

## JOY — JESUS IS BORN

### Objective

The children find out that Christ's appearance created great joy.

### Contents

- The shepherds (Luke 2:8–20).
- Simeon and Anna (Luke 2:21–38).
- The wise men (Matthew 2:1–12).
- We look forward to Jesus' return.



## Lesson Plan

### Lead-In

#### Discussion

The children recount what they know about Jesus' birth. If necessary, supplement what the children already know, bringing out the following points:

- Caesar Augustus ordered a census.
- Mary and Joseph therefore set out on their way from Nazareth to Bethlehem, Joseph's home town.
- The journey was very strenuous for Mary since her child was to be born soon, as the angel had previously promised.
- Her child was born in Bethlehem and she laid him in a manger because there was no room for them at the inn.

### Implementation

The children look at the theme picture while the story about the shepherds is elaborated on.

- The shepherds were tending their animals at night, when it suddenly became very bright all around them.
- An angel appeared to them. One of the children reads aloud what he said.

#### Bible

Luke 2:10–12:

*"Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger."*

#### Teacher's Presentation

The angels announced the birth of the Saviour to the shepherds. "Saviour" means deliverer, redeemer, liberator from misery. They told them that this was "Christ", the Messiah. "Christ" and "Messiah" both mean "the anointed one".

#### Discussion

- The shepherds immediately set out on their way to Bethlehem.
- They found the child with Mary and Joseph, and told them about their encounter with the angel, the heavenly host and everything they had heard about this child.

**Teacher's Presentation**

- Mary and Joseph were moved in their hearts by what they heard from the shepherds.
- The shepherds turned back, praising and extolling God for everything they had seen and heard.

Mary and Joseph adhered to the instructions of the Mosaic Law. Eight days after his birth, the child was circumcised and received the name Jesus which the angel had already provided at the time it announced his birth. The name "Jesus" means "salvation, deliverer, redeemer".

After the birth, Mary remained at home for forty days. Then Mary and Joseph brought the child into the temple to dedicate him to God and to bring a thank-offering.

**Workbook, Text**

The children read "Simeon and Anna" in the workbook. Discuss the text.

**Simeon**

- Simeon was a devout and God-fearing man. He was waiting for Christ, the promised one.
- Through the Holy Ghost he had been told that he would not see death before he had seen Christ the Lord.
- Prompted by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple.
- When Mary and Joseph came with Jesus into the temple, Simeon took the child in his arms and praised God.
- He said, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation" (Luke 2:29–30).

**Anna**

- The prophetess Anna was a widow, advanced in years, who served the Lord day and night in the temple. At that moment, she came to Mary, Joseph and Simeon holding the child.
- She thanked God and talked about the child to everyone waiting for salvation.

**Teacher's Presentation**

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem during King Herod's reign, there also were wise men who came from the East. They were speaking about a newborn king.

**Discussion**

Elaborate on the story "The Wise Men" with the children and, if necessary, supplement what they know.

- The wise men from the East were astrologers.
- The Holy Bible is not explicit about how many wise men there were.
- From the appearance of a particular star they deduced that a new king must have been born in Jerusalem.
- In order to worship him, they travelled to Jerusalem to inquire about the new king there. However, no one there knew about the birth of a new king.
- After the high priests and scribes had found an indication in the writings of the prophet Micah that Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, the wise men were directed there.
- In Bethlehem they found the child with Mary and Joseph and worshipped him.
- They gave the child gifts of
  - gold – a valuable means of payment,
  - myrrh – an expensive resin with a pleasant aroma,
  - frankincense – made from a particular resin which, when lit, gives off a pleasant smell.
- At God's behest, the wise men returned home without going back to King Herod as he had requested of them.
- Shortly thereafter, Herod had all children two years of age and under in Bethlehem and the surrounding area killed.

**Workbook, Exercise**

With the help of the exercise, the children determine how the joy at Jesus' appearance became evident.

**Question Prompt**

Is Jesus' appearance also reason for us to rejoice?

## Discussion

- Jesus Christ was born as the redeemer for all mankind.
- Through his sacrificial death, he broke Satan's power and thereby created the means whereby man can be saved from eternal death.
- Our sins can be forgiven.
- Jesus promised, "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:3).
- We look forward to coming into the eternal fellowship with Jesus Christ.

## Conclusion

### Question Prompt

What effect does the joy at Jesus' birth and his promised return have on us?

## Discussion

- We wait and prepare ourselves for his appearance.
- We tell others about this beautiful goal of our faith.

## Notes

[illegible]