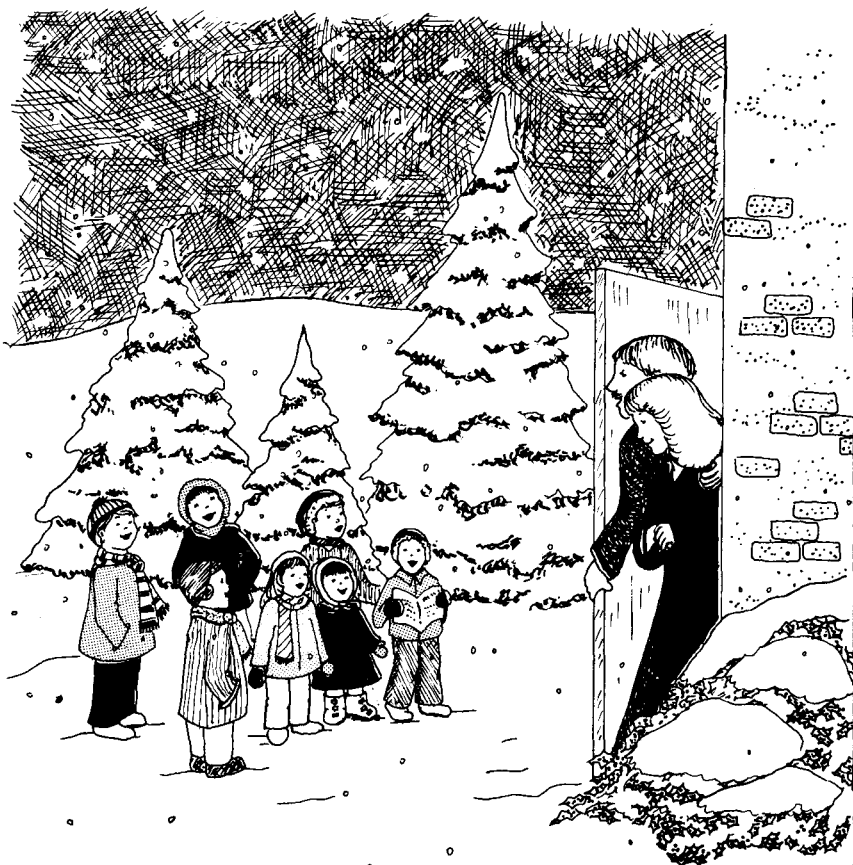


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THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

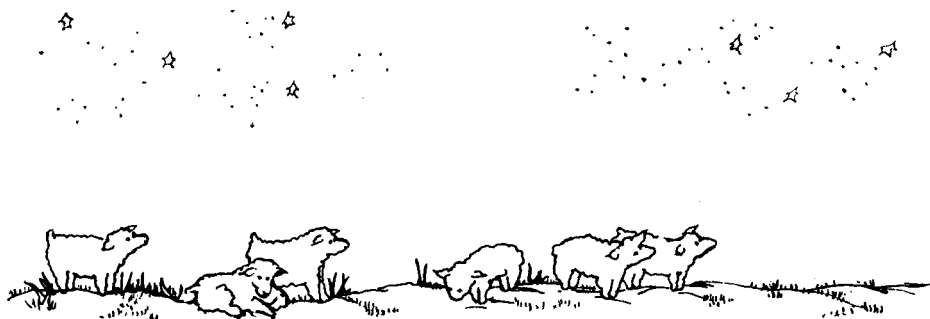


THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Many times we hear people talk about family traditions. A “tradition” is something that is done over and over again for many years. For example, if your mom and dad always take your family to your grandparents’ house on Christmas day, you could say that it was a family “tradition” to visit your grandma and grandpa on Christmas. There are not only family traditions but there are also religious traditions. These traditions may not always line up with what the Word says. We need to learn what God’s Word says so that we know what is truth and what is tradition concerning the wonderful birth of Jesus Christ.

God’s Word tells us in Luke chapter two that not long before Jesus was to be born, a ruler named Caesar Augustus made a law which told all the people in the land that they would be taxed. “Taxing” here does not mean that the people had to pay money to the king. It means the king was taking an enrollment. Your teacher takes roll (attendance) in your class to see who is there. In a similar way, the king took an enrollment too. This is why each man was instructed to return to the town of his birth so that an enrollment could be made in each city.

Joseph was from Bethlehem, so he and Mary went to that city. The city was very crowded because others had also come for the enrollment. Since there was no room for Joseph and Mary in the inns, they stayed at a stable. Mary was ready to have her first baby and it was here that she



gave birth to Jesus. Luke 2:7 tells us, "And she [Mary] brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."

"Swaddling clothes" were long strips of cloth about two inches wide. They were only put on the baby for a very short period of time. These strips were wrapped around the baby from head to toe with only a space left around the nose and mouth so that the baby could breathe. These strips were not wrapped around the baby to keep it warm. Rather, this was a custom carried out for a baby who was to become a king. The wrapping meant that the baby would grow to be straight and upright before God.

Jesus was also salted, which means that he was washed in water that had a little bit of salt in it. When a person is "salted," it means that he will ALWAYS be honest.

In the fields near Bethlehem, where Jesus was born, some shepherds were watching over their sheep by night. This is one reason we know that Jesus was born in the fall of the year and not in December, the coldest part of winter. During the fall of the year, the farmers would hire shepherds to take their sheep into the fields. The sheep would fertilize the fields with their manure. To the shepherds' surprise, the angel of the Lord appeared to them. The glory of the Lord shone round about the shepherds and it frightened them. Luke 2:10-12 tells us, "And the angel said unto them, 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 [the thing that will tell you that you have found the Savior]



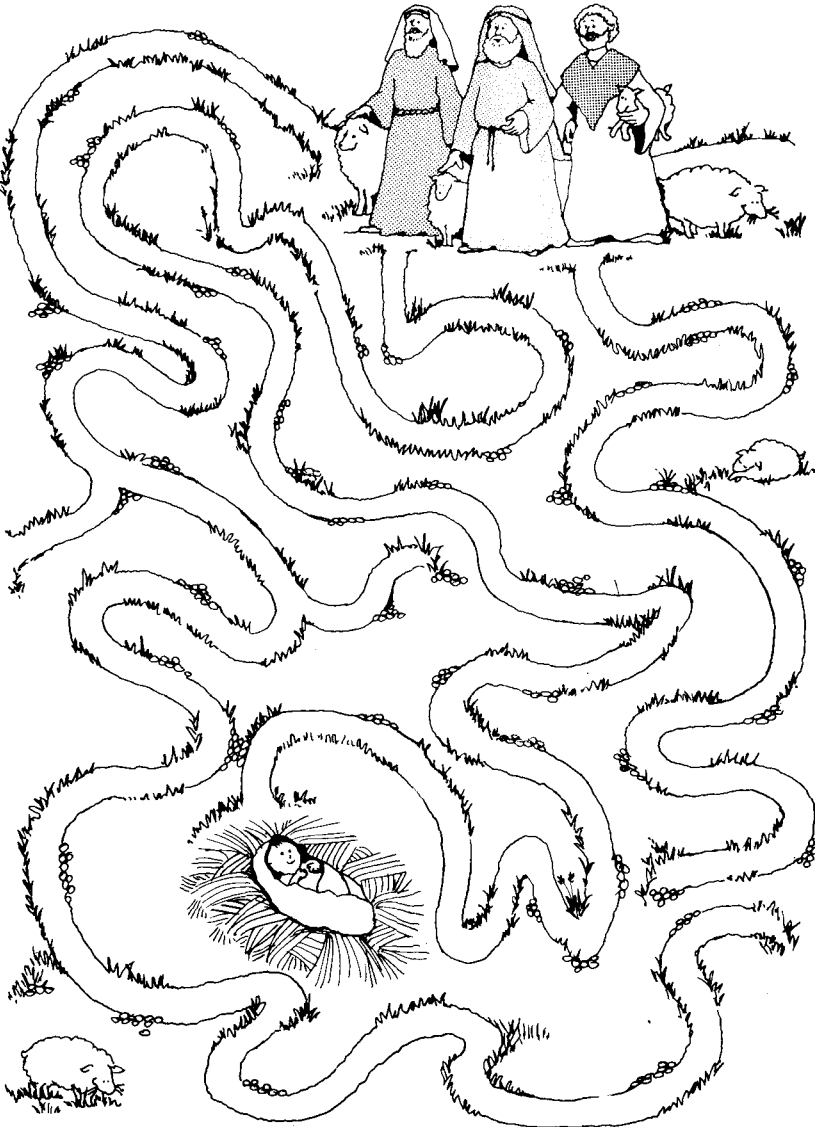
unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”

The shepherds “made haste,” which means they hurried, going straight to Bethlehem. Sure enough, Jesus was still in the swaddling clothes when they arrived. The shepherds were very excited! Luke 2:17 says, “And when they had seen *it* [Jesus the Savior], they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.” Some time later, when Jesus was no longer a newborn baby, some kings and wise men (we do not know how many) also came to see Jesus.

How exciting it is for us to know what happened when Jesus was born. It is exciting to know where he was born and the time of the year. How blessed we can be to know the truth of God’s Word concerning Jesus’ birth. What a joy it is to share these truths with others so that they can know what God’s Word says, too!



When the shepherds reached the place where Joseph, Mary and Jesus were, Jesus was still in the swaddling clothes. Find the path which goes from the shepherds to the baby. Be careful not to cross over any lines.



ANSWERS

page 5: the middle path
 page 9: tree, top, truck, table, telescope, trumpet, thermometer, telephone, thread
 page 11: Son, one, new
 page 8: 1.c, 2.c, 3.c 4.b, 5.a



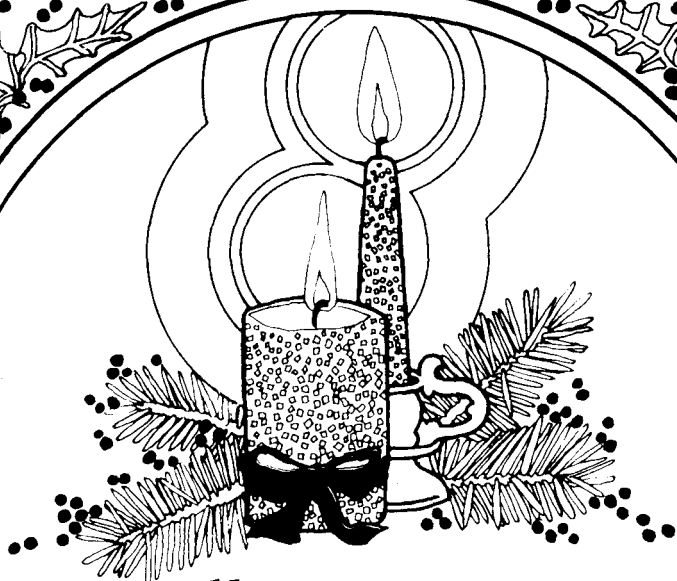
And she (Mary) brought forth her firstborn son. . . . Luke 2:7a

Quiz

1. We need to learn what God's Word says so that we know what is _____ and what is _____ concerning the wonderful birth of Jesus Christ.
 - a. truth, correct
 - b. tradition, false
 - c. truth, tradition
2. God's Word tells us in Luke chapter 2 that not long before Jesus was to be born, a ruler named Caesar Augustus made a law which told all the people in the land that they would be _____.
 - a. billed
 - b. charged
 - c. taxed
3. "Swaddling clothes" were long strips of cloth about _____ wide.
 - a. two feet
 - b. eighteen inches
 - c. two inches
4. This wrapping meant that the baby would grow to be _____ and upright before God.
 - a. crooked
 - b. straight
 - c. curved
5. When a person is "salted", it means that he will ALWAYS be _____.
 - a. honest
 - b. dishonest
 - c. seasoned

Although the words “truth” and “tradition” both start with the letter “t”, these words are very different in meaning. Look at the picture below. See how many other things you can find that begin with the letter “t”.





Candle Decorating

Materials:

Candle

Glitter (any color)

Colored ribbon or yarn (to tie around your candle)

Glue

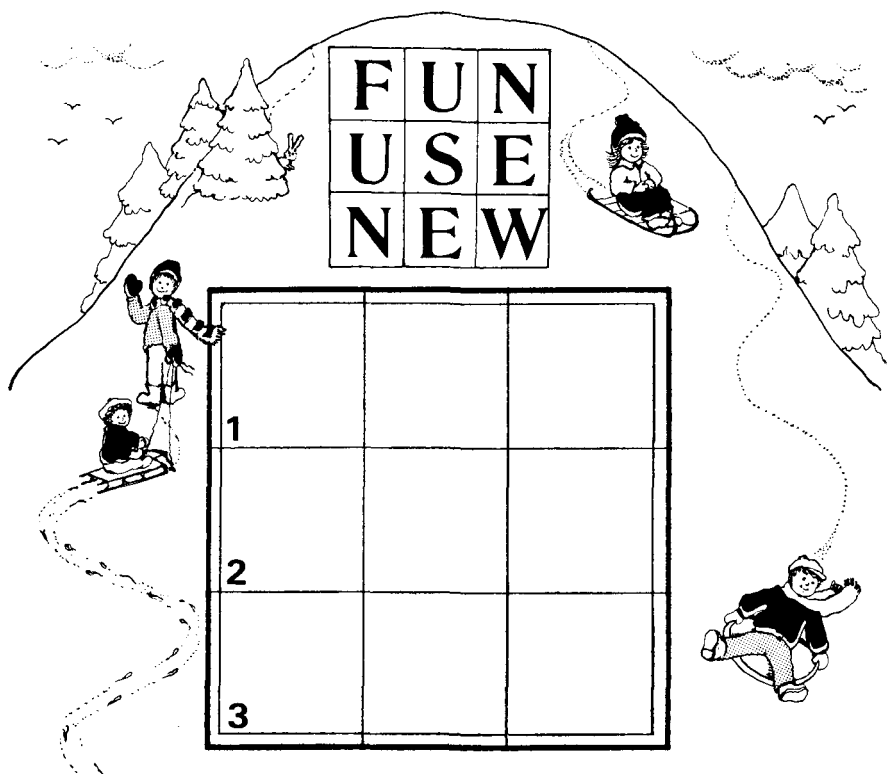
Newspaper

Procedure:

1. Lay one or two pieces of newspaper on a table.
2. Working over the newspaper, draw a design on your candle with the glue. Don't draw on the bottom of your candle, or on the wick.
3. Sprinkle some glitter on your newspaper.
4. With your fingers, sprinkle glitter on all the places you have glue. Make sure that all the glue is covered with glitter.
5. Stand your candle up to dry.
6. When your candle is dry, tie a bow around the bottom as it is pictured above.

Sensational Scripture Squares

In a "Scripture Square" you can read the same words from left to right and from top to bottom, like this:



Look up each verse and write the missing word in the box above. When you are done, you will have your OWN "Scripture Square!"

1. "And she brought forth her firstborn _____, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger..." (Luke 2:7a).
2. "And be ye kind _____ to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (Ephesians 4:32).
3. "A _____ commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you..." (John 13:34a).

JOY TO THE WORLD

Joy to the world, the lord is come,
Let earth receive the king,
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the savior reigns;
Let men their songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove,
The glories of his righteousness,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love,
And wonders, wonders of his love.

