



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.

THE WAY

Whisper Verse: "Praise the Lord."

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. Many young children are very excited about this tradition. To honor all parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) their family traditions, but to redirect their focus to celebrate the gift of God's Son.

Teacher Tip: Celebrate Jesus' birth with a party during this lesson. Decorate with balloons, streamers, or other inexpensive decorations. Serve a favorite Christmas treat.



Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 15	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of a shepherd or sheep
		Whisper Verse	Sign language for "Praise the Lord."
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org. Additional Supplies: Advent wreath (See GOT TIME?)	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "Give Thanks to the Lord" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "His One and Only Son" "I Bring You Good News" "I Am with You" "Let Everything That Has Breath" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" "The Lord Is Faithful" Additional Hymn Suggestions: "Away in a Manger"
		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 Visual: "Heavenly Host and Shepherds" craft sample
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: Heavenly Host and Shepherds	2 small paper cups (uncoated), 2 craft sticks, sturdy paper (tan, gray, white), brown felt, black pipe cleaner, 3 cotton balls, gold or silver glitter, glue, pen or marker, 2 stickers or labels
		Game: Good News Angels	None
		Game: Praise the Lord!	None
		Snack: Shepherds' Sheep	Marshmallows or cotton candy
		Circle of Prayer	None
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10, Lesson 51 Color This Story: "Shepherds See God's Promised Son"
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Luke 2:8-20	None
	Up to 10	Game: Pass the Gift	Wrapped gift box (with removable lid), baby Jesus (doll or "Baby Jesus" craft sample), Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"
	Up to 10	Game: Shout It Out	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "Give Thanks to the Lord"
	Up to 15	Craft: Advent Crown Wreath	See GOT TIME?
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about celebrating Jesus' birth

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



Praise the Lord

THE 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 the Lord because Jesus had been born. Today's Whisper Verse is "Praise the Lord."** Teach the Whisper Verse in spoken language and in sign language below. **We call it the Whisper Verse so you can whisper it to others.***

SIGN LANGUAGE: "Praise the Lord."

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

Each time we say today's Whisper Verse, let's say it with two hand motions:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| "Praise" | The right index finger gently taps the lips and then both hands clap. These signs for "truth" and "applaud," create the sign for "praise." |
| "(the) Lord." | Extend thumb and index finger of right hand to create an "L" shape. Bring "L" shape diagonal across chest from the left shoulder to the right hip as a royal sash. |

Allow children to enjoy free play until everyone has arrived. **Let's sing the "Clean Up Song" as we put toys away before Praise Time.** Praise any child who helps. Allow several minutes for clean up.

**"Clean Up Song": Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

Gather and seat children in Praise Time area.

***Today's Whisper Verse:** "Praise the Lord," Psalm 147:1. The Whisper Verse is a tool to help the children learn a major point in the lesson. It is coupled with sign language or hand motions as a memory aid. The verse is not necessarily chosen from today's Bible story.



The God of Peace

THE WORSHIP

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.



It's Praise Time—our time to sing praise to the God of Peace. God gave us peace when He gave us His Son Jesus. After the angel told the shepherds baby Jesus was born, the sky filled with the heavenly host, the army of heaven. They praised the Lord saying, “Glory to God in the highest!” and “Peace on earth.” Let's sing about that good news. Sing: “I Bring You Good News.”

The angel, the heavenly host, and the shepherds all praised the Lord. We can praise Him, too. Our Whisper Verse says, “Praise the Lord.” Review the Whisper Verse together: “Praise the Lord.” Include sign language. Sing: “Let Everything That Has Breath.” Include the Whisper Verse sign language when singing the lyrics, “Praise the Lord.”

We praise the Lord 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: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song “Give Thanks to the Lord” while collecting the offering.



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. Choose a child to assist in lighting the four purple 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.



When the shepherds saw baby Jesus, they praised the Lord. Let's praise Him now with a favorite Christmas hymn. Sing: “Away in a Manger” or a favorite traditional Christmas hymn.



The host and shepherds praised the Lord

THE WORD

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

With my eyes on my teacher;

My mouth quiet as can be,

I will listen to hear,

How God loves you and me.

Point to eyes.

Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.

Cup hand around ear.

Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Last time, we learned baby Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Today, we will hear how God sent an angel to tell the shepherds the good news of baby Jesus' birth. Handle the Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Luke 2:16.

WATCH THE WORD: LUKE 2:8-20

Read the points below or retell the passage in your own words using the points below as a general guide. To illustrate the story, display the "Heavenly Host and Shepherds" craft sample. Other visual options include a picture of the heavenly host and shepherds, Color This Story, or any related picture.

- **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.) **Let's find our answer in the Bible.** Read Luke 2:16 from the teacher's Bible.

Who did the heavenly host and the shepherds praise? (The Lord.) **Our Whisper Verse tells us the answer. Let's say it together: "Praise the Lord."** Include sign language or hand motions.



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 paper (tan, gray, white), brown felt, black pipe cleaner, 3 cotton balls, gold or silver glitter, glue, pen or marker, 2 stickers or labels

Prepare: Cut a slit in the bottom of each cup large enough for the craft stick to fit through it. On one sticker or label, print: **The Shepherds See God's Promised Son. Luke 2:8-20**. On another sticker or label, print: **The Heavenly Host Say, "Glory to God!" Luke 2:8-20**

For the heavenly host:

- From sturdy white paper, cut three 2-inch circles and three 4-inch triangles for heads and bodies.

For the shepherd:

- From sturdy tan paper, cut a 2-inch diameter circle for his head.
- From sturdy gray paper, cut a 4-inch triangle for his robe.
- From brown felt, cut a 3-inch x ½-inch strip for a belt.
- Cut a black pipe cleaner in half.

Teacher Tip #1: 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.

Teacher Tip #2: To save time, pre-attach the heads on the bodies and the craft sticks on the bodies.

Directions for the heavenly host:

1. Draw the face of a heavenly host on each white circle.
2. Glue a white circle to the top of each of the three robes (triangles).
3. Overlap and glue the three robes so the three figures are attached, standing side-by-side.
4. Spread glue on the robes and sprinkle with a little glitter.
5. Glue cotton balls to the bottom of the robes.
6. Glue the figure on a craft stick. Insert the craft stick in one of the two cups.
7. Attach the **The Heavenly Host Say, "Glory to God!" Luke 2:8-20** label to the cup.

Directions for the shepherd:

1. Draw the shepherd's face and hair on the tan head. Glue it to the top of the gray robe (triangle).
2. Glue the felt belt onto the shepherd's robe.
3. Bend the pipe cleaner into a shepherd's staff with a hook on the end. Glue it to the robe.
4. Glue the figure on a craft stick. Insert the shepherd's craft stick in the other cup.
5. Attach the **The Shepherds See God's Promised Son. Luke 2:8-20** label to the cup.

Craft Discussion:

- **The heavenly host is 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 seeing baby Jesus? (They praised God.) That's our Whisper Verse! Let's say it with our motions right now! Say the Whisper Verse together with the hand motions.**

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 is 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 say and sign the Whisper Verse, **"Praise the Lord."**
7. Play again, choosing different children to be the angel, heavenly host, and shepherds.

GAME: PRAISE THE LORD!

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

Supplies: None

The angel praised the Lord. The heavenly host (the army of heaven) praised the Lord. The shepherds praised the Lord. They each praised the Lord because Jesus was born. We can praise the Lord for Jesus' birth, too!

Directions:

1. Divide the children into two groups: the heavenly host and the shepherds. Seat each group on opposite sides of the play area.
2. Read each of the phrases below. After each phrase, point to one of the groups. The group you point to stands up and says and signs the Whisper Verse, **"Praise the Lord."** Alternate groups after each phrase.
 - **God kept His promise to send His Son!**
 - **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 the Lord!**
3. **Optional:** Continue the game by choosing children to stand and complete the sentence: **"Lord, I praise You because You ..."** After completing the sentence, he or she points to a group who stands up and says and signs the Whisper Verse, "Praise the Lord."

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 snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or other 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. 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.)
 - **Who remembers our Whisper Verse?** Choose a child to demonstrate the motions to the Whisper Verse: "Praise the Lord."
 - **The heavenly host is the army of heaven. Who did the heavenly host praise?** (The Lord God.) **Everyone in heaven was happy baby Jesus had been born.**
 - **The shepherds praised the Lord after they saw baby Jesus. Can you praise the Lord?** (Yes!)



CIRCLE OF PRAYER

God made you and He cares for you. He loves to hear you pray with private words or words you say out loud. Let's fold our hands and close our eyes. As I lift up your name to God in heaven, I will lay my hand on your shoulder. Let's pray together.

Dear God, thank You for making us and loving us. We lift up to You a special prayer for ____, ____, ____ (say each name). We pray for our families and friends. Thank You for teaching us how to love one another. Amen.



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

COMPLETED CRAFT: Take home your "Heavenly Host and Shepherd" craft. Tell someone the same news the angel told the shepherds—Jesus has been born!

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY: Distribute Ponder, Pray & Play cards, if available. **Show this card to your family. Talk about how the heavenly host and shepherds praised the Lord because Jesus had been born.**

COLOR THIS STORY: "The Shepherds See God's Promised Son." Discuss the Bible story and play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, "Give Thanks to the Lord," as the children color.



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 acts it out with hand motions; then repeats the same phrase and motions with the children.

- **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,** (Whisper Verse sign language.)
- **Who kept the promise that He gave us!** (Point to heaven.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

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

GAME: SHOUT IT OUT

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

Supplies: 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!

Directions:

1. Divide the children into two groups. Groups sit on opposite sides of the play area.
2. Teach one group the first part of the verse: **"Give thanks to the Lord..."** Teach the other group the second part: **"...for He is good."**
3. Tell the children one way God has been good to you. Point to each group in order and lead them in jumping up and shouting their part of the verse.
4. Choose a child to stand and share one way God has been good to him or her. The child points to each group to stand and say their part of the verse.
5. Play until each child has a turn.
6. Finish by singing the Bible Memory Verse Song. Challenge children to sing it as loud as they can.

GOT TIME? *continued...*

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.

CRAFT: ADVENT CROWN WREATH

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

Supplies: Poster board or sturdy paper, craft jewels or costume jewelry, 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. Each week we light a new candle. 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.

Directions:

1. Decorate the circle with craft jewels or costume jewelry.
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...*



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. When the heavenly host (heaven's army) appeared in the sky, what did they do? 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! "Birthday Party!" 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.

Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse:

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