

# A Journey to Bethlehem



Dear RHL Families,

As Advent and Christmas draw near, it is time to slow down and prepare our hearts for Jesus! Instead of having an “Elf on the Shelf,” this resource utilizes the Nativity. Please do not feel obligated to follow these suggestions; they are presented here for your consideration. Adapt it to your family's needs and capabilities. Although this resource is designed for daily use, feel free to use it weekly, every other day, or in any other configuration that works for your family.

For 25 days, you will follow the Christmas story together. Each day features a card that contains a snippet of the Christmas story, the corresponding scripture verses, and a thought-provoking question to discuss as a family. Again, please feel free to make it your own! Adjust the questions to fit your family if necessary.

Below is our suggestion of how to use this resource. All figures are provided at the end of this handout, but if you have a Nativity, feel free to use it too!

### **DAYS 1 - 19**

Hide away the angels and the shepherd. They will not be used until later. Place Mary and Joseph somewhere very visible. Each day, move Mary and Joseph somewhere different that gets closer and closer to your Christmas tree. Have your child(ren) locate Mary and Joseph. Read the part of the Christmas story provided and discuss the question of the day. Repeat for Days 2-19.

### **DAYS 20**

Baby Jesus is here! Yes, we know this is a little early. Mary and Joseph finally reach your Christmas tree today. Place them with Baby Jesus. Read today's snippet of the Christmas story and discuss your question of the day.

### **DAYS 21-23**

The story doesn't end at Jesus' birth! The tables have flipped today. Parents, it is your time off. Have YOUR CHILD(REN) hide the angels for YOU to find. Continue reading part of the Christmas story and discussing the question of the day.

### **DAY 24**

Some very special people wanted to see Jesus. Hide the shepherds and Magi for YOUR CHILD(REN) to find. Continue reading today's snippet and discussing today's question.

### **DAY 25**

FINALLY! Complete the Nativity. Place the angels, shepherds, and magi near Mary, Joseph, and Jesus. As before, read the last bit of the Christmas story presented and discuss the last question. **Merry Christmas!**



## DAY 1

"My name is Mary, and I am engaged to Joseph. The angel Gabriel came to me and told me some news I cannot believe."

*The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."*

*Luke 1:28 NIV*



How would you feel if an angel appeared to you?

## DAY 4

"So I am going to have a baby named Jesus"

*He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.*

*Luke 1:32-33 NIV*



Who is Jesus?

## DAY 2

"I was troubled by what the angel said to me, but the angel told me not to fear for I had found favor with God."

*But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God."*

*Luke 1:28 NIV*



What do you think it means to "have found favor with God?"

## DAY 5

"How could this be? I told the angel that I wasn't married yet."

*The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God."*

*Luke 1:35 NIV*



Who is the Holy Spirit?

## DAY 3

"I was shocked, but the angel began to explain what it meant to be highly favored by God. He told me I was going to have God's son!"

*You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.*

*Luke 1:31 NIV*



How do you think this made Mary feel?

## DAY 6

"The angel assured me that there is nothing God cannot do."

*"For no word from God will ever fail." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.*

*Luke 1:37-38 NIV*



What has God done in your life that seemed impossible?

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## DAY 7

"Hi! My name is Joseph. I was just told my future wife, Mary, is to have a baby! I can't believe this."

*Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

*Matthew 1:19 NIV*



Have you ever been given news you couldn't believe?

## DAY 10

This baby is to fulfill the promise God told Jeremiah.

"The days are coming,' declares the Lord, 'when I will fulfill the good promise I made to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time I will make a righteous branch sprout from David's line; he will do what is just and right in the land.'"

*Jeremiah 33:14-15*



How has God been faithful to you?

## DAY 8

"While I was thinking on these things, an angel appeared to me."

*"But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.'"*

*Matthew 1:20 NIV*



How has God revealed His divine planning in your life?

## DAY 11

"I, Mary, traveled to Judea to see my cousin Elizabeth. She was also going to have a baby. As I greeted her, her baby leaped with joy in her belly."

*When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*

*Luke 1:41 NIV*



Who is the baby in Elizabeth carries and why is he important?

## DAY 9

"The baby Mary would have would fulfill the word a prophet once spoke."

*"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel."*

*Matthew 1:23 NIV*



How do you feel knowing that God is truly with us?

## DAY 12

"As unbelievable as having the son of God might seem, I am God's humble servant. He has blessed me and I rejoice in Him."

*"From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me – holy is his name."*

*Luke 1:49 NIV*



What can you thank God for?

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### DAY 13

"As the days went on, Caesar Augustus decreed a census would take place."

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register.*

*Luke 2:1-3 NIV*



How does the census influence Jesus' birth?

### DAY 16

"It was time to pack for our journey to Bethlehem even with me being so close to deliver."

*He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*

*Luke 2:5 NIV*



What does Mary's willingness to travel reveal about her?

### DAY 14

"Since the decree was sent out, Joseph and I had to travel all the way to Bethlehem."

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.*

*Luke 2:4 NIV*



How do you think Mary and Joseph felt about the journey?

### DAY 17

"As we made our way to Bethlehem, the arrival of the baby came closer. We had to find ANY place to stay quickly."

*While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born.*

*Luke 2:6 NIV*



Why do you think God chose for Jesus to be born as a baby?

### DAY 15

It's time to rejoice! It's almost time for the arrival of the Messiah!

*"A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The spirit of the Lord will rest on him – the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of might, the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord."*

*Isaiah 11:1-2*



Where else do we see the Spirit rest on Jesus?

### DAY 18

"There was a beautiful inn we came across. We asked for a room but there was no room available. But there was a manger we could stay in."

*"...because there was no guest room available for them."*

*Luke 2:7b*



What does Jesus' humble birthplace reveal about God's heart?

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## DAY 19

Jesus represents true peace!

*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

*John 14:27 NIV*



How is the peace Jesus gives different from the world's idea of peace?

## DAY 22

*But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.*

*Luke 2:10-12*



What brings you joy about knowing Jesus as your Savior?

## DAY 20

*"On that first Christmas morning, baby Jesus was born."*

*"And she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger...."*

*Luke 2:7a NIV*



How can you share the joy of Jesus with someone?

## DAY 23

*Then, there was a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God.*

*Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

*Luke 2:13-14*



Where in your life do you need God's peace?

## DAY 21

*That night there were shepherds tending to their flock when an angel appeared.*

*And the angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.*

*Luke 2:9 NIV*



Why was the news shared with the shepherds first?

## DAY 24

*They came to find us in the manger.*

*So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger*

*Luke 2:16*



Why were the shepherds and Magi in such a rush to see Baby Jesus?

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## DAY 25

Now it was time to return to Galilee, the city  
of Nazareth, and baby Jesus grew and grew.

*When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord,  
they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth.*

*And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom,  
and the grace of God was on him.*

*Luke 2:39-40*



What can we learn about  
God from the story of Jesus'  
birth?

# *A Journey to Bethlehem*



















