands around mouth.)
- **"Fear not, I bring good news.** (Point to self.)
- **The baby you'll find in Bethlehem** (Point to opposite corner.)
- **Is the Savior born for you!"** (Point to each other.)

- **The shepherds saw the heavenly host;** (Use hands as binoculars.)
- **Heaven's army in the sky.** (Point across the sky.)
- **The heavenly host said, "Peace on earth"** (Fold hands in prayer.)
- **And "Glory to God on high!"** (Point to heaven.)

- **The shepherds hurried to Bethlehem** (Run in place.)
- **To see the baby born to save us.** (Pretend to rock baby in arms.)
- **All the way home they praised the Lord,** (Raise hands to the sky in praise.)
- **Who kept the promise that He gave us!** (Point to heaven.)

CRAFT: ADVENT CROWN WREATH

Purpose: Children work together to create an Advent crown wreath.

Supplies: Poster board or sturdy paper, craft decorations, gold paint (or gold foil, gold wrapping paper, etc.), four tall gold candles, four candleholders, one gold dinner plate or plate wrapped in gold foil or paper, stapler, glue

Prepare: Cut a 3-inch x 24-inch strip of poster board. Paint the poster board strip gold. Let it dry. Staple the ends to create a circle (crown) shape.

Teacher Tip: Create one wreath for the classroom or individual wreaths for children to take home. The directions for this wreath suggest four candles. Some wreaths add a fifth candle, "the Christ Candle" which is in the center of the wreath and lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day.

Advent means coming. In the four weeks before Christmas, believers use an Advent wreath to celebrate the coming of Jesus. Our Advent wreath is in round; it has no beginning and no end. This reminds us of the promise of a never ending life forever with God. Each week we light a new candle to remind us of part of the Christmas story.

Directions:

1. Decorate the circle with craft decorations.
2. Place the crown on a gold dinner plate or plate wrapped in gold foil or paper.
3. Place the four gold candles in holders evenly along the inner rim of crown.

Optional Flameless Advent Crown Wreaths: (1) Cut candle shapes from sturdy gold or yellow paper. Color the flames red or orange. Attach the candles to the crown with tape. (2) Use battery operated candles.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good." Psalm 118:1a

GAME: PASS THE GIFT

Purpose: Children learn the meaning of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Wrapped gift box (with removable lid), baby Jesus doll, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"

Prepare: Place baby Jesus inside the box and close the box lid.

God gives you lots of gifts. One of the things He gives you is people who love you very much. When someone gives something to you, what should you do? (Thank them.) Our Bible Memory Verse tells us we should thank God for the gifts and the people He has given us. It says, "Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good."

Directions:

1. Children sit in a circle. Give the gift box to one of the children.
2. **What is one thing you thank God for?** (Child responds.)
3. Lead all the children in saying, **"Thank you, God!"**
4. Children pass the gift around the circle. While each child holds the gift, repeat steps 2-3.
5. **Let's see the biggest gift God has given to us.**
6. Choose one child to open the box and discover baby Jesus inside.
7. Sing the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song together as a celebration of thanks to God.

GAME: GIVE THANKS BUBBLES

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Bubbles, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"

Our Bible Memory Verse tells us God is good. He is always good to you and me! Together, let's say, "God is good." Lead the children in saying, "God is good." Now, let's listen to our Bible Memory Verse Song as we have fun with these bubbles. When you catch or pop a bubble, I want you to shout "God is good!"

Directions:

1. Children stand in the play area.
2. While the Bible Memory Verse Song is playing, blow bubbles for the children to catch.
3. Encourage the children to shout **"God is good!"** each time they catch or pop a bubble.

GOT TIME? *continued...*



STORY TIME

Gather the children and read a favorite story. This can be a Bible story, a chapter from *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello*, or a story about Jesus' birth or people celebrating His birth.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 10, Lesson 51: Advent 4: Shepherds See God's Promised Son

PONDER! To celebrate the coming of Jesus, create a family Advent Wreath using a circle of greenery and four candles to stand for the four Sundays before Christmas. Light the fourth candle as the Shepherds' Candle and read Luke 2:8-20. Talk about the message the angel brought the shepherds. What did the shepherds do after they saw baby Jesus?

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, we praise You for sending Your Son at Christmas. Help us remember His birth is the reason we celebrate Christmas. Amen."

PLAY! Christmas is Jesus' birthday, so plan a party with your family. Enjoy your family's favorite way to celebrate a birthday. As your gift to Jesus, gather food, blankets, or clothes to give to people in need. Tell them Jesus loves them.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Give thanks to the Lord	(thanks) Move open hands up and away, flicking fingers twice. (Lord) Make "L" shape with right index finger and thumb. Move "L" from left shoulder to right hip as a royal sash.
for He is good."	(good) Palms up, move one hand from mouth to lay on top of other palm.
Psalms 118:1a	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.