

PAPER

BAG

PREVIEW PROGRAM ONLY
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CHRISTMAS

PLEASE PURCHASE
Elementary

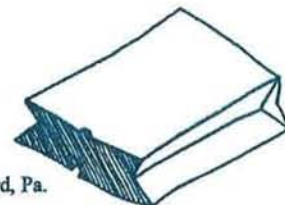
Advent

Curriculum

from close encounters ministries

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A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS

A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS is a four week Christmas curriculum developed specifically for kindergarten through grade six Sunday School students.

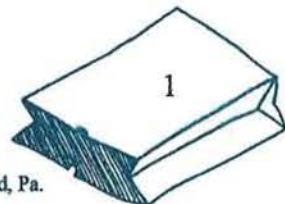
A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS begins each week with a musical opening. Songs of the season introduce the activities.

A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS features CHRISTMAS "LIVE" where the birth of Jesus is told in four parts by people dressed in costume. The journey is guided by "Peeka", a slightly talkative friend of Mary and Joseph.

A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS provides student opportunity to design Christmas tree ornaments from brown paper bags and a variety of colorful trims.

A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS shares completed ornament projects with the church family on a group Christmas tree displayed throughout the Christmas season.

A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS celebrates the birth of Jesus in a joyous, memorable fashion.

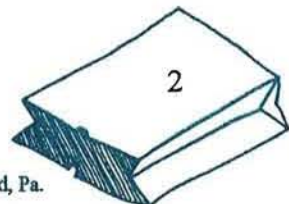


COPY INFORMATION

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Do not give the program to other churches. Instead, give them the address and telephone number of CLOSE ENCOUNTERS MINISTRIES. This enables us to continue producing fun Christian programming at a low cost.

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FOR THE PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS DIRECTOR

Merry Christmas! So you are the Sunday School leader who wants to prepare a special month of lessons for your elementary students. It will be fun and your church will enjoy the beautiful, homemade Christmas ornaments appearing on a centrally located tree during Advent. The effort combines teaching students about the real meaning of Christmas and presenting an impressive, handcrafted gift to the Church family.

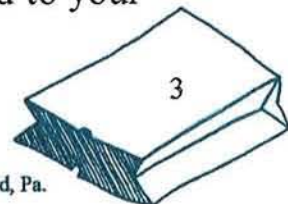
Christmas is extremely important in the life of the church. Children are wide eyed and hyperactive as the great day approaches. Even "Bah-Humbug" folks sparkle as Christmas Sunday approaches. For some church members, the programs and decorations prepared by your local congregation comprise most of their holiday celebration. What a wonderful opportunity to be part of the excitement!

READ THE ENTIRE PROGRAM PRIVATELY. Once familiar with the concept it will be time to present it to the teaching staff. If adaptations are desired, make them at the beginning of the planning time to eliminate confusion. Any changes in activities or crafts are best recommended by the director.

MEET WITH THE TEACHERS. Prepare the staff for this special programming. Tell them where they will be working and what will be expected of them.

THE LEARNING CENTERS. Set up Christmas learning centers in well lit, large areas of the church. Decorate the CHRISTMAS "LIVE" area with simple items reflecting life in the Holy Land. The Paper Bag craft tables must be large with chairs spaced comfortably and supplies stacked in the middle of each table.

CRAFT OPTIONS: Curriculum suggestions are a springboard to your



own creativity. Present the program exactly as printed and it will be fun and worthwhile. Change a few activities and crafts and you will still have a great program. Consider the needs of your students, the location, budget and overall goals.

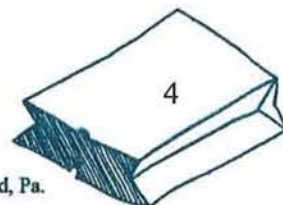
DELEGATE RESPONSIBILITY. This must be a team effort. Never apologize when asking people to help. Sunday School teachers/volunteers must be involved with teaching assignments and crafting projects.

PRACTICE A POSITIVE APPROACH. Christmas is fun, exciting and meaningful. It is worth extra effort in the midst of personal family preparations, party going and travel. Eliminate negative talk. "We cannot do it," "We never did it that way" or "There is no money" just won't be accepted. If the director's attitude is right, even the grouchiest saint will respond.

PRAY! Pray for the Sunday School teachers, classes and special artists who will make A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS successful. Take it before the Lord and then LET GO AND LET GOD!

PLAN! Read the entire program. Mark areas needing special attention. Adapt the program to fit the needs of your Sunday School and congregation. List all details you will handle personally.

PREPARATION TIME. Hopefully you have ordered A PAPER BAG CHRISTMAS with more than a month lead time. All CHRISTMAS "LIVE" participants must be informed and given their parts. Craft supplies must be gathered and patterns must be copied.



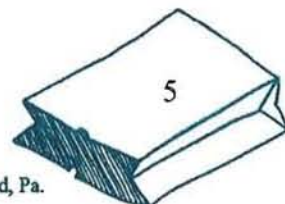
THE LEARNING CENTERS AT A GLANCE

THE OPENING. (15 MINUTES) As students arrive, greet them in a large area where attendance is taken, offering collected, announcements made and Christmas songs are sung.

CHRISTMAS "LIVE". (10-15 MINUTES) Move the entire group (K-6) to a large story area to hear the Christmas story in four parts. Each week the story ends in an exciting spot. This is done with the entire group present. Ask several students and adults to portray characters in the Christmas story. All parts may be read--not memorized!

PAPER BAG ORNAMENTS. (25-30 MINUTES) Prepare several large craft tables in a large area. (Separate classrooms may be used.) Place supplies on tables for a variety of paper bag ornaments made by the students. Students move from table to table to make one or more ornaments within the allotted time. Leaders (Adults/teens) should be stationed at each table to explain the paper bag ornament and help with completion of the projects.

CHRISTMAS TREE CELEBRATION. (5 MINUTES) All students gather at the Christmas tree to place their ornaments. If glue is not dry, hang a sample ornament and place the others later. Close with a quiet Christmas song and prayer.



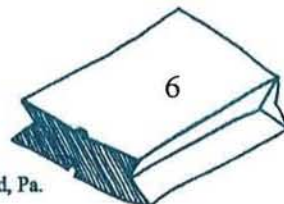
THE CHRISTMAS TREE

Paper Bag ornaments are hung on a centrally located Christmas tree for the entire church to enjoy. If your Sunday School is large, consider two or three trees with all activities performed within separate departments or individual Sunday School class trees.

Trim the tree with lights before Week #1. Place a nativity set under the tree. If a few extra ornaments are desired, be sure they fit the simple brown bag/Christmas story theme.

Allow students to place their ornaments on the tree at the end of each session. If wet glue is a problem, place a sample ornament on the tree. Hang fully dried ornaments by the next week.

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CHRISTMAS "LIVE"

Telling the Christmas story is a wonderful annual tradition in churches around the world. Make this story time special by combining a Christmas story script with "live" actors reading their small parts. No rehearsal is necessary. Keep the story time informal.

One part of the story will be told each week in December. CHRISTMAS "LIVE" should last between 10-15 minutes. If it is shorter or longer than expected, don't panic. The time will be made up during PAPER BAG ORNAMENT time.

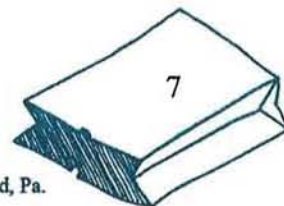
COSTUMES: Ask each participant to bring their own Holy Land costume. Draped fabric, bath robes, scarves, sandals and simple caftans work well.

"LIVE" ACTORS: Ask teens and adults to participate in this portion of the program. Give scripts to each person before Week #1. Ask several people to stand by as substitutes in case of sudden illness. Be sure to communicate that this is an informal gathering and the story parts may be read--not memorized. Encourage everyone to speak clearly and slowly.

THE ROOM: Choose a room large enough to fit all students and teachers. This may be the sanctuary or fellowship hall. Keep the set simple. A few green plants, blankets, baskets, etc. will set the stage.

PROPS: Keep the props simple. It is possible to pretend you are holding an item instead of actually making or bringing a prop. Decide what is available to your group.

Place an easel at one side of the stage. Print the skit titles on brown paper bags much like old vaudeville signs. Week #1: THE JOURNEY BEGINS, Week #2: THE BABY SHOWER, Week #3: DON'T DOUBT IN THE DARK WHAT GOD HAS TAUGHT YOU IN THE LIGHT, Week #4: HEAVEN'S DAWN. Display the appropriate bag each week.



WEEK #1:

CHRISTMAS "LIVE"--THE JOURNEY BEGINS!

ACTORS: PEEKA, GABRIEL, ZACHARIAS, MARY

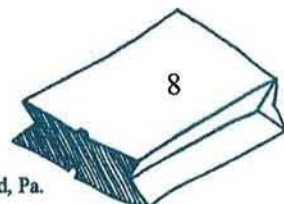
PEEKA: Shalom! My name is Peekka. I know you are here to listen to the story of the Messiah--and I am just the person to take you on the journey.

My name means "The Watcher or The Peeker". I can't seem to help myself. I want to know what is going on all the time so I hide around corners and listen at the doorways. It is very interesting to find out what others are doing. Oh, not that I am suggesting such a thing for you. I admit it is a bad habit. However--would you like to come with me to the temple? There have been some odd occurrences over there. Let's go!

(PEEKA HIDES BEHIND A PLANT OR OBJECT WHILE THE ANGEL GABRIEL AND ZECHARIAH SPEAK.)

GABRIEL: Zacharias, it is a special day as you fulfill your priestly duties. To enter the Holy of Holies is an important, once in a lifetime, task. God has looked upon your faithful life with pleasure. He sent me to tell you that your prayer is heard and your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby boy. You will call him John.

ZACHARIAS: I hate to disappoint you but I think you have the wrong guy. Can't you see I'm getting older? My sweet wife, Elizabeth, has given up on children. She is too old to have a baby. Don't tell her, but I see a few gray hairs on her head. We will never understand why God didn't bless us with a child. Ahh, well, it is for God to know and for us to question until the day we die.



GABRIEL: Am I to understand you don't believe God is going to work in a special way here? Are you sure you want to say that?

ZACHARIAS: Yep! That's the way I see it. Gray hair, too old, no baby. Sorry. Check out the next guy.

GABRIEL: Okay, Zacharias, then it's time to prove it to you. Until my words are fulfilled and that baby is born you will not be able to speak.

ZACHARIAS: Yeah, right! I'll believe it when I see it. A baby! A baby--(struggle to speak) A bab--(Croaking) A ba---- (Mouthing words in a panic, holding throat. Runs off stage.)

GABRIEL SHAKES HEAD WHILE LEAVING THE STAGE.

PEEKA: (Coming to front) Whoa, did you see that? I do believe that was an angel of the Lord. Zacharias can't talk--just like the angel said. I can't believe Elizabeth is going to have a baby. She has tried for so many years and still has no children. It is a shame to her and her family that God has not blessed them. Not that I want to talk about her behind her back, but it will cause a lot of gossip in town. Let's run over to Mary's house and see what she's been up to lately.

MARY STROLLS ONTO THE STAGE AND PEERS OFF INTO THE DISTANCE. PEEKA HIDES BEHIND ANOTHER OBJECT WHEN SHE SEES GABRIEL ENTER THE ROOM.

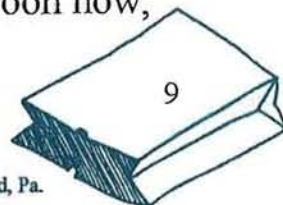
GABRIEL: (Calling...) Mary! Oh, Mary!

MARY: What? Who's there? Oh, you are so bright. It hurts my eyes!

GABRIEL: Don't be afraid, Mary. I have wonderful news for you!

MARY: I could use a little good news.

GABRIEL: God has decided to wonderfully bless you! Very soon now,



you will become pregnant and have a baby boy and you must name him Jesus. He shall be very great and shall be called the Son of God. And the Lord God shall give him the throne of his ancestor David--King David. And he shall reign over Israel forever, his Kingdom shall never end!"

MARY: How can I have a baby? I'm just a kid. I'm not married! I am not a princess! My children could not become kings.

GABRIEL: The Holy Spirit shall come upon you, and the power of God shall overshadow you; so the baby born to you will be utterly holy--the Son of God.

By the way, your Aunt Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age. Every promise from God shall surely come true!

MARY: (Bowing her head) I am the Lord's servant and I am willing to do whatever he wants. May everything you said come true.

(GABRIEL DISAPPEARS QUICKLY.)

PEEKA: Hey, Mary. Was that an angel who just spoke to you?

MARY: Peekka, what are you doing here? Yes, an angel of the Lord brought me wonderful news. He said I would have a baby boy. It will be soon and I should call him Jesus. He is to be the Son of God!

PEEKA: Yeah, right. You and I might know that but what will this town think? You know how everyone loves to gossip. Not me, of course. I wouldn't think of telling anyone anything. Maybe you should reconsider. Tell God to pick somebody else. You are young and your whole life could be ruined.

MARY: Peekka, this is God's business. If everyone in Nazareth wants to think bad things about me, it is His choice. I will obey God.

PEEKA: I think you are a wonderful person, Mary. I wish I could be more like you. I would like God to use me in a special way too.

MARY: He will. Just ask Him to show you what He wants you to do with your life. Once you give your life to Him, He always gives it back to you in wonderful ways.

PEEKA: I will begin to pray this very day for God's blessings on my life. What will you do now, Mary?

MARY: I'm not sure. I don't feel different. Perhaps I will wait and pray. Maybe I should speak to Joseph. We are to be married soon and he will want to know what has happened. I love Joseph very much and I hope he understands.

PEEKA: Joseph is a very understanding man but I think this will be hard even for him. (Eagerly) Would you like ME to tell him?

MARY: No, Peekka. That's the last thing I want you to do. I will speak to Joseph privately and we will decide what to do next. Hmm, I have a strong feeling that I should visit my Aunt Elizabeth.

PEEKA: Mary, that is a long walk to her house. Are you sure you have the time?

MARY: I will make the time. The angel said Elizabeth is going to have a baby too. It is such a happy event in their family. You know, Elizabeth is getting older and she hasn't had any children. Somehow I believe the angel's words are true. I want to be part of it--and I want to tell her about my baby--I mean, God's baby!

PEEKA: Well, as long as you are determined to go, I think I will go with you--to keep you safe--and to find out what is going on around here.
(PEEKA AND MARY EXIT ARM IN ARM.)

WEEK #2:

CHRISTMAS "LIVE" --THE BABY SHOWER

ACTORS: ELIZABETH, MARY, PEEKA, SEVERAL WOMEN AND GIRLS

(SEAT SEVERAL GIRLS AND WOMEN IN A CIRCLE ON THE FLOOR. THEY MAY BE HOLDING BLANKETS, BASKETS, SMALL WOODEN BABY TOYS.)

ELIZABETH: (Laughing) Thank you, thank you! What wonderful friends you are to bring me all these baby gifts. I'm so glad you came to spend time with me. Isn't it wonderful that my baby will be born in a few months? I am thrilled that God has chosen to bless me so late in life.

WOMAN FRIEND: Where has Zacharias been lately. We haven't seen much of him.

ELIZABETH: He hasn't been saying much lately. In fact, he's been downright silent. He might have a slight illness or it could be that the angel of the Lord said he wouldn't speak until our baby is born. I don't think it will be quiet at our house much longer!

EVERYONE LAUGHS. MARY AND PEEKA ENTER THE ROOM.

ELIZABETH: (Joyously) Mary, dear Mary, how wonderful to see you! Whee! My little baby just kicked inside me. How wonderful to feel his little feet!

Mary, you are favored by God above all other women and your child is destined for God's mightiest praise. What an honor this is, that the mother



of my Lord should visit me! When you came in and greeted me, the instant I heard your voice, my baby moved in me for joy! You believed that God would do what he said; that is why he has given you this wonderful blessing.

MARY: Oh, how I praise the Lord. How I rejoice in God my Savior! For he took notice of his lowly servant girl and now generation after generation forever shall call me blest of God. For He, the mighty Holy One, has done great things to me. His mercy goes on from generation to generation, to all who reverence him.

How powerful is his mighty arm! How he scatters the proud and haughty ones! He has torn princes from their thrones and exalted the lowly. He has satisfied the hungry hearts and sent the rich away with empty hands. And how he has helped his servant Israel! He has not forgotten his promise to be merciful. For he promised our fathers--Abraham and his children--to be merciful to them forever!

PEEKA: (Whispering to audience) I do believe I am witnessing the power of the Holy Spirit of God coming upon my friends Elizabeth and Mary. It is wonderful to be part of God's plan.

ELIZABETH: Come and join our baby party. You know all my friends from the hills of Judea. They have brought baby gifts and food to eat. We will rejoice together.

MARY: I have come to stay with you for about three months. We will talk and laugh and plan for our babies. It will be a pleasant time praising God who made us and made our children.

PEEKA: I can stay too, Elizabeth. I will help you weave soft blankets for the baby and I will cook for you while I am here. Please let me serve you.

ELIZABETH: Of course, Peekka. We are glad you have come. You are always welcome in our home. How are things in Nazareth?

PEEKA: Funny you should ask...there have been some mighty odd things going on down there. Gabriel, the angel of the Lord, came twice that I saw. He told your Zacharias about your baby and he visited Mary and told her she would have a baby too--even though she is not married!

MARY: Peekka---

PEEKA: (Talking fast) Oh, sorry. I can't seem to stop gossiping about these things. I never saw an angel before. Mary was so cool. She just turned around and said, "Okay, I'll do it." I'm telling you God is really going to use this family in a special way. I wonder what the baby will look like. Of course, we already know it's going to be a boy--yours too, huh? John and Jesus--cousins and good friends unless I miss my guess. It's nice to know the baby's name before it's born, don't you think?....

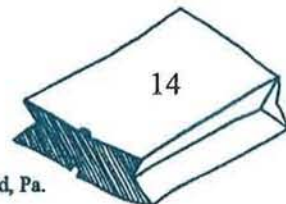
MARY: Peekka--give it a rest. We have a long time to talk of these things. Let's enjoy this baby party. I'm sure Elizabeth would like to rest--her body AND her ears.

ELIZABETH: Yes, perhaps we should rest and enjoy each other. Have you spoken to Joseph? Is he going to marry you? I am concerned that people of Nazareth won't believe your baby is sent directly from God.

MARY: I have spoken to my Joseph. He is confused and isn't sure whether to believe me or not. He will have time to think while I visit you. What will be, will be. My very life is in the hands of God.

PEEKA LEAVES THE GROUP AND SPEAKS TO THE AUDIENCE:
We spent a happy three months with Elizabeth and her household. True to the angel's word, Zacharias never spoke the entire time we were there. We had to communicate with gestures.

Soon Elizabeth's waiting was over and her baby boy was born. The word spread quickly to her neighbors and relatives (It wasn't me--Really!) of how kind the Lord had been to her and everyone rejoiced.



When the baby was eight days old, all the relatives and friends came for the circumcision ceremony. They all assumed the baby's name would be Zacharias, after his father.

But Elizabeth said, "No, He must be named John!"

"What?" they exclaimed. "There is no one in all your family by that name." So they asked the baby's father, talking to him by gestures. He motioned for a piece of paper and to everyone's surprise wrote, "His name is JOHN!" Instantly Zacharias could speak again and he began praising God.

Wonder fell upon the whole neighborhood and the news of what had happened spread through the Judean hills. Everyone who heard about it thought long thoughts and asked, "I wonder what this child will turn out to be? For the hand of the Lord is surely upon him in some special way."

Then his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit of God and gave this picture of the future: "Praise the Lord, the God of Israel, for he has come to visit his people and has redeemed them. He is sending us a Mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David, just as he promised. He will make us holy and acceptable, ready to stand in His presence forever.

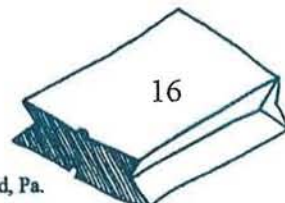
My little son shall be called the prophet of the glorious God, for he will prepare the way for the Messiah. He will tell his people how to find salvation through forgiveness of their sins. All this will be because the mercy of our God is very tender and heaven's dawn is about to break upon us to give light to those who sit in darkness and death's shadow and to guide us to the path of peace."

I was there as the little boy grew and he greatly loved God and when he grew up he lived out in the lonely wilderness until he began his public ministry to Israel.

Well, I have to get back to Nazareth. I think Joseph is going to need my special help next. Poor guy! He probably doesn't know what to think about all of this!

EVERYONE ON STAGE EXITS.

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WEEK #3:

CHRISTMAS "LIVE"
--DON'T DOUBT IN THE DARK
WHAT GOD HAS TAUGHT YOU
IN THE LIGHT!

ACTORS: PEEKA, JOSEPH, GABRIEL

PEEKA: (To the audience) Shalom! Today I visit Joseph. He has had a difficult few months. Mary and I just got back from a visit with Elizabeth. What fun it was. We ate, we talked, we ate some more. In between eating and talking we made baby clothes and talked, talked, talked. I think talking is my favorite thing to do!

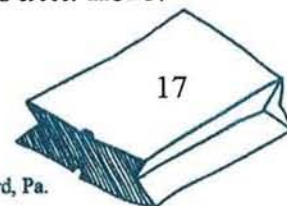
Let's take a deep breath and see what Joseph has to say today.

JOSEPH: (Entering the room--looking sad) Peekka, I don't have time for you today. I cannot talk and I do not trust you to keep my thoughts private. Just go home and leave me alone.

PEEKA: How can you say that, Joseph? You know I never gossip. I would never speak a word to anyone of your thoughts. I have come from Mary. She is anxiously awaiting your decision about the marriage. The engagement has gone long enough at this point for you to--

JOSEPH: (Sadly) --Divorce her. I know. Don't you think I have been thinking about this for months? It's all I ever think of. I have to think some more. Please leave, Peekka. Let me think and pray.

PEEKA: (Offended) Well, I know when I'm not wanted. I'm outta here.



Really--outta here! I won't stay another moment--unless you ask of course and then I will stick around to listen to you talk. What do you think, Joe? Huh? Can I stay?

JOSEPH: Peekka, go home!!! I will call for you if I want you.
(PEEKA EXITS WITH HER HEAD DOWN.)

JOSEPH: (Pacing) Oh, gracious Lord! Help me. I love Mary. She is the light of my life. I want to marry her but how can I believe this baby is sent from God. Who ever heard of anyone having a baby like that? I think there is another man in her life and for whatever reason, she is lying to me. Lying. I have never heard Mary speak a lie in her life. She doesn't lie--but how could this be?

If I divorce her, she will be publicly disgraced. I can't put Mary in the position of being laughed at and talked about for so many years. And what about the baby? Who will raise that child? Should I swallow my pride and marry her anyway? I have enough money to take her and the baby into my home. What if people think it's MY baby. I am a man of stern principle. I am a follower of God. I cannot bear the awful thoughts of my neighbors. Life will never be the same again. Oh Mary, why did you do this?

(JOSEPH PACES UP AND DOWN THE ROOM, THINKING.)

(Stops and faces audience) I have decided. I cannot marry this girl. I will divorce her even though I love her. I will not make a big deal of it. I will do this privately so she will not be disgraced in our community. Perhaps, with time, people will forget we were ever engaged at all. Maybe she can go away and have the baby elsewhere.

(YAWNING) I am so tired. This has been a difficult decision. I think I will take a nap. (LIES ON FLOOR AND SLEEPS.)

GABRIEL: (Enters and whispers) Joseph, Joseph, son of David. It's me

Gabriel, the angel of the Lord. I know you are dreaming so just listen to what I have to say. Do not hesitate to take Mary as your wife! The child within her has been conceived by the Holy Spirit. She will have a son and you shall name him Jesus. It means Savior. He will save his people from their sins. This will fulfill God's message through his prophets--"Listen! The virgin shall conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and he shall be called Immanuel (meaning God is with Us)."

(GABRIEL EXITS. JOSEPH WAKES UP, STRETCHES AND STANDS UP.)

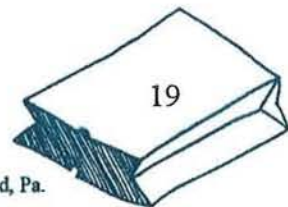
JOSEPH: Whew, what a dream! I have to stop eating pizza before bedtime. Wait, maybe it wasn't the pizza. It was a message from God. I know it was! I am to keep my plans to get married. Mary was telling the truth after all. How could I have doubted her? She is faithful, honest and true. God is using our family in a mighty way. I wonder what will happen next. I have to find Mary to tell her the good news!

(JOSEPH EXITS.)

PEEKA ENTERS: I knew I shouldn't go home. Boy, that Gabriel sure gets around. Mary will be so happy that Joseph has decided to marry her. She really loves the guy. Well, I think there is a baby in our future. Some baby. He is to be the Savior of the world. We have waited for the Messiah so long that I wonder if our nation Israel will believe it when he finally arrives.

In the mean time, I heard that Caesar Augustus, the Roman Emperor, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the nation. Everyone is required to return to his ancestral home for this registration. That means Joseph and Mary have to travel to Bethlehem in Judea. Joseph is of the royal line of David and Bethlehem is David's ancient home. I hope they can wait 'til after the baby is born. Those Romans! They sure know how to put big problems into the lives of everyday people. Maybe I'll walk to Bethlehem with Mary and Joseph--just for the trip, of course.

PEEKA EXITS.



WEEK #4:

CHRISTMAS "LIVE"

--HEAVEN'S DAWN!

ACTORS: PEEKA, MARY, JOSEPH, SHEPHERDS, ANGELS,
WISEMEN

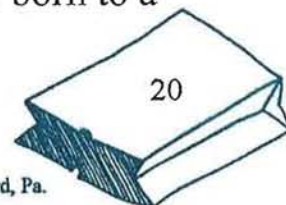
PEEKA: (Enters room excitedly.) What a trip! I have never seen so many people in my life. Everyone is trying to find a place to sleep. Joseph asked every innkeeper in Bethlehem. No one had a spot to sleep. This cave is the best we could do. Mary is really sick. I think the baby is going to be born tonight. Joseph looks worried.

JOSEPH: (Helping Mary into the room and down on a small bedroll.) Step aside, Peekka. Let me put Mary on that mound of hay over there. Once she gets a little rest she will be fine. Right dear?

MARY: Right, Joseph. All I need to do is lie down for a bit. I'll be ready to head for home in the morning. Oh, oh! There it goes again. What a strange pain!

PEEKA: (To the audience) Let's give them some time alone. Listen, these past few months have been amazing. I keep remembering the words Zacharias spoke when his son John was born. He said, "God is sending us a Mighty Savior from the royal line of his servant David, just as He promised--someone to save us from all who hate us...the mercy of our God is very tender and heaven's dawn is about to break upon us to give light to those who sit in darkness and death's shadow and to guide us to the path of peace."

The words of Zacharias sound so much like the words of the prophet Isaiah, "...the Lord himself will choose the sign--a child shall be born to a



virgin! And she shall call him Emmanuel (meaning God is with us)."

Let's see. (Looking back at Mary and Joseph and a small baby.) Oh how wonderful! The baby has been born! Mary, you did it! He is beautiful!

MARY: (Holding a wrapped doll) Look at this beautiful gift God has given me. He is a perfect baby boy. His name is Jesus! Immanuel!

JOSEPH: I am so honored to be given this child sent from God. I will do my best to teach him, as his earthly father, the ways of his Heavenly Father.

SHEPHERDS ENTER THE ROOM AND KNEEL AROUND MARY AND JOSEPH AND PEEKA.

SHEPHERD #1: Here is the baby! I knew we would find him. The star is shining right over this spot.

SHEPHERD #2: You wouldn't believe the kind of night we have had.
PEEKA: Oh, I might! What happened?

SHEPHERD #3: We were watching the sheep just like always. It was cold and clear and we were making a little food over the fire. Suddenly, an angel appeared out of nowhere.

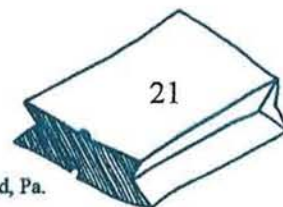
SHEPHERD #1: It was beautiful. The land shone bright with the glory of the Lord. I was really afraid.

SHEPHERD #2: Me too!

SHEPHERD #3: Me too!

SHEPHERD #2: The angel said, "Don't be afraid."--and I wasn't!

SHEPHERD #1: Me either!



SHEPHERD #3: Me either! He said, "I bring you the most joyful news ever announced and it is for everyone! The Savior--yes, the Messiah, the Lord--has been born tonight in Bethlehem! How will you recognize him? You will find a baby wrapped in a blanket, lying in a manger!"

SHEPHERD #1: Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others--the armies of heaven--praising God.

SHEPHERD #2: They said, "Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace on earth for all those pleasing him." When they disappeared, I said to my friends, "Come on! Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

SHEPHERD #3: We ran right here and found you. And here is the baby, lying in a manger! I am going to tell everyone I know about this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.

PEEKA: Finally, a man after my own heart!

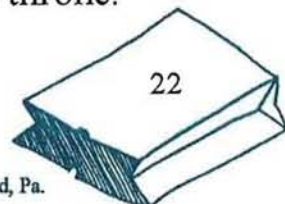
MARY AND JOSEPH: PEEKA!

PEEKA: Well, he is!

SHEPHERDS LEAVE THE STAGE. MARY AND JOSEPH RISE TO SIT IN CHAIRS AS PEEKA SPEAKS.

PEEKA: Heaven's dawn! What a wonderful description of that amazing night. Everyone who heard the shepherds' story expressed astonishment. Mary was so quiet. It was as if she was treasuring all the memories inside her heart so she would remember every moment for the rest of her life.

About this time, some wise men arrived in Jerusalem asking about the newborn King of the Jews. They saw His star in the East and wanted to meet Jesus and worship Him. King Herod, that rascally old guy, was upset and called a meeting to figure out who would threaten his throne.



He called the wise men before him and smiled a wicked smile. "I want to worship this special baby king too. Promise me you will return from Bethlehem and give me directions to his house."

Oh look, here they come now!

THREE WISE MEN PROCEED DOWN THE AISLE AND BOW BEFORE THE FAMILY ON STAGE.

WISE MAN #1: (Placing his gift on the floor) We have found you, Savior of the World.

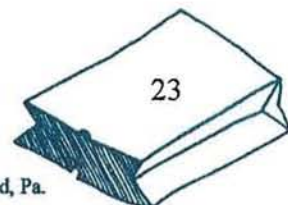
WISE MAN #2: (Placing his gift on the floor) We have found you, Promised Messiah.

WISE MAN #3: (Placing his gift on the floor) We have found you and we worship you, O King of Israel.

PEEKA: The wise men were truly wise and didn't trust Herod. When they returned to their own land, they didn't go through Jerusalem to report to Herod, for God had warned them in a dream to go home another way.

After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up and flee to Egypt with the baby and his mother," the angel said, "and stay there until I tell you to return, for King Herod is going to try to kill the child." That very night Joseph left for Egypt with Mary and the baby and stayed there until King Herod's death.

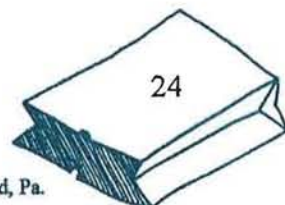
This isn't the end of the story. Jesus grew to be a wonderful young man. He obeyed his parents and when Joseph finally died, Jesus supported his mother and brothers and sisters in the carpenter's shop. He began to speak of his heavenly purpose when he was an adult and for three years he preached and taught and healed the people of Israel. God's promise of a saviour came true in His Son, Jesus. What a precious gift this baby became for all the world.



The religious leaders became so jealous of his popularity that they arranged to have him killed. Jesus died on a Roman cross outside the city of Jerusalem. Three days later he rose from the grave--but that's a story for another day! Shalom!

ALL ACTORS EXIT.

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PAPER BAG ORNAMENT SUPPLIES

***SUPPLIES....SUPPLIES....SUPPLIES....SUPPLIES.
...SUPPLIES....***

Gather supplies to make a variety of ornaments before the series begins and preparation during December is cut dramatically.

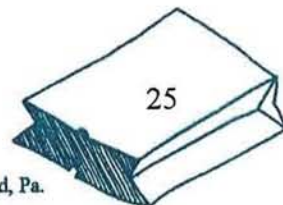
PAPER BAGS: Ask for brown grocery bags donations. These will be used as the base of each ornament and for a paper bag Christmas chain.

PINKING SHEARS: Make the edges of each paper bag ornament a little fancier. "Pink" the edges of the circle and oval paper bag bases.

RIBBON: Purchase thin-satin ribbon to tie bows to the fronts of ornaments. String ribbon from the top of each decoration.

GLUE, PAPER PUNCH, SCISSORS, GLITTER, BUTTONS, MARKERS, CRAYONS, MACARONI SHAPES, SEASHELLS, CONSTRUCTION PAPER, FABRIC PIECES, ACRYLIC PAINT, FEATHERS, GREEN TISSUE, JINGLE BELLS, SEQUINS, PIPE CLEANERS, STICKERS, GOLD PAINT, GLITTER SPRAY, RIBBON. Place general supplies on each craft table. Students choose decorations from the varied selection while completing their project.

OTHER SUPPLIES: Look for bits and pieces of items you think would add to the Christmas decor. Small pieces of jewelry, paint and other leftover craft supplies may be used.



PAPER BAG ORNAMENT DIRECTIONS

Use these general directions as a guideline. If you have another ornament project to add, do so. Have fun with the paper bag theme. Use your imagination!

Offer at least three (3) projects each week. Students rotate from table to table completing individual ornaments. Print names on each ornament for easy identification. The goal is to complete the ornament well--not quickly. If all students do not make all three projects, that is fine. There will be plenty of ornaments on the tree by the end of Week #4.

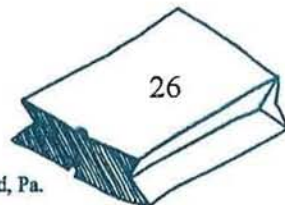
PAPER BAG BASES: Precut ovals and circles from paper bags. Students color and glue their project to the base which will then be hung on the Christmas tree.

If students cut their own bases, provide cardboard patterns and scissors.

PATTERNS: Christmas symbols and Nativity characters are from the "Preschool Pattern Book", illustrated by Linda Blassingame, Romilda Dilley, Pat Karch and Olga Packard, Standard Publishing, Cincinnati, Ohio, 1990.

There may be other symbols you want to use. Find simple figures and easy-to-complete projects. Time is an important factor. Copy enough of each pattern for the week to allow most students to complete each one.

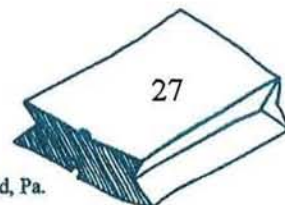
RIBBON: Punch one hole in the top of each ornament. String thin satin ribbon through the hole and hang on the Christmas tree. Purchase enough ribbon so students may glue bows to their ornaments.



Colors may vary from traditional holiday red and green to country blues and mauves to white or ivory. Whichever you choose, stick with the color theme for every ornament on the tree.

DECORATIONS: Encourage students to be creative. Remind them to use a minimum of glue when fixing their bows, buttons or glitter to the ornament.

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INDIVIDUAL ORNAMENT INSTRUCTIONS

PAPER BAG CHAIN: Precut strips of paper bag to be used as Christmas chain links. Students add to the chain each week until there is enough length to wrap around the display tree. Students attach several of the smaller ornaments (stars and hearts) at intervals along the length of chain.

PACKING PEANUT CHAIN: Save white Styrofoam packing peanuts which students string (string and darning needle) to wrap around the tree.

1. CIRCLE: The circle is used as a pattern for a paper bag base. Precut circles for all students and "pink" the edges. Older students may have time to cut their own circles.

Circles may also be used to print verses or messages.

2. OVAL: The oval is used as a pattern for a paper bag base. Precut ovals for all students and "pink" the edges. Older students may have time to cut their own ovals.

Ovals may also be used to print verses or messages.

3. CHRISTMAS TREE: The tree pattern is used as a base cut from green construction paper. Decorate the tree with objects from the craft table or print Christmas verses.

4. CHRISTMAS BELL: The bell pattern is used as a base cut from construction paper. The picture of the head of Jesus may be placed in the center and glued into position.

- 5. HEAD OF ADULT JESUS:** The result of the night in Bethlehem was the birth of Jesus. This smiling face will remind people that Jesus had a mission to complete as the Son of God.
- 6. SCROLL:** Older students attach this to an oval base and print "For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior...Christ the Lord."
- 7. CANDY CANE:** Read the attached story of the candy cane as students make this decoration and attach it to a base. Give real candy canes to each student. Hang real candy canes on the Christmas tree. Tie a ribbon around each candy cane.
- 8. WREATH:** Students decorate their wreath and attach it to the circle base.
- 9. STAR:** Decorate with glitter and attach to a paper bag base. Attach some stars to the giant paper bag Christmas chain at frequent intervals. Assign older students the task of making and gluing stars to the chain as it nears completion.
- 10. HEART:** Each student should make at least one heart and print their own name in the center.
- 11. ANGEL:** Color this childish angel and attach it to a paper bag base. Sprinkle each angel with glitter.
- 12. PRAYING HANDS:** These hands remind us to be thankful for Bethlehem and for the gift God gave that night.
- 13. DONKEY:** Attach donkeys to paper bag bases. Gray or brown yarn pieces (about 1") may be attached over the head and neck as a mane.
- 14. JOSEPH:** This figure may be placed on a separate base or combined with Mary and Baby Jesus.

- 15. MARY:** This figure may be placed on a separate base or combined with Joseph and Baby Jesus.
- 16. BABY JESUS:** This figure may be placed on a separate base or combined with Mary and Joseph.
- 17. GOLDEN CROWN:** Cut from yellow construction paper and decorate with sticker jewels or plain stickers. Cover with glitter.
- 18. KNEELING SHEPHERD WITH STAFF:** This figure may be placed on a separate base or combined with any other shepherd and/or sheep.
- 19. KNEELING SHEPHERD IN PRAYER:** This figure may be placed on a separate base or combined with any other shepherd and/or sheep.
- 20. THREE WISE MEN:** Attach to oval base. They will overlap the edges. That is okay for a different look.
- 21. CAMEL:** This figure may be placed on an oval base.
- 22. KNEELING SHEEP:** This figure may be placed on a separate bag base or attached to a base with any shepherd.
- 23. STANDING SHEEP:** Cover this sheep with white cotton balls glued into place. Attach sheep to any base.
- 24. SNOWFLAKES:** Instructions for snowflakes are included. These decorations make great fillers on the tree. Students enjoy learning how to make them.
- 25. CROSS:** A cross wreath may be made using a circle of crosses which barely touch at the cross beams and overlap in the middle. The cross may be reduced on your church copier for easier use. OR--give each student one cross to hang on the tree.

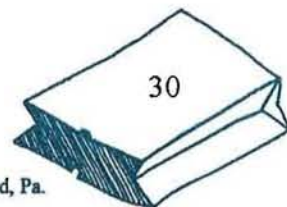


TABLE TOPICS

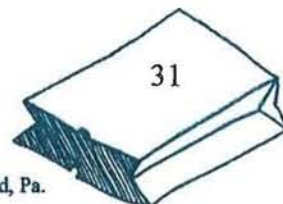
Instead of idle chit chat at the craft tables, read information concerning the meaning of each Christmas symbol. Use the paragraphs provided. Place one paragraph on the table for the table leader. Encourage appropriate discussion as students complete their ornaments.

5. HEAD OF ADULT JESUS: Every artist thinks they know what Jesus looked like while He lived on earth. The truth is no one really knows and there were no photographers (cameras were not invented!), sculptors or painters present to record the face of Jesus. He probably looked like a Jewish man. He may have had dark hair, brown eyes and tan skin. We often see Jesus with long hair and a beard but history records that men of that time wore their hair short and did not necessarily have a beard. He wore a short tunic and sandals (or bare feet) underneath a long, outer coat that was used for protection from sun, wind and rain. At night the outer coat was used as a blanket or pillow.

John says, "After the soldiers had nailed Jesus to the cross, they divided up his clothes into four parts, one for each of them. But his outer garment was made from a single piece of cloth, and it did not have any seams. The soldiers said to each other, 'Let's not rip it apart. We will gamble to see who gets it.'" (John 19:23-24 CEV)

Before Jesus was born in Bethlehem, prophets of God foretold much of His life including the part about His clothing. "This happened so that the Scriptures would come true, which say, 'They divided up my clothes and gambled for my garments.'" (John 19:24 CEV)

Jesus is the Son of God--the Messiah Savior that the whole world waited for. His birth in Bethlehem was just the beginning. The Babe in the Manger became the Christ of the Cross!



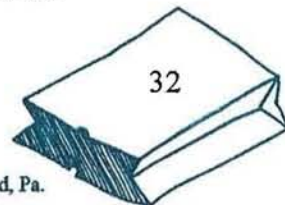
6. SCROLL: A scroll is made of papyrus, leather or parchment sheets joined together in long rolls, usually 10-12 inches wide and up to thirty-five feet long. It is rolled on two wooden rollers with part of the roller sticking out as a handle. Rarely are both sides written on. As the printing is read the reader rolls up the side already used.

At the time of Jesus and before, all printing was done on scrolls. There were no books as we know them today. Christians were the first people to make the more convenient book form. Scrolls were often stored in pottery jars. The most famous scrolls we know of today are the "Dead Sea Scrolls" found by a shepherd boy in the Qumran Mountains in the 1940's. He tossed a stone into a cave and heard pottery crashing. When he looked, there were very old manuscripts inside. These scrolls were portions of scripture. It is wonderful to have proof that God's Word is true and has changed very little from the first copies written thousands of years ago.

7. CANDY CANE: Let's learn why the candy cane is the perfect Christmas candy: It is in the shape of a shepherd's staff. Jesus is our shepherd and we are His flock. A sheep follows his own shepherd, knows his voice, trusts him and knows he is totally safe with him. A sheep will follow no other shepherd but his own. This is how we are to be with Jesus if we truly follow Him. Upside down the candy cane is a "J", the first letter of Jesus name.

The wide red stripe represents the blood He shed on the cross for each one of us so we can have eternal life through Him. The white stripe represents the sinlessness and purity of our Lord. He is the only human being who ever lived on this earth who never committed one single sin. Even though He was tempted just as we are, He never sinned. The narrow red stripe represents that by His stripes we are healed. Before the crucifixion, Jesus was beaten, the crown of thorns was placed on His head.

The flavoring is peppermint which is similar to hyssop. Hyssop is of the mint family and was used in the Old Testament for purification and



sacrifice. When we break our candy cane, it reminds us that Jesus body was broken for us. If we share our candy cane and give in love, it represents the same love of Jesus because He is to be share with one another in love.

8. WREATH: The wreath is covered with evergreen. Our hope for eternity is always green because it is based on Christ. Green is the color of life and growth. The wreath is in the form of a circle. A circle has no beginning and no end. What better way to picture eternity. Our life with God is everlasting and begins right now!

9. STAR: Matthew says wise men from the east saw a star and followed it from their country to find the birthplace of the Messiah. Stopping by King Herod's palace, they nearly got into trouble because the jealous king wanted to kill this new king everyone was talking about. He said--in sweet, buttery words, "Go the Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, let me know. I want to go and worship him too." (Matthew 12:8 CEV) He was lying!

The men listened to what the king said and then left. The star they had seen in the east went on ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. They were thrilled and excited to see the star." (Matthew 2:9-10 CEV)

What was the star they saw? There are several ideas star gazers have considered:

1. The most popular idea is that an unidentified comet passed by and was clearly visible both night and day which would account for its movement.
2. A super nova occurred and its' spectacular brilliance was seen by the wise men.
3. Several planets came together with a bright star and could be seen easily.
4. God provided a source of light which cannot now be determined

and which the wise men saw and followed.

When they arrived, they told Mary and Joseph, "We have seen his star and have come to worship him." (Matthew 2:2)

10. HEART: Your heart is a pump which gives physical life to your body. Your heart is also the word used for the "inner" you--the part of you that only you and God understand. Your heart is the center of all your thinking activities and feeling activities. The Bible has a lot to say about "the heart of man". In fact the word heart is used 955 times in the Bible.

Your heart can be honest and good, perfect, pure, true, understanding, wise, false, gross, hard, haughty, meek, searching, willing, deceitful, stony, stubborn, wicked, broken, bitter, discouraged, failing, fainting, fearful, glad, grieved, heavy, joyful or merry.

If you have a "heart for God", you want to learn about Him, worship Him and help other people.

As you sign your name on the Christmas tree heart, remember that God knows your heart!

11. ANGEL: The message of the Christmas angel came to shepherds who were sleepily guarding their sheep outside the city of Bethlehem. The angel appeared suddenly and the brightness of the Lord's glory flashed around the men. They were afraid. (Wouldn't you be scared?)

The angel said, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you which will make everyone happy. This very day in King David's hometown a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord. You will know who he is, because you will find him dressed in baby clothes and lying on a bed of hay.

"Suddenly there were many angels coming down from heaven, praising God: "Praise God in heaven! Peace on earth to everyone who pleases

God." (Luke 2:8-14 CEV)

Angels are God's messengers. How wonderful that God allowed the angels to be part of Jesus' birthday story.

12. PRAYING HANDS: Do you pray? God has established this way of communicating with him. We can ask God anything and He will answer us. Does that mean He says yes to everything we ask? No. Sometimes He says "Yes". Sometimes He says "No". Sometimes He says, "Wait". And sometimes He says, "Yes, and here's more!"

We must believe He knows the best for us. Part of prayer is saying "Thank you". God loves to hear from us everyday. He never sleeps and He is never too busy to hear from you. There is no request too small for God to answer.

13. DONKEY: Most people think the Bible says that Mary rode a donkey to Bethlehem while Joseph walked beside her. Actually the Bible does not say anything about a donkey. Isn't it funny how we add to stories to make them better?

Most Hebrews, even very poor people, had at least one donkey. Riding a donkey was like riding in a car today. It was the only way to go! Wealthy men had many donkeys and they rode them with pride. There were many rules about the kind treatment of the humble donkey.

There are few mentions of donkeys in the New Testament but we know that Jesus rode a donkey into the city of Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

14. JOSEPH: Joseph was the husband of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Matthew and Luke say Jesus was born to Mary at a time when she was engaged to Joseph, a descendant of King David. He was a poor carpenter and was known as a "just" man. Joseph could not even afford to buy a lamb to offer when the family went to the Temple to make offerings required in God's Law. Only the poor offered two doves or young pigeons.



When he learned that Mary was having a baby, he was understandably upset. When he learned she was becoming the mother of Israel's Messiah, he followed through on God's plan. He took her to Bethlehem where Jesus was born.

It seems that Joseph died before Jesus was fully grown. Jesus took care of Mary and his younger brothers and sisters. This may be why His ministry did not begin until He was 30 years old. Joseph taught Jesus the carpentry business which sustained the family through the years.

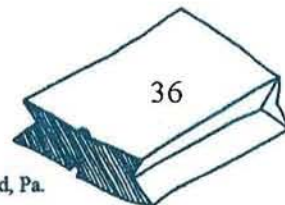
15. MARY: Life changed dramatically for young Mary when the angel Gabriel appeared and told her she would have a baby who would be the Son of God. Mary was obedient and looked forward to this mysterious event. Her cousin, Elizabeth, also had a baby named John. John and Jesus grew up together as cousins in the hills of Judea. They were destined to change the world. Mary knew these things and treasured each memory in her heart.

In Mary's own words: "With all my heart I praise the Lord, and I am glad because of God my Savior. God cares for me, his humble servant. From now on, all people will say God has blessed me." (Luke 1:47-48 CEV)

16. BABY JESUS: Most of us were born in hospitals where doctors and nurses hustle and bustle around the mother and baby. Everything is bright and clean.

Jesus was born in a stable or cave where animals were kept. It was a busy night in Bethlehem. So many people were in town to register their names in the census that not one hotel room was available to Mary and Joseph.

It probably did not smell great alongside the animals but it was a private spot. The hotels of that day were crowded places with many people sleeping side by side in each dark, dirty room. God provided fresh hay and water, lantern light and complete privacy.



Baby Jesus was wrapped in soft, clean cloths to keep Him warm and secure. A manger was nearby. It normally held fresh hay or water for the animals and may have been carved from rock. On this night, the manger held a baby. Not just any baby! This baby was God's Son, the Messiah.

17. CROWN: A golden crown is the symbol of kingship. Only kings and queens, rulers of highest honor, wear crowns. Most crowns have gold and silver and precious stones in them. They cost much money and are rare.

The crown is the symbol of you and I being crowned with God's creation. We are to rule the world under God.

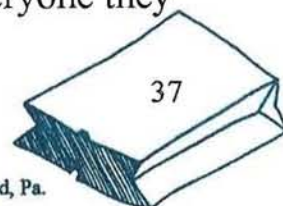
Jesus was born into King David's family. He was of a royal line. The crown reminds us of King David.

Roman soldiers wove a crown of thorns from a thorny plant and smashed it on Jesus' head before he died on the cross. They hated Jesus even though He was a king.

The crown reminds us of victory. An Olympic champion was given a crown or wreath of leaves to represent winning. Jesus is victorious over death and rose from the grave. He was given a crown and we will be given the crown of life when we get to heaven. ("Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life..." Rev. 2:10) When you see the crown, think of Jesus and victory!

18 and 19. SHEPHERDS: Shepherds were common men taking care of flocks of sheep along every hillside in Israel. Sometimes they were not the most honest or caring people.

The night Jesus was born, a group of shepherds were privileged to meet many angels who told them about the birth of the Messiah. They believed the message and ran into Bethlehem to see for themselves. When they found the baby, they worshiped Him. They ran out and told everyone they



found that Jesus had been born. They said wonderful things about Him. The Messiah had arrived.

20. WISE MEN: These men are always connected with the Christmas story. They weren't there the night Jesus was born and there were probably more than three. Does that surprise you?

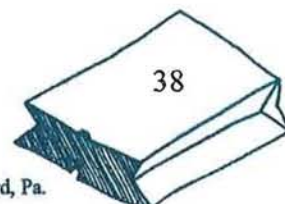
These wise men were from a scholarly group known as Magi. This title was used for hundreds of years in the government of Persia. The Magi were highly trained advisers to the ruler. Daniel was one of the Magi in the days of Cyrus and the great Persian empire nearly 500 years before Jesus was born.

In their eastern land, they were well known for their star gazing and their intelligence. There may have been as many as twelve wise men traveling together. When they saw an unusual star in the sky they may have remembered the teaching of Daniel and the promise of a star in Numbers 24:17.

In Jerusalem, the sudden appearance of the Magi, probably traveling in force with all imaginable oriental pomp and accompanied by a cavalry escort to insure their safe travel through Roman territory, certainly alarmed King Herod and the people of Jerusalem.

Meeting with Herod would have been the polite thing to do. Herod needed to be reassured that they did not want to start a small battle once they were within the city walls. Neither group trusted the other yet the Magi wanted to honor the new king of the Jews. He would save the world from war and suffering.

Once they followed the strange star to Jesus, they gave the family gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These were gifts worth a lot of money. Mary, Joseph and Jesus could live from the money for a long time. The gifts of the Magi were provisions from God while they were in Egypt hiding from the king.



21. CAMEL: Did the wise men ride to Jesus on camels? Maybe, but we do not know for sure. Camels were important during those days because they could carry 400 pounds and a rider. A camel's back stands about seven feet off the ground. They squawk loudly when they kneel down for loading. They can survive for long periods of time between drinks of water and eat the toughest, most thorny bushes. The hottest day barely bothers the camel.

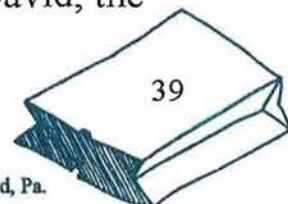
Their feet are unique having broad cushions which work well on sand, gravel and rock--all of which are found in the desert. A camel foot is so wide it can race across the sands of the desert at the rate of sixty to seventy five miles per day. Their coats grow thick in the winter and fall off in the spring. This cast off hair is woven into clothing and blankets.

If you lived during the time of King David and you wanted to send several large packages to another city, you would probably hire a camel. Camels are still used as UPS trucks in many parts of the world. King David thought camels were so useful he hired a special Arab camel driver to take care of his camels. The Arab's name was Obil. (I Chron. 27:30)

22. KNEELING SHEEP: Perhaps there were a few sheep huddled in the cave in Bethlehem. Sheep were important in those days. They were used for food and clothing. They were also used in the temple for sacrifices to God.

Sheep are followers. They don't seem to have a brain in their little heads. The shepherd does everything for the sheep. Jesus calls Himself "I am the good shepherd." John 10:14. Isaiah 53:6 says, "All we like sheep have gone astray."

We are used to seeing white sheep but early sheep were probably brown or black. There were mountain sheep and desert sheep. There were sheep that had long tails and short tails. Some sheep in Bible days had tails that weighed fifteen pounds! All sheep loved a green, grassy pasture with a cool stream running nearby. Shepherds led their flocks there. David, the



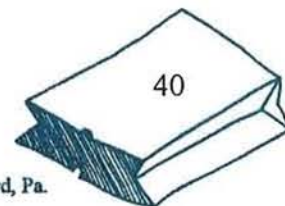
shepherd boy, wrote, "He makes me lie down in green pastures." (Psalm 23:2)

23. LAMB: John the Baptist announced "Behold the Lamb of God..." when introducing his cousin Jesus to the crowds. Jesus was to be a sacrifice for sins just like the small, innocent lambs in the temple were offered by the priests upon altars. It didn't seem fair to kill the lamb. What had it ever done to anyone? The same is said of Jesus--It didn't seem fair to kill The Lamb of God. What did He ever do to anyone? Jesus became our sacrifice so we can be saved and go to heaven.

24. SNOWFLAKES: There was probably some snow in the upper areas of Israel. When you make this snowflake think of the purity of Jesus coming to earth as an innocent baby and becoming our Savior.

25. CROSS OF CALVARY: The cross is worn as jewelry and shown in beautiful settings. When Jesus was on earth it was a tool the Romans used to kill people.

Christians look at the cross as the promise of God that we are rescued by the Savior who died on that cross. All we have to do is believe in Jesus as our Savior and we become part of God's family.



CHRISTMAS SCRIPTURE

Ask several older students to print Christmas verses on paper bag bases. Hang the verses on the display tree between other ornaments telling the Christmas story.

Jesus said to him, "...He who has seen me has seen the Father...." John 14:9 RSV

He...was sent to bear witness of that Light. John 1:8

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given.... Isaiah 9:6

Walk as children of light. Ephesians 5:8

I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Luke 2:10 NIV

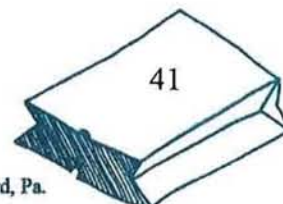
Arise, shine; for thy light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. Isaiah 60:1

Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift! II Corinthians 9:15 RSV

The people which sat in darkness saw great light....Matthew 4:16
...Behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10-11 NAS

Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased. Luke 2:14 NAS

...The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14 NIV



**HERE ARE SOME NAMES OF JESUS THAT MAY BE PRINTED
ON THE HEART ORNAMENT AND HUNG ON THE DISPLAY
TREE:**

And thou shalt call his name Jesus... Matthew 1:21

Prince of Peace --Isaiah 9:6

Mighty God --Isaiah 9:6

Wonderful Counselor --Isaiah 9:6

Prince of Life --Acts 3:15

Lord God Almighty --Rev. 15:3

Lion of the Tribe of Judah --Rev. 5:5

Root of David --Rev. 22:16

Word of Life --I John 1:1

Author and Finisher of our Faith --Hebrews 12:2

Advocate --I John 2:1

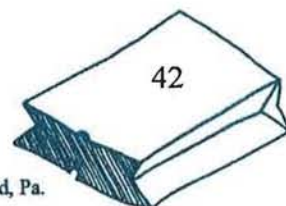
The Way --John 14:6

Dayspring --Luke 1:78

Lord of All --Acts 10:36

I AM --John 8:58

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Son of God --John 1:34

Shepherd and Bishop of Souls --I Peter 2:25

Messiah --John 1:41

Savior --II Peter 2:20

Chief Cornerstone --Ephesians 2:20

King of Kings --Rev. 19:16

Righteous Judge --II Timothy 4:8

Light of the World --John 8:12

Head of Church --Ephesians 1:22

Morning Star --Rev. 22:16

Sun of Righteousness --Mal. 4:2

Lord Jesus Christ --Acts 15:11

Chief Shepherd --I Peter 5:4

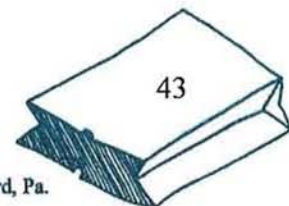
Resurrection and Life --John 11:25

Horn of Salvation --Luke 1:69

Governor --Matthew 2:6

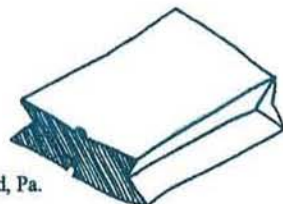
Alpha and Omega --Rev. 1:8

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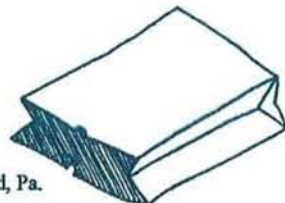
1.
Circle





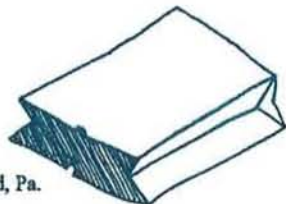
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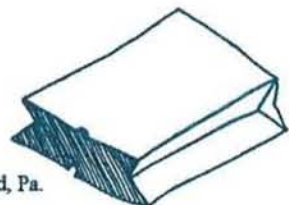
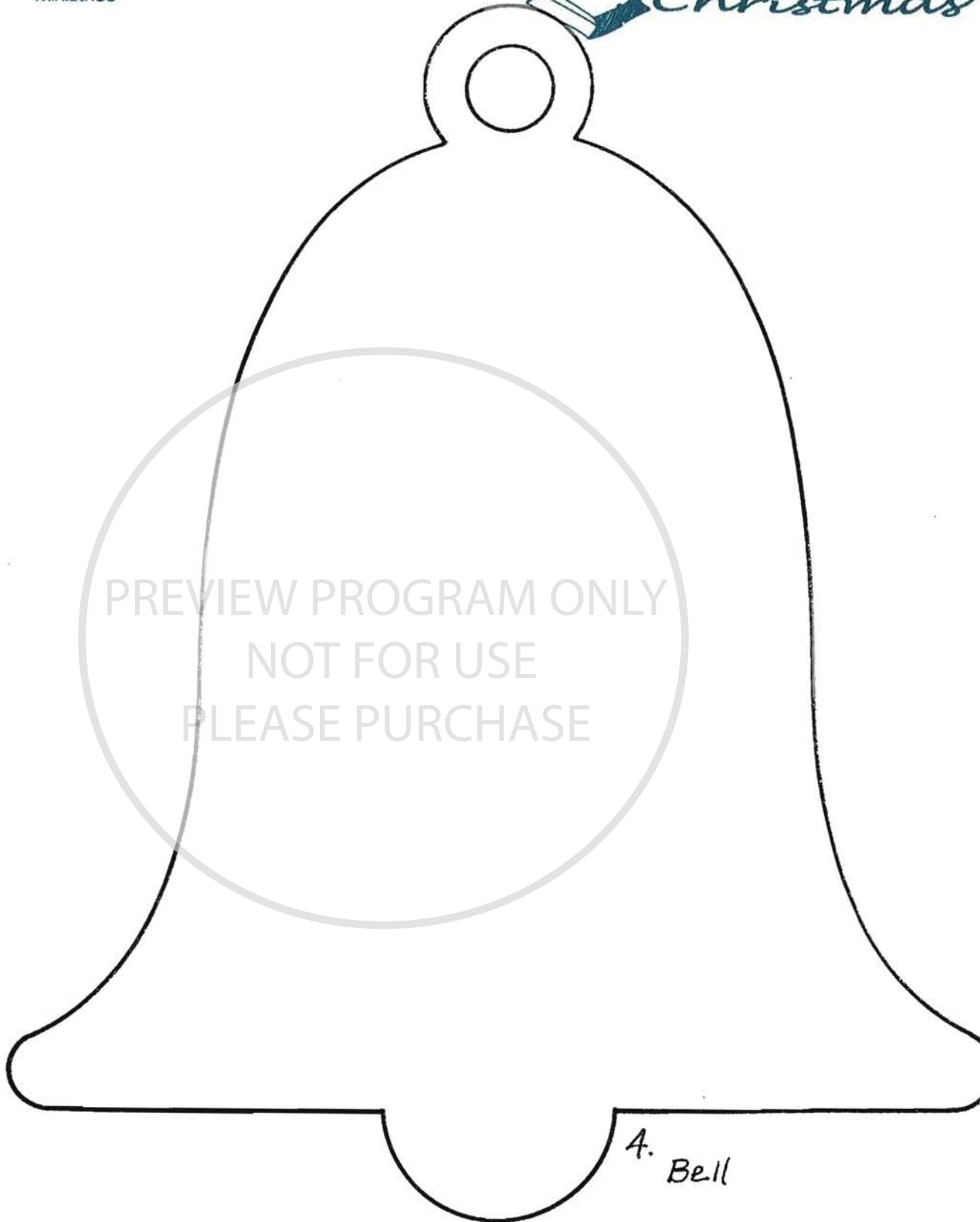
2.
Oval

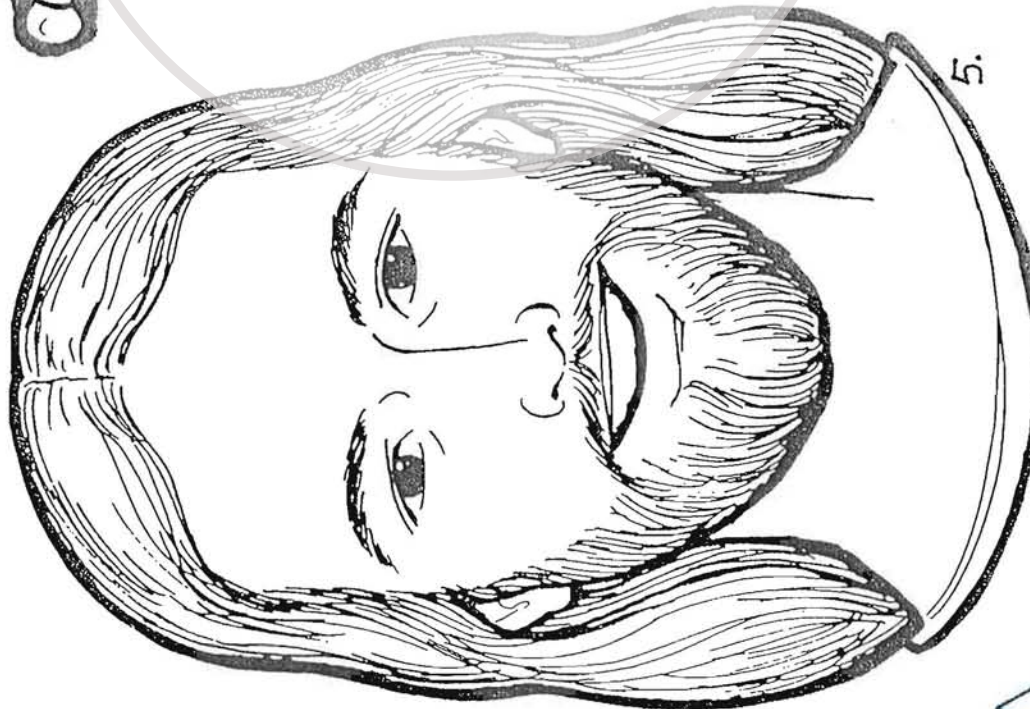
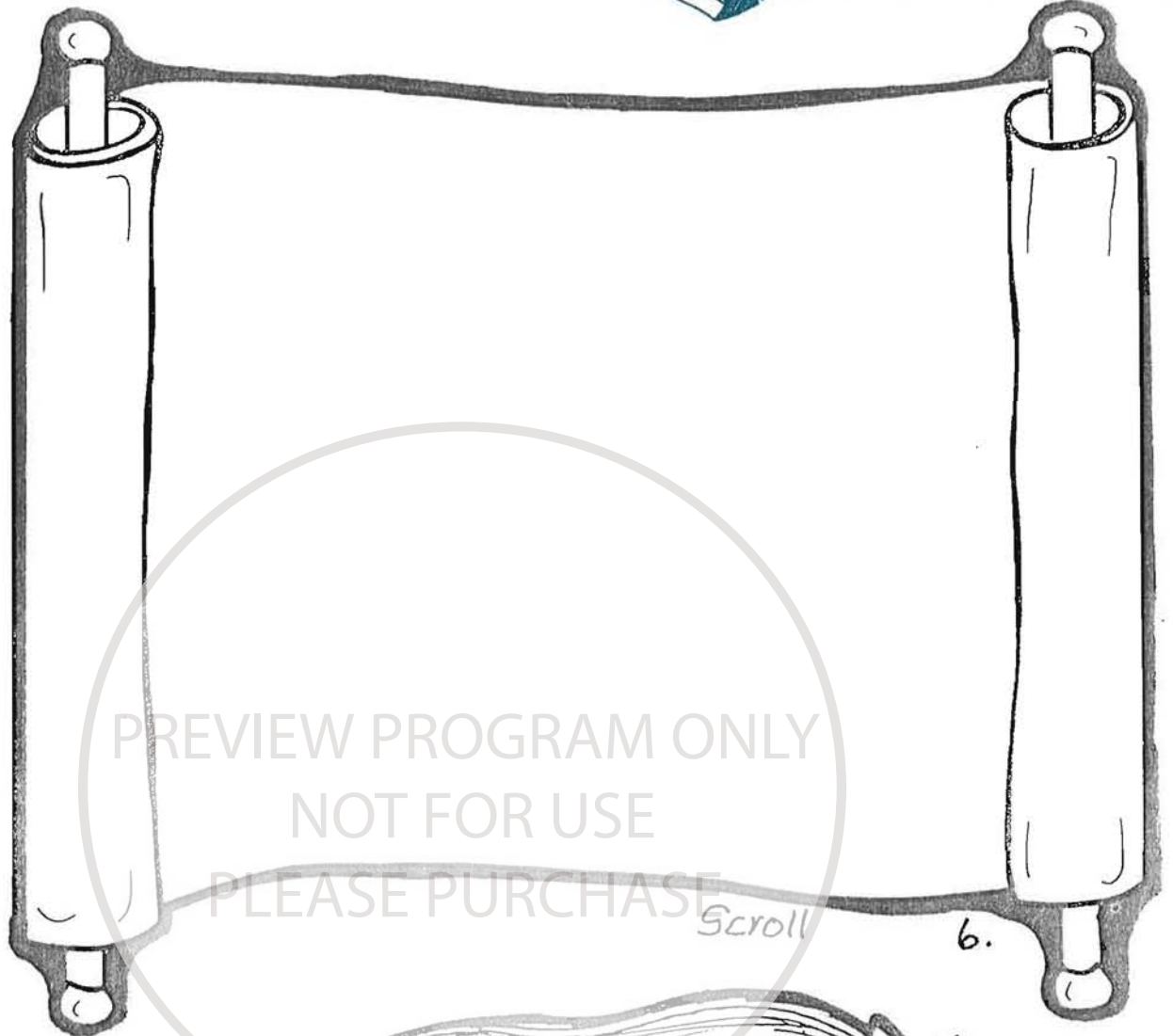




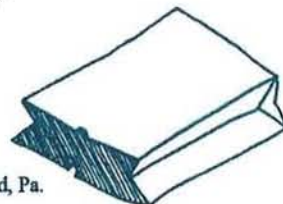
3. Tree

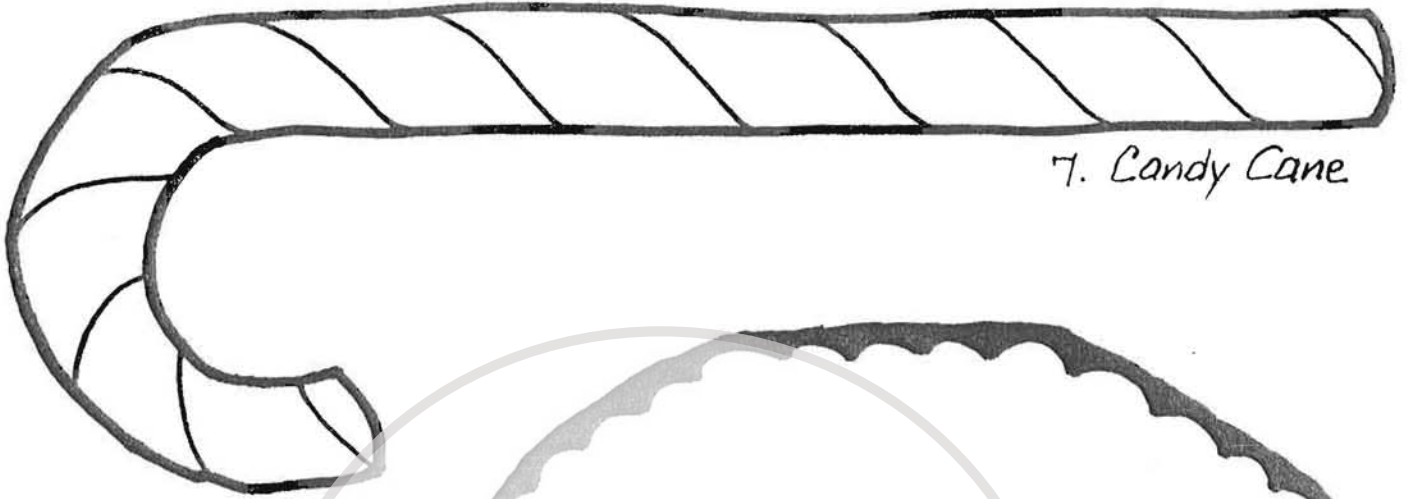




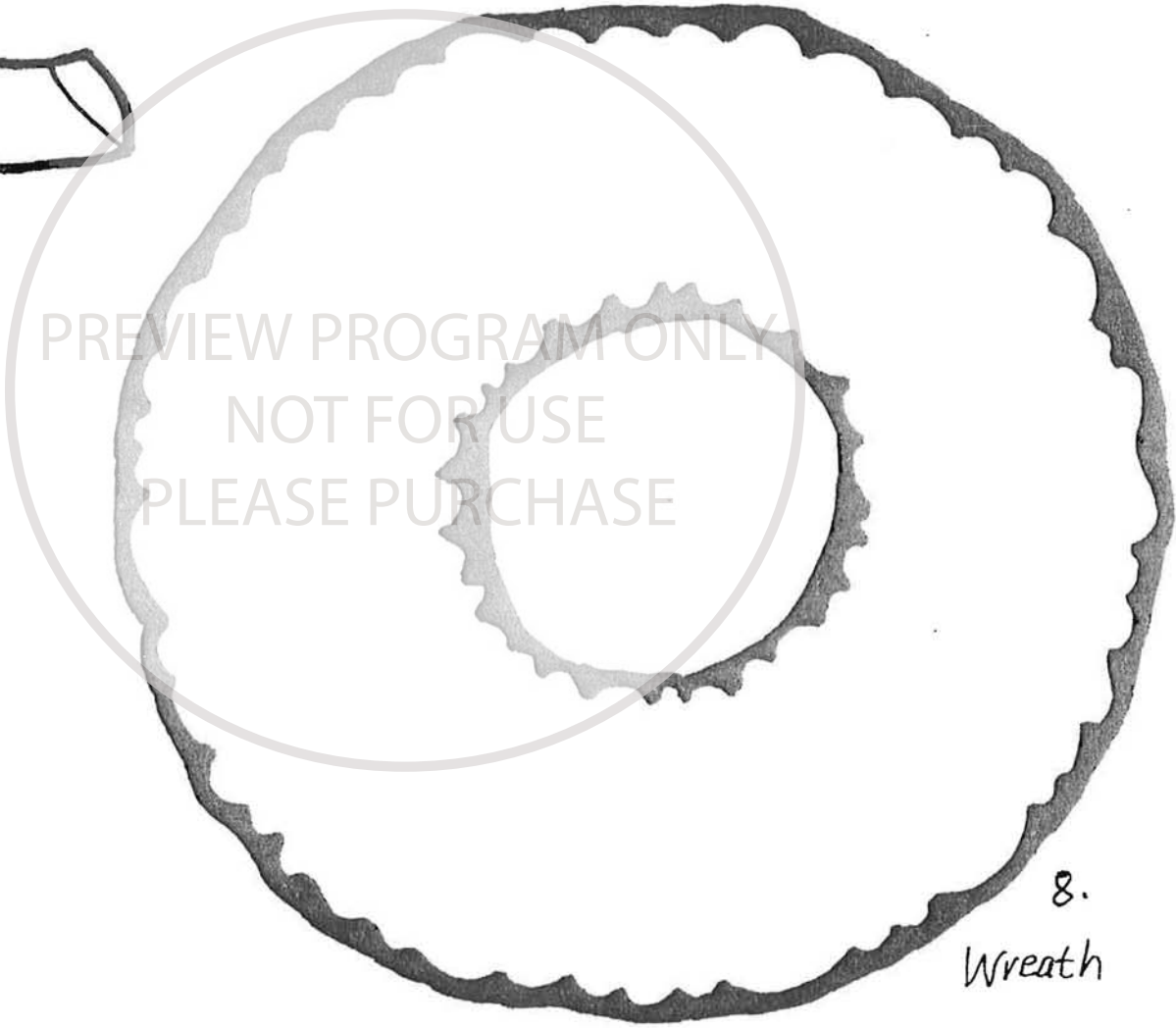


Adult Jesus



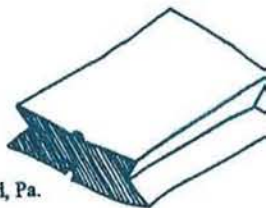


7. Candy Cane



8. Wreath

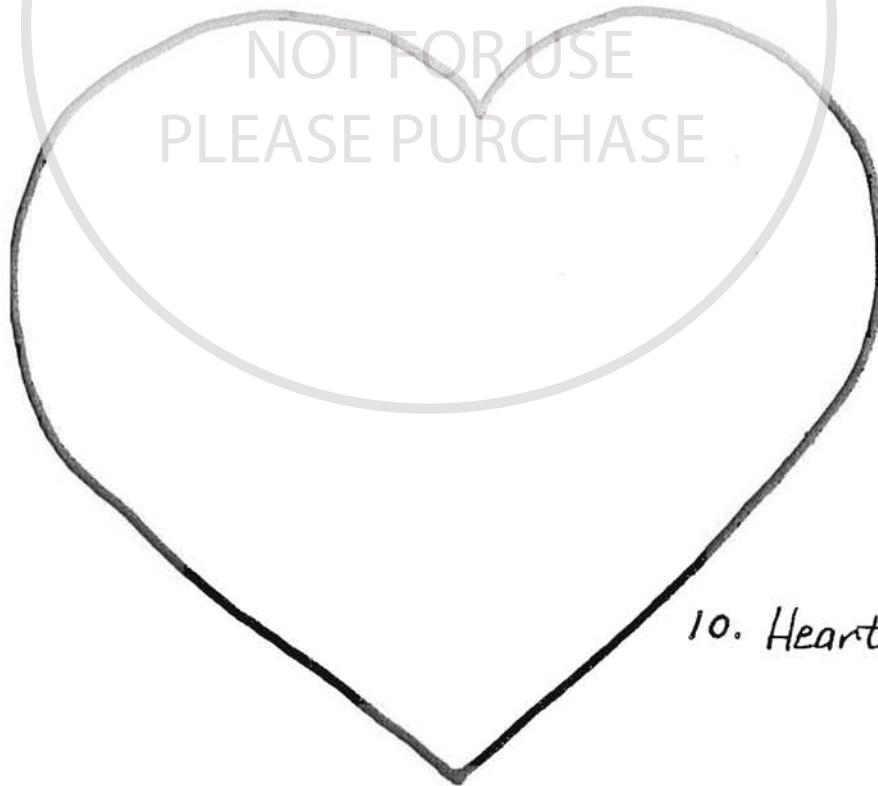
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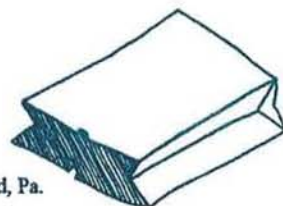


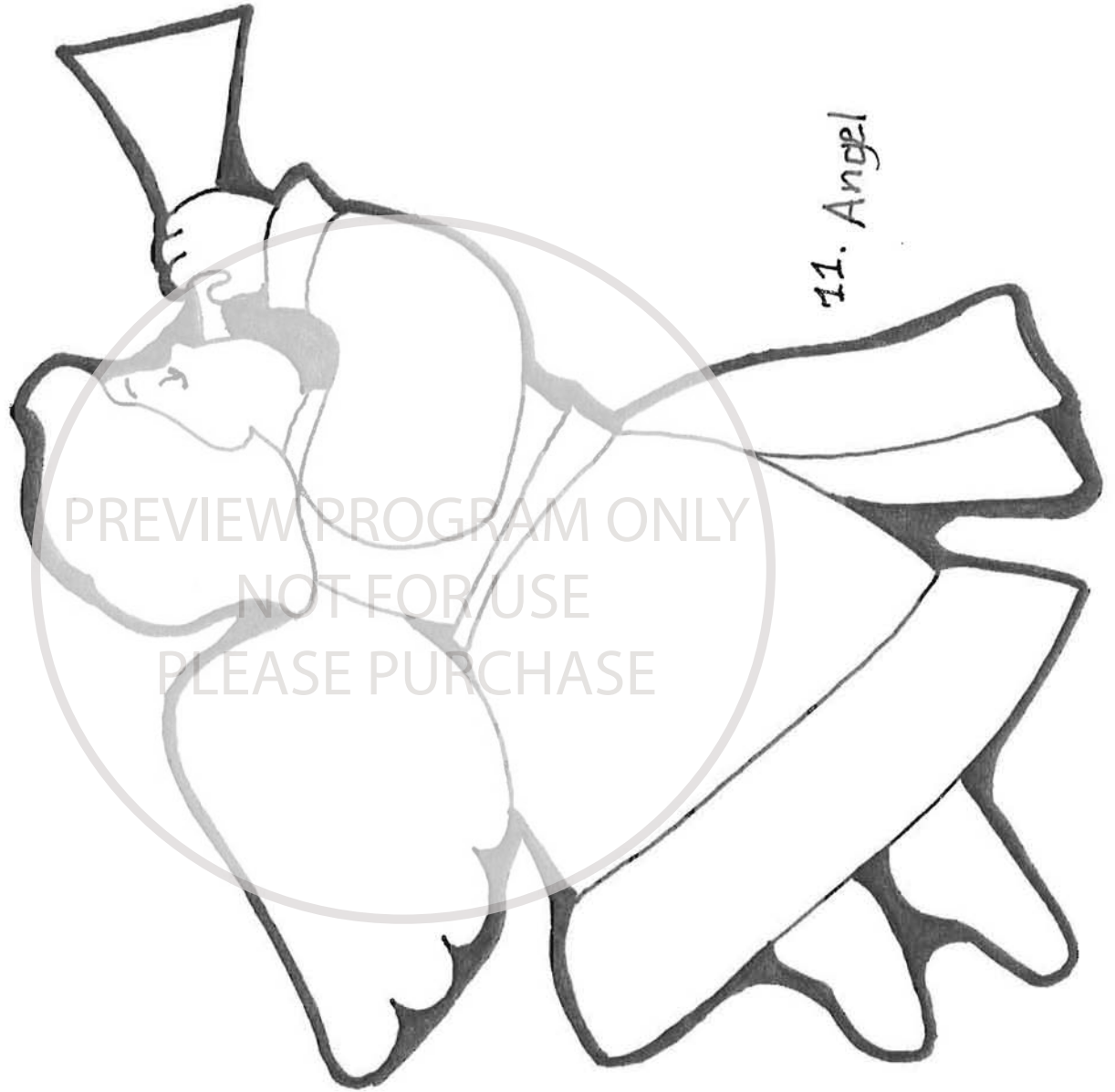
9. Star

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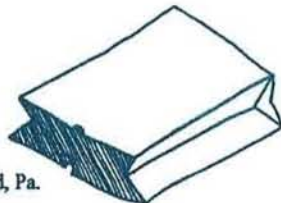
10. Heart

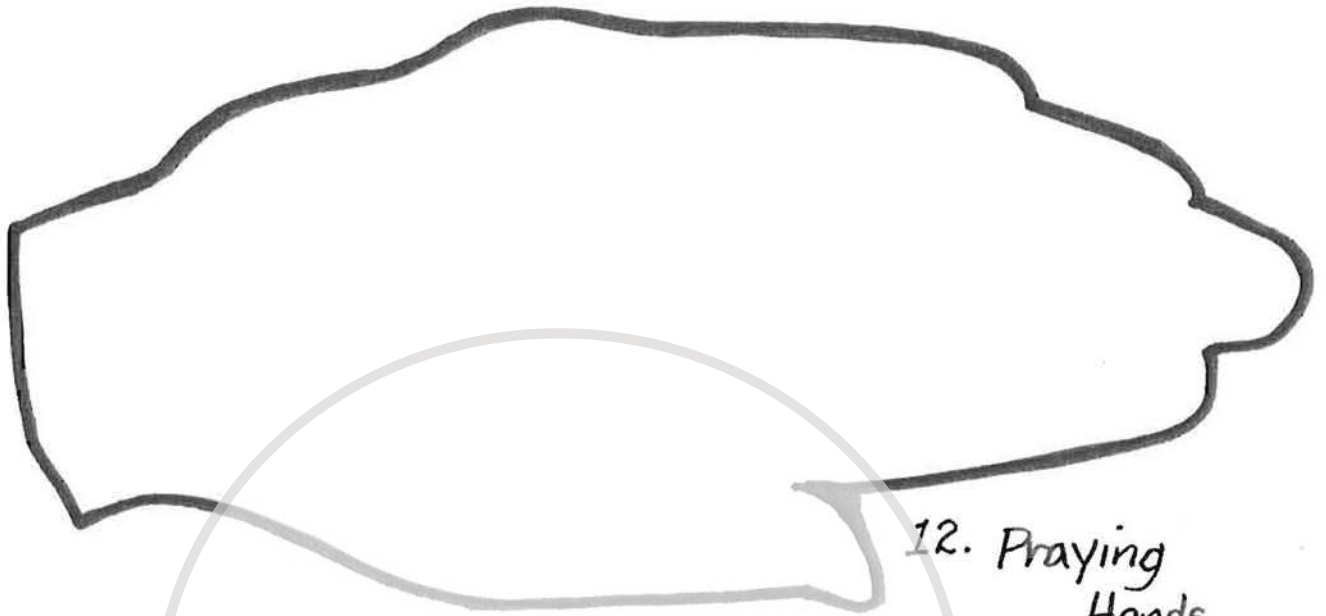




11. Angel

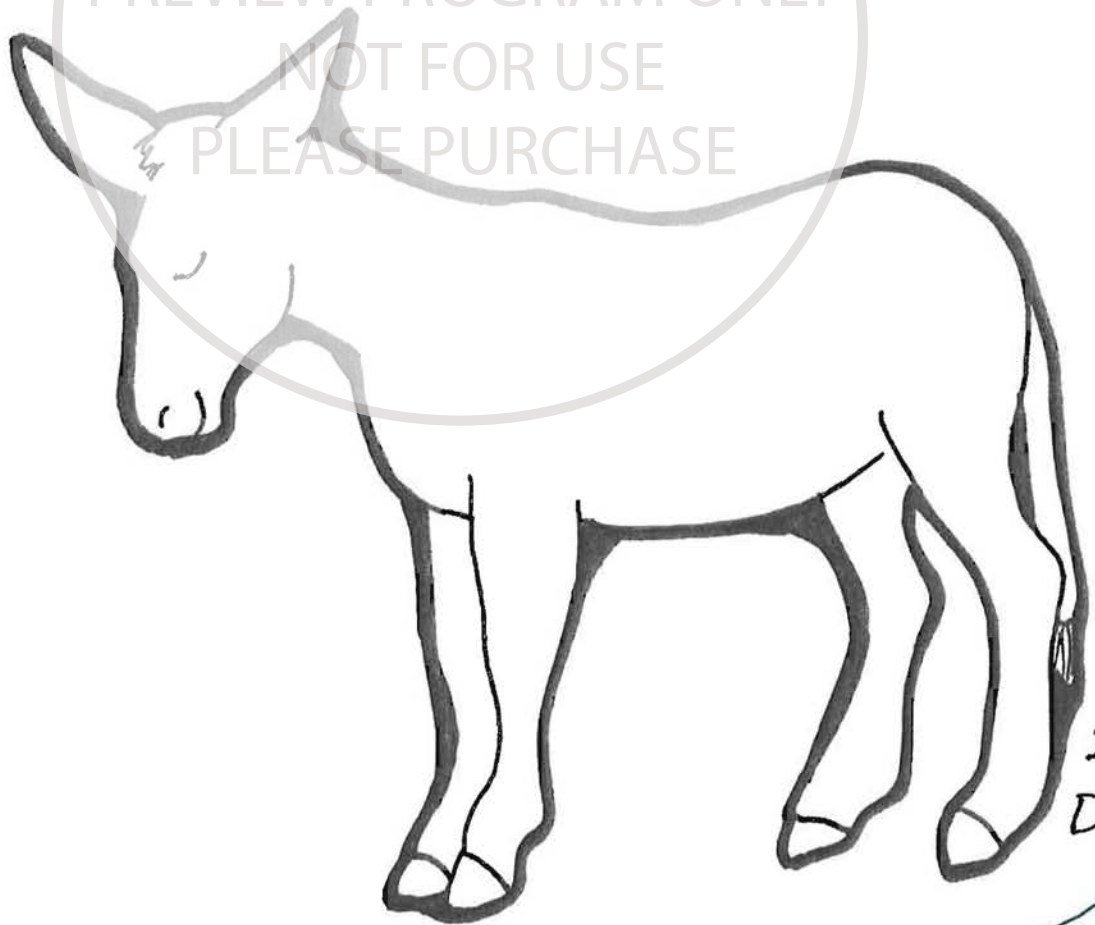
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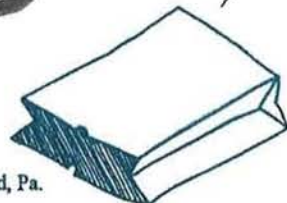


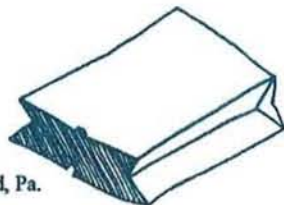
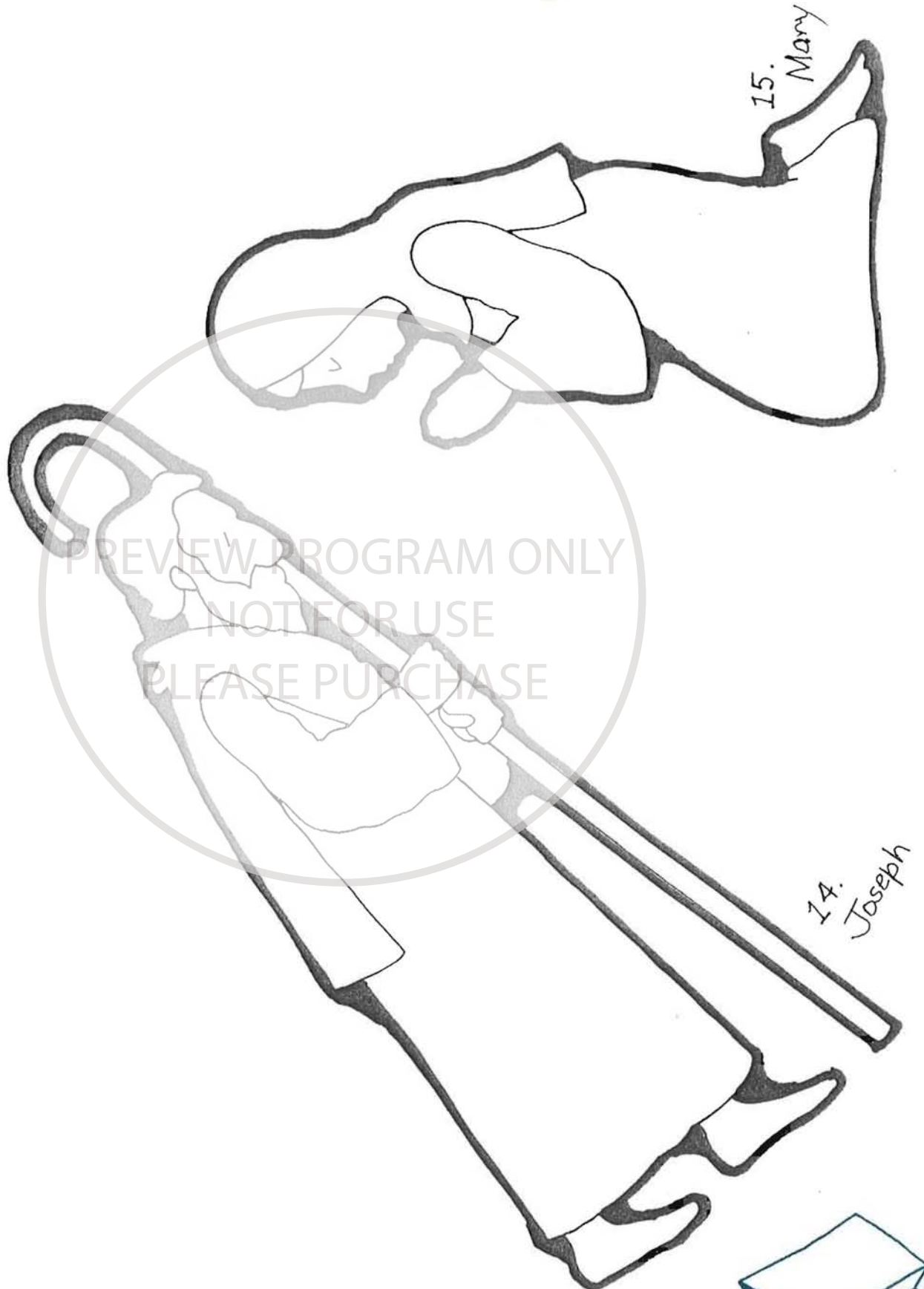
12. Praying
Hands

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13.
Donkey





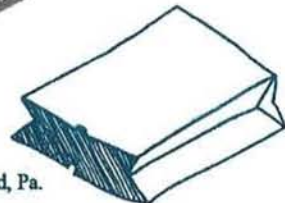


16. Baby Jesus

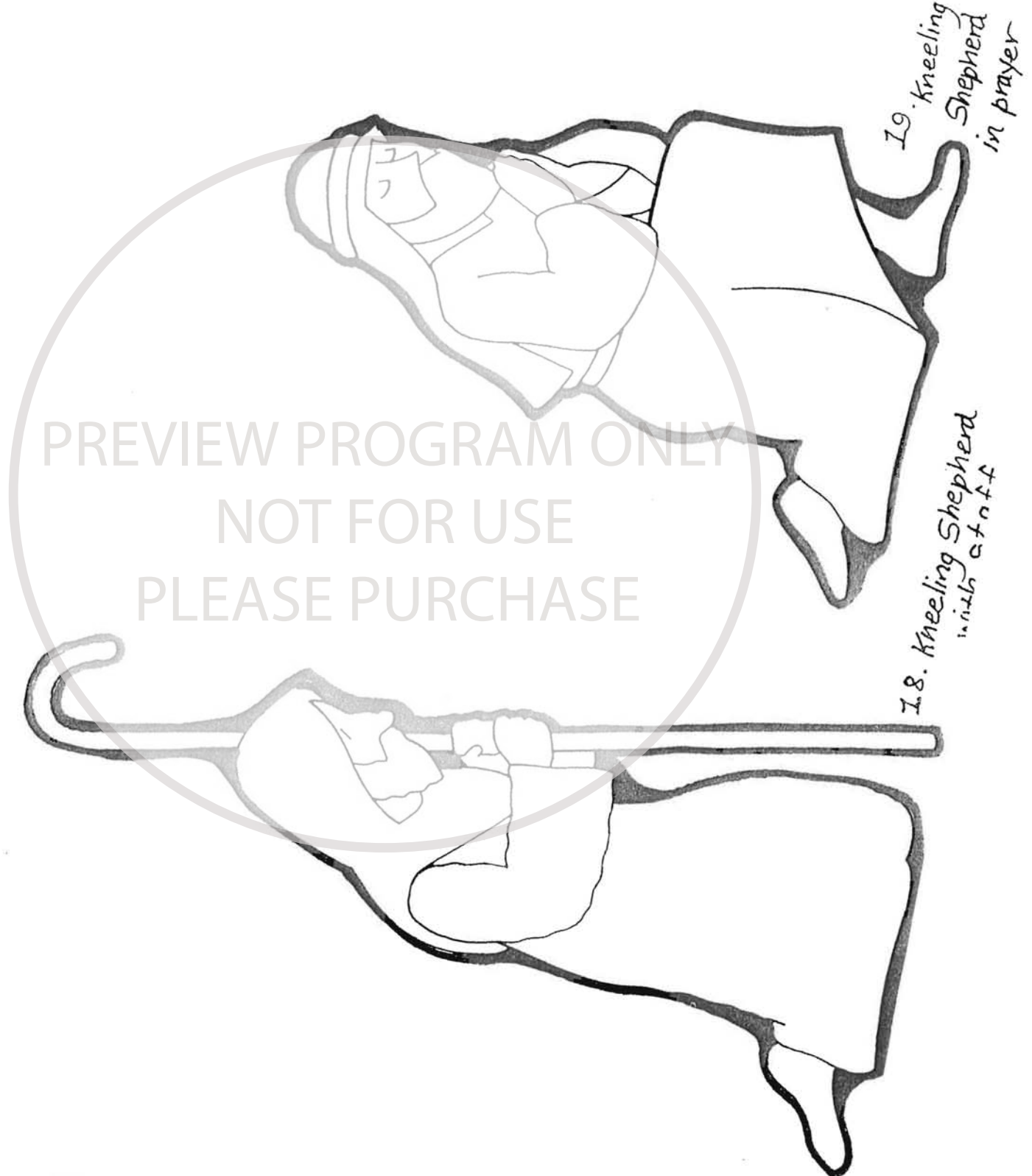
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17. Crown



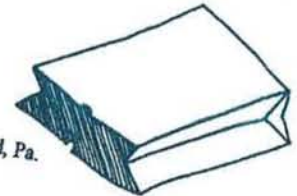
A Paper Bag Christmas



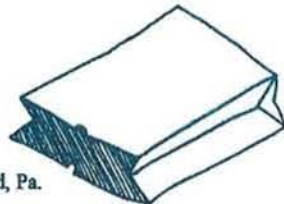
19. Kneeling Shepherd in prayer

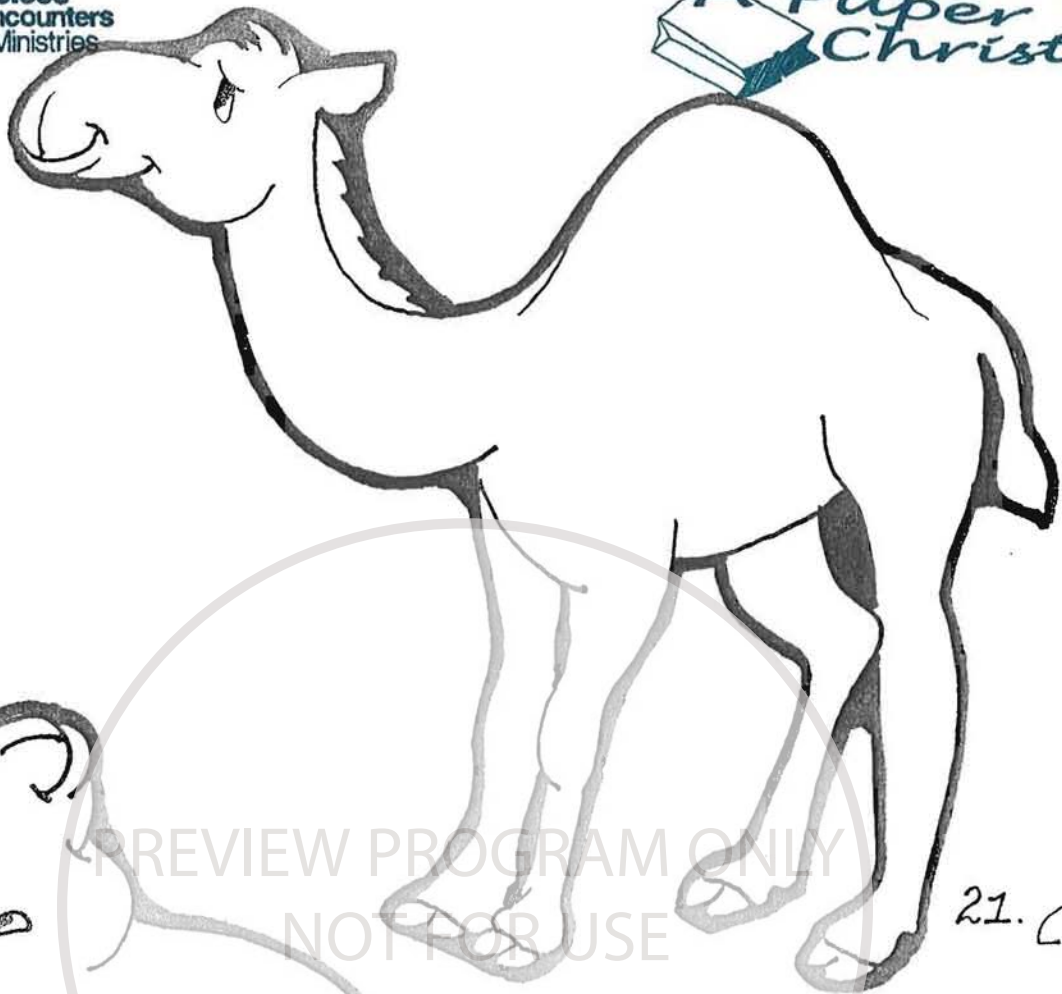
18. Kneeling Shepherd with staff

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20. Wise Men



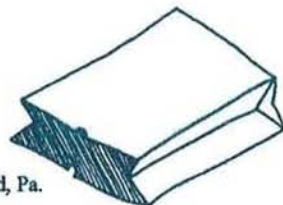


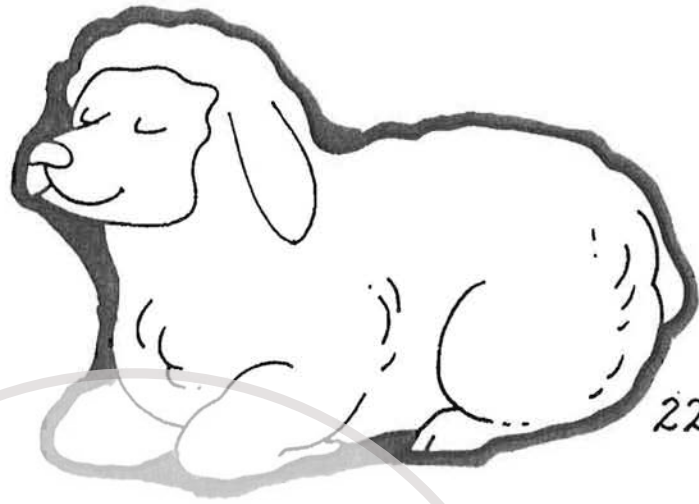
21. Camel



21. Camel

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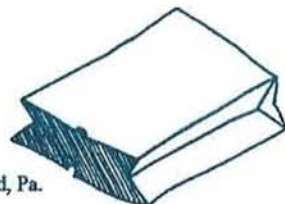




22. Kneeling Sheep



23. Lamb



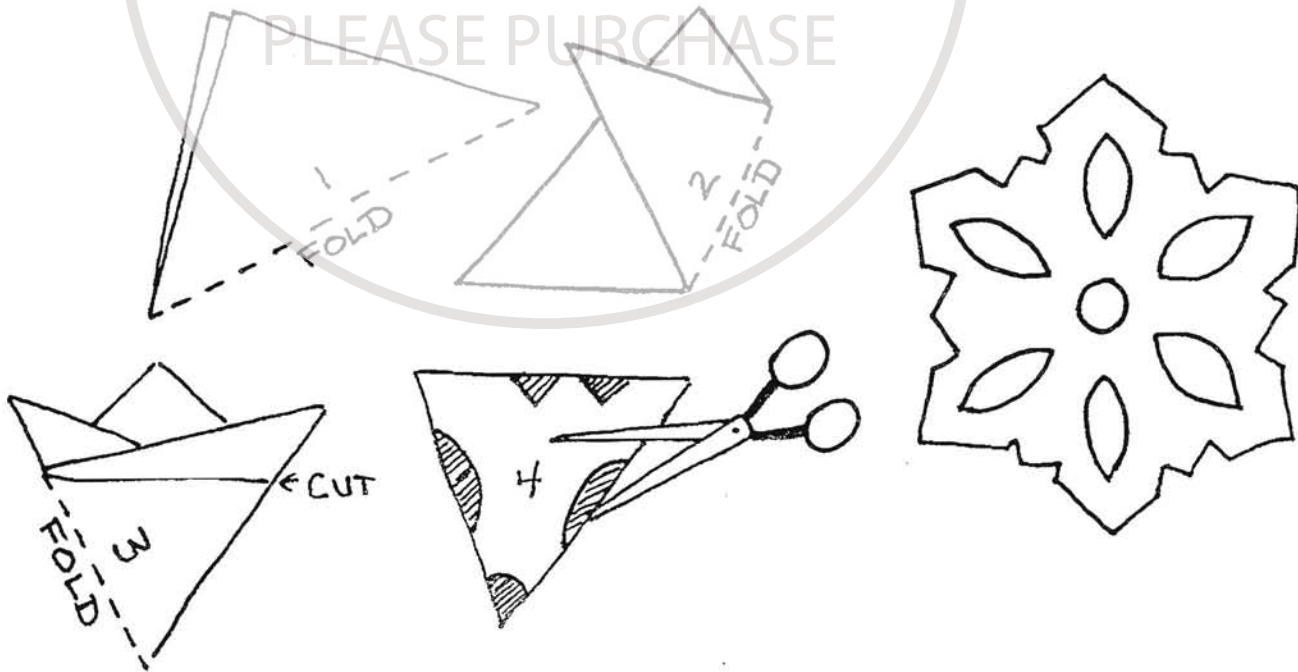
HOW TO CUT SNOWFLAKES:

Cut snowflakes from lightweight white paper. (Typing paper works well.) Fold as shown in the sketches. Cut as much or as little as you want.

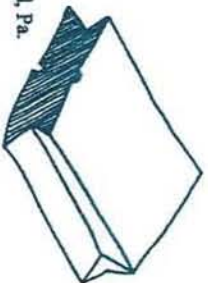
Attach a piece of white yarn or clear fish line and hang from the Christmas tree.

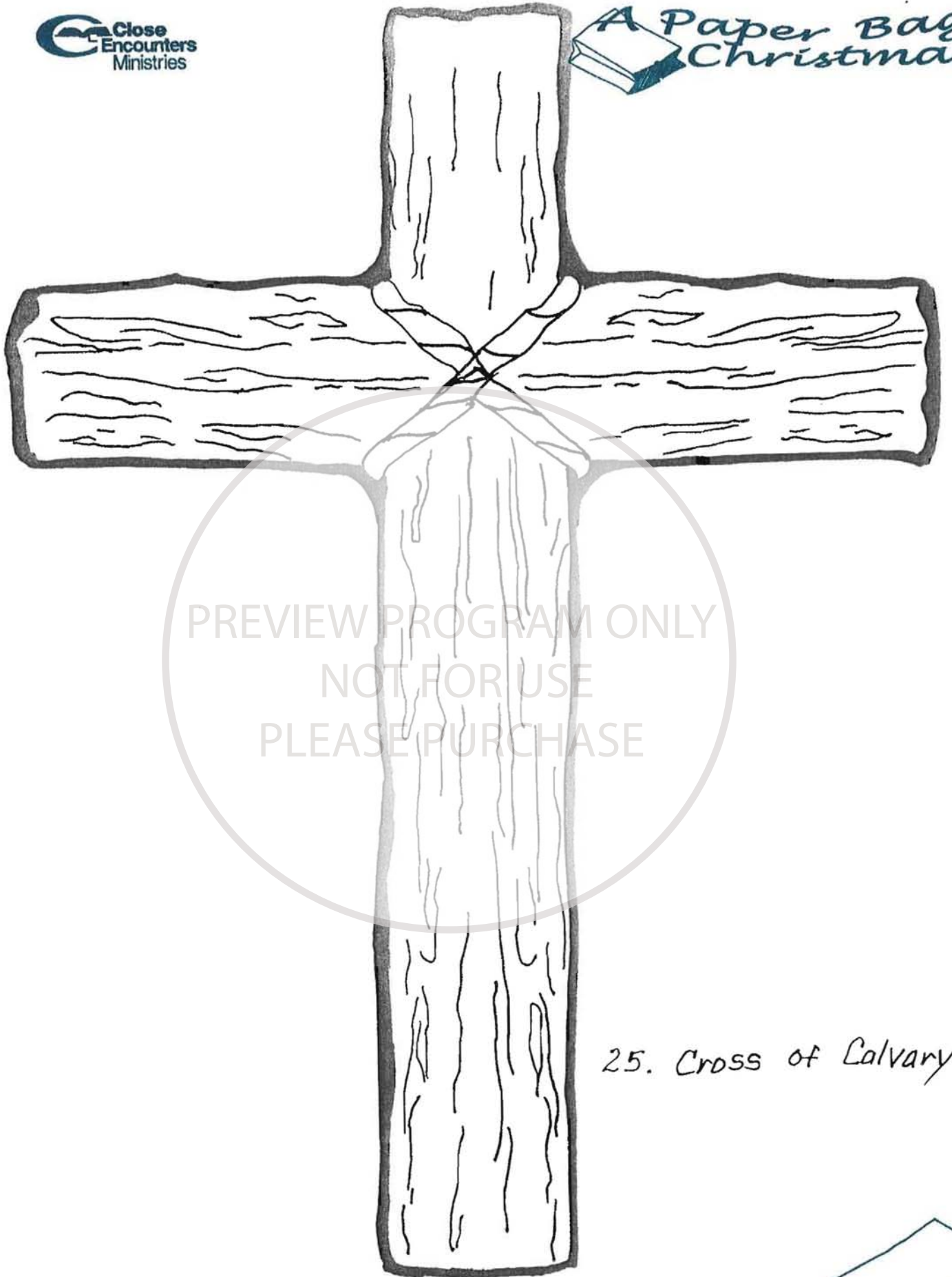
Option: Spread thin lines of glue and sprinkle glitter on each snowflake to make them shimmer in the light.

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A Paper Bag
Christmas





25. Cross of Calvary

