



**Worship Illustration: Storybook
The Love Sub
Prophets & Promises: Advent of the Promised One
Unit 10, Lesson 51**

Advent 4: Shepherds See the Promised One

Luke 2:1-20

"Oh, hey, Handsome," Shiloh said sadly, as he slid down the pole onto the Command Deck. "I know we've been getting ready for our first Christmas aboard the Love Sub and that should make me happy, but it just seems like something's missing." He accepted the gingerbread cookie Handsome offered him. He began to nibble around its edges. "Thanks, Handsome! That makes me feel a little better, but I just wish I had more Christmas spirit."

"Merry Christmas!" Woodstock greeted from above. The bright, red Christmas hat bounced merrily on his head as he slid down the pole. "Merry Christmas, Shiloh. Guess what I have."

Shiloh looked at him blankly. "Uh, the flu?"

"No, dude! Virtual Christmas cards!" Handsome waved the remote control at the large screen hanging on the wall. "Flash them up there, Handsome." A picture of a Christmas tree with the title, "Merry Christmas, Kong-a-loosh!" flashed on the screen. "This one's from Ambassador Nofutu!" Handsome clicked the remote again and a picture of a sleeping Dr. Sominex with the title, "Peace on Earth" appeared. "That's from Dr. Sominex. Next, please." A swirling rainbow of colors flashed on the screen with the title, "God so loved the world" splashed across the front of the picture in bubbly red and green letters. "And, this one is from your mom, Ophelia."

Shiloh burst into tears. "That is so sad."

Woodstock stared at Shiloh. "I thought it would make you happy to hear from home."

"It just makes me homesick!" Shiloh wailed.

"Oh, Shiloh!" Woodstock comforted him as he handed him a tissue. "I know what will cheer you up. Let's read the best Christmas card of all time, the Power Source. Let me get it out!"

"I don't know if anything can cheer up my lonely heart," Shiloh moaned.

"God's Word will!" Woodstock assured him. as he picked up the Bible from behind the Power Panel and turned to Luke 2. "You know you're not the first person who was away from home on Christmas. Joseph and Mary had to go all the way to Bethlehem."

"Why?" Shiloh sniffled.

"The governor said everyone had to go back to their hometown so they could count all the people," Woodstock explained, "and Joseph's family was from a little town called Bethlehem."

"But, I thought Mary was going to have a baby," Shiloh remembered.

"She was!" Woodstock confirmed. "The time came for the baby to be born while they were on the trip."

"I remember this story," Shiloh said. "There was no room at the inn, so they had to give baby Jesus a manger for a bed."

"That's right, dude. Mary and Joseph were far away from home, but that didn't stop God from keeping His promise," Woodstock explained.

"You mean the promise that He would send a Savior?" Shiloh wondered. When Woodstock answered with a nod, Shiloh continued, "I'll bet everyone was happy about that."

"I know the shepherds were happy when they heard the Good News!"

"What shepherds?" Shiloh asked, dabbing his eyes with the tissue that was now soggy.

"There were shepherds living in the fields," Woodstock began, "and an angel showed up and told them where to find Jesus."

Shiloh's eyes widened. "Whoa, they met an angel?"

"They sure did. Not only that, but the Bible says a whole company of heavenly host appeared. They were the army of heaven and they were praising God." Woodstock found the words of the heavenly host in the Bible and read aloud, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."

"Yeah, dudes. Glory to God, man!" Shiloh cheered, his original sorrow long forgotten. "God wants us all to give Him glory!"

"And, He gives peace to men on whom His favor rests," Woodstock added.

"Totally," Shiloh started to agree, but then he paused. "Wait ... who are the men on whom God's favor rests?"

"They are the people God is pleased with. They're not just men, but every man, woman, and child who believes in Jesus." Woodstock patted Shiloh on the shoulder. "Dude, that's us! God is pleased with all who believe. He loves us so much that He sends ..."

"... peace! I get it!" Shiloh interrupted. "That's what Isaiah meant when he called Jesus the Prince of Peace!"

"Right on, dude!" Woodstock agreed. "Before Jesus was born, people were separated from God by their sin. They had no peace with God, because they were fighting against doing things His way. That's called sin!"

"But, Jesus brought peace between believers and God," Shiloh continued.

"That's what the prophets were pointing us to ..." Woodstock clicked the remote a few times so Dr. Sominex's virtual card was showing on the screen. "... peace on Earth," Woodstock finished while pointing at the title on the card.

"That peace can only be found in knowing Jesus, our Savior," Shiloh said.

"Amen," Woodstock confirmed. "Jesus came to bring peace between God and us, just as God had promised."

"Yeah, when we have peace with God, we have peace with each other, too," Shiloh said.

"That's right," Woodstock agreed, "even enemies can get along if they both decide to follow Jesus."

Shiloh grinned. "Whoa! That's the power of love ... the love of Jesus!"

Woodstock put his arm around Shiloh, "That's what really brings glory to God!"

"So, what did the shepherds do when they heard Jesus came to bring peace?" Shiloh asked.

"They hurried and found Mary, Joseph, and the baby. Then, they spread the word about what the angel said," Woodstock explained.

"Man, I wish I was a shepherd," Shiloh said wistfully.

"We're kind of like the shepherds; we spread God's Word to all His sheep. There's one more thing we're going to do." Woodstock gave the Bible to Shiloh. "Read the last part."

"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen ..." Shiloh's head jerked up and he stared at his uncle. "Uncle Woody, does this mean what I think it does? Are we going home?"

"You got it, dude!" Woodstock smiled broadly at Shiloh's reaction to his surprise. "We're going home for Christmas! We're taking the Love Sub back to 1973!"

"Out of sight!" Shiloh shouted. "I have so many groovy stories to tell my friends about all the far out prophets we met and how they all point us to the Prince of Peace."

"You know what?" Woodstock began. "That's a great way to bring peace to your friends and our family."

Shiloh danced around the room. "Speaking of peace, we've gotta peace out and get back to our time."

Woodstock motioned for Shiloh to strap into the first mate's chair while he took his spot in the captain's chair. "Even as we return to our own time in history, always remember, 'No matter where you are in time, God is good all the time!'"