

Fourth Week of Advent

The Little King



 **Light all Four Colored Candles**

 **Opening Prayer and Song**

Heavenly Father, You love to give good gifts to people. Jesus is the most precious gift of all. Show us again His greatness, power, and glory. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Silent Night, Holy Night

Franz Xaver Gruber / Joseph Mohr / Ron Klusmeier

Verse 1

*Silent night holy night
All is calm all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and child
Holy infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace
Sleep in heavenly peace*

Verse 2

*Silent night holy night
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar*

*Heavenly hosts sing alleluia
Christ the Savior is born
Christ the Savior is born*

Verse 3

*Silent night holy night
Son of God love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus Lord at Thy birth
Jesus Lord at Thy birth*

Devotional

Relief finally came. Peace. Quiet. The warmth of holding the baby brought sheer pleasure and an uncontainable joy. Mary really thought she would burst with happiness! How could all these emotions be in one heart? The world seemed more alive than it had ever been! This baby was the greatest miracle of all!

God became flesh. This baby in Mary's arms was fully God and fully human. He was as much man as if he were never God; and as much God

Mary did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters? Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? This child that you've delivered, will soon deliver you.

Mary did you know that your baby boy is the Lord of all creation? Mary did you know that your sleeping child will one day rule the nations?...

This sleeping Child you're holding is the Great I AM.

(from Mary, Did you Know?)

as if he were never man. Amazing! God was now dwelling among people in a radically, new way. No one could have imagined this creative, bold move of God's love. Astonishingly, God did not send His One and only Son to live among royalty and the elite. He placed him in Joseph's home, a carpenter's home, to settle in among merchants, fishermen, shepherds and farmers.

Mary and Joseph talked, breaking the silence. What could all this mean? There were no answers, at least, no answers that made sense. Joseph knew he longed for the Messiah that God promised, but how could this baby be the

Promised King? He gazed at this small bundle wrapped in cloths, lying quietly in the manger, and wondered what God would do next.

Then all of a sudden, the heavens sang louder than a thousand choirs on this silent night. God was stirring again, sending an angel to announce the news of the Savior to shepherds. In a moment, a brightness burst upon the countryside as a great company of angels sang, **"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests."**

As you think of Joseph and Mary watching baby Jesus, let's read the next move of God in this dramatic story.

Let's read the story...



There were shepherders camping in the neighborhood. They had set night watches over their sheep. Suddenly, God's angel stood among them and God's glory blazed around them. They were terrified. The angel said, "Don't be afraid. I'm here to announce a great and joyful event that is meant for everybody worldwide: A Savior has just been born in David's town, a Savior who is Messiah and Master. This is what you're to look for: a baby wrapped in a blanket and lying in a manger."

At once the angel was joined by a huge angelic choir singing God's praises: "Glory to God in the heavenly heights, peace to all men and women on earth who please him."

As the angel choir withdrew into heaven, the shepherders talked it over. "Let's get over to Bethlehem as fast as we can and see for ourselves what God has revealed to us." They left, running and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in the manger. Seeing was believing. They told everyone they met what the angels had said about this child. All who heard the shepherders were impressed.

Mary kept all these things to herself, holding them dear, deep within herself. The shepherders returned and let loose, glorifying and praising God for everything they had heard and seen. It turned out exactly the way they'd been told!

Luke 2:8-20 (*The Message*)

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we praise you that You choose the simple and confound the wise. You use the humble to announce the news of the birth of the Savior. We thank You for Your kindness in sending Jesus, our Master and Savior. We ask You to bless this Christmas season and draw us closer to You. We love You and adore You. In Jesus' Name. Amen.

Record your own prayers.

Family Activity

Choose an activity listed 58-63 or continue to work on the previous one.



Daily Scripture Meditations

Monday: Matthew 2:1-6

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

*"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."*

This is a familiar part of the Christmas story. Very importantly, they are outside of Israel and they are aware of what God is doing. Why do you think Herod was so threatened?

What strikes you as significant in this episode?

Tuesday: Matthew 2:7-12

"Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."

What was your response the first time you heard and understood the good news of Jesus Christ?

The Magi, immediately bowed and worshiped Jesus. They brought treasures. What treasures would you want to bring to Jesus this year?

Wednesday: Matthew 2:13-23

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

*"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more."*

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child's life are dead." So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: "He will be called a Nazarene."

King Herod was threatened and offended by Jesus. Why do you think so many people are threatened and offended by Jesus today?

How do we try to remove Jesus' authority from our lives today?

Thursday: Luke 2:25-35

"Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

'Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.'"

In difficult times, where do you turn to be consoled?

Why is it difficult to turn to God sometimes?

Friday: Luke 2:33-35

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

How have you seen Jesus cause division?

Mary is also caused much pain. What issues in the Scriptures point to Mary's pain?

Saturday: Luke 2:36-38

There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

Anna was an ordinary woman serving in the temple hoping that God would fulfill His promises soon. Take time to thank God for your redemption through Christ.

Write out a prayer expressing your commitment to serve to the honor of Christ.

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor.

The Prophet Isaiah (61:1-2a) written over 700 years before Jesus