



**Shepherd:** *"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."* —John 10:11

**King:** *"And the Lord said: Blessed is he through whose seed Messiah shall come; for he saith—I am Messiah, the King of Zion."* —Moses 7:53

*Note: This activity may be copied or printed from the Internet at [www.friend.lds.org](http://www.friend.lds.org).*

**Star:** *"There came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."* —Matthew 2:1-2

**Lamb:** *"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."* —John 1:29



**Gift:** *"Wherefore, by faith was the law of Moses given. But in the gift of his Son hath God prepared a more excellent way; and it is by faith that it hath been fulfilled."* —Ether 12:11



# The Greatest Gift

*This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Acts 1:11).*

BY ELIZABETH RICKS



Do you like to receive gifts? We all do.

Gifts show us that someone cares about us.

Knowing that someone cares about us and loves us makes us happy. When we love people, we want to give them gifts.

What kinds of gifts do you like to give to the people you love? The gifts that you give do not need to be fancy or expensive. Your gift can be reading a story to a younger child, helping your mom or dad prepare a meal, or saying a kind word.

Because our Heavenly Father loves us, He gives us many gifts. In John 3:16, we read about a most precious gift: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Jesus came to earth as a baby born in Bethlehem.

His life is an example for us. He also atoned for our sins and gave us the opportunity to return to live with our Heavenly Father again. If we follow Jesus Christ in faith, we can receive another wonderful gift: “If thou wilt do good, yea, and hold out faithful to the end, thou shalt be saved in the kingdom of God, which is the greatest of all the gifts of God” (D&C 6:13).

As we follow Jesus Christ in faith, we look forward to the time when He will return to earth. We know that He will come again and that someday we will receive the greatest of all the gifts of God—eternal life. ●

## Activity

Each of the ornaments on the opposite page is a symbol of Jesus Christ. Read the scripture references to find out how the ornaments are symbols. Mount the ornaments on heavy paper, and cut them out. Cut out the scriptures. Glue or tape each one on the back of the correct ornament to remind you how the ornament is a symbol of Christ. Put a ribbon through the top of the ornament, and hang it where your family can enjoy it.

## Sharing Time Ideas

(Note: All songs are from *Children's Songbook* unless otherwise noted; GAK = Gospel Art Picture Kit; TNGC = Teaching, No Greater Call.)

1. Display a flag, a heart, and a smiley face. Ask the children what they may represent (country, love, happiness). Explain that each of these is a symbol—something that stands for something else. Ancient prophets told people that Jesus Christ would come to earth. Some, like Isaiah and Samuel the Lamanite, were specific, while others used symbols to teach of Christ. Display a picture of a lamb (see *Primary 2* manual, 123) or a stuffed animal lamb. Explain that although you do not have a real lamb in Primary, your object is a symbol of a lamb, and a lamb is a symbol of Jesus Christ. Discuss ways that Jesus Christ is like a lamb (see “Comparisons,” *TNGC*, 163–64).

*For older children:* Pass out the following scripture references: Genesis 22:3–8; Exodus 12:21–28; Isaiah 53:7; John 1:29; 1 Nephi 12:6. Read the scriptures, and discuss how each tells of Christ. Explain that when we understand symbols, we can see that the ancient prophets foretold Christ's coming to the earth. Bear testimony that just as you know that Christmas is coming soon, the prophets knew that Christ would be born. Sing “Sing of Christmas” (*Friend*, Dec. 2003, 28).

*For younger children:* Tell the children that sometimes we have to look hard to understand what “the Lamb” means in the scriptures and that they will need to look hard to find their lamb in Primary. Using the same object as before, have one child leave the room and another child hide the object. Sing songs about the Savior from the *Children's Songbook* while the child who left the room returns to find the object. Have the children sing louder the closer the child gets to the object. Repeat with different songs. Bear testimony of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ.

2. Write “The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight” on a chalkboard or poster. Ask them who or what “thee” might refer to. Explain that sometimes poets like to refer to things that aren't people as if they were people. Tell the children that “thee” in this sentence is a place. Play a guessing game to discover that the place is Bethlehem and the night is the night when the Savior was born. (See “O Little Town of Bethlehem,” *Hymns*, no. 208.)

To learn more about Bethlehem, divide the Primary into four groups. Give each group one of the following: a map of the Holy Land (found in the Bible or your meetinghouse library); scripture reference Micah 5:2; a Bible, opened to the Bible Dictionary; and scripture reference John 6:51. Have the first group show the location of Bethlehem. Have the second group read Micah 5:2 and explain that our Heavenly Father's plan was for Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. Have the third group find the meaning of the word *Bethlehem* (House of Bread). Have the fourth group explain why Jesus is the Bread of Life. Point out that the Bread of Life was born in the House of Bread.

Teach the first verse of “O Little Town of Bethlehem.” For older children, after the first verse is taught, pass out hymnbooks and sing all three verses. Describe how Bethlehem might have looked on the night Jesus was born, and explain that Jesus is the “Light” spoken of in the song. Explain the last line, which is written on the chalkboard. Tell how people beginning with Adam and Eve looked forward to Christ's coming to earth. People hoped that He would come, and some feared that He might not come.

Have the children draw a picture of Bethlehem using the information

they have learned in the song (see “Drawing Activities,” *TNGC*, 166–67). Testify that Jesus Christ, by coming to the earth, fulfilled the prophecies and made it possible for us to live with God again.

3. Display three wrapped gifts. Tell the children that at Christmastime we celebrate the gift of Jesus Christ coming to the earth (see John 3:16). By coming to the earth and promising to return again, Jesus has given us three wonderful gifts! Tell them that by answering questions about Jesus Christ they can find out what those three gifts are. (Before Primary, write in large print the words *peace*, *happiness*, and *love*, and then cut out the letters.) Invite three children to hold the packages. Explain that as the children answer each question correctly, they will get a letter that will tell them what their gift is. Ask questions such as “Who is Jesus's mother?” (Mary), “Who is Jesus's father?” (Heavenly Father), “Where can we read about Jesus?” (in the scriptures), “When we take the sacrament, what does the bread represent?” (Jesus's body). Each time a correct answer is given, give a letter that goes with the box to the child who is holding it. Let groups of children work together to unscramble the letters and reveal the word. At the end of the game, the boxes will display the words *peace*, *happiness*, and *love*. When the children have unscrambled the words, have them open the packages. Inside each have a key word and a scripture: Peace—John 14:27; Happiness—Mosiah 2:41; Love—John 15:13. Have the child holding the box read the scripture. Sing “I Feel My Savior's Love” (pp. 74–75).

4. *For older children:* Invite two children to hold GAK 238 (The Second Coming) and GAK 239 (The Resurrected Jesus Christ). Have the Primary children compare the two pictures, pointing out what is the same and what is different. Ask the children holding the pictures to read the title of the picture and the summary that appears on the back of the picture. Explain that one is a picture of what Jesus might look like when He comes again and the other is a picture of what He might have looked like when He was resurrected. Tell them that there is a reason for the similarity. Help all the children look up Acts 1:11. Tell them to put their fingers on the scripture and look at you when they are ready. Display either a globe or GAK 600 (The World). Read the scripture, moving the picture of the resurrected Jesus away from the globe as you read, “. . . taken up from you into heaven.” Move the picture of the Second Coming toward the globe as you read, “. . . shall so come in like manner.” Repeat, allowing different children to move the pictures as the rest of the children read the scripture. (This is a good opportunity to involve a child who is disabled.)

Sing “When He Comes Again” (pp. 82–83). Tell the children that the song presents different details about how the Savior might come again and that the scripture they just learned also tells them how the Savior will come.

The week before Primary, invite several children to be prepared to share things they have learned in Primary this year that will help them prepare for the Second Coming. They might recount a favorite sharing time, a memorable Primary lesson, or something they learned from an activity day. Intersperse songs with the participants, singing songs that you learned this year and reviewing the principles that they teach. Bear testimony that Jesus will come again and that as we follow Him in faith, we can enjoy eternal life.

5. *Friend* references: “By These Names,” Apr. 1995, 14–15; “If I Had Been in Bethlehem,” Dec. 1989, 32–33; “Jesus Christ Is Born,” Aug. 2000, 16–18; “Jesus Will Come Again,” Dec. 1999, 10–11; “Testimony of Truth,” Dec. 2003, 42; “His Little Lamb,” Dec. 1997, 18; “Gifts of the Savior,” Dec. 2001, 2.