

Mary and Joseph, after the birth of Jesus, took Jesus to the temple to dedicate Him to the Lord. While there, Joseph and his family were introduced to two prophetic figures, one being Simeon, an elderly prophet to whom God made a promise. He longed to see the arrival of the Messiah. When he finally meets Him, he delivers a message of hope and sorrow to Mary and Joseph.

We also see some familiar language to a well-known Christmas song, *The Twelve Days of Christmas*. A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons were typically the offering of someone who didn't have much. The law stipulated that a lamb be offered, but they could not afford a lamb, then they could offer two turtledoves or pigeons. Who knew that such a familiar Christmas song had so much spiritual depth.

## READ

22 When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"v), 24 and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

25 Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. 26 It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. 27 Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28 Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

29 "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,  
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.  
30 For my eyes have seen your salvation,  
31 which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:  
32 a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
and the glory of your people Israel."

33 The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34 Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, 35 so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

36 There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. 38 Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

39 When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. 40 And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

Luke 2:22-40 NIV

## REFLECT

1. Have you ever had a promise broken to you? How did it make you feel?
2. Why is it good news to know that God keeps his promises?
3. If someone keeps their promises, does that mean that they are faithful?
4. What does faithful mean?
5. How do you think God's faithfulness impacted Simeon?
6. How does God being faithful and knowing that He finishes what He starts, impact your life today?

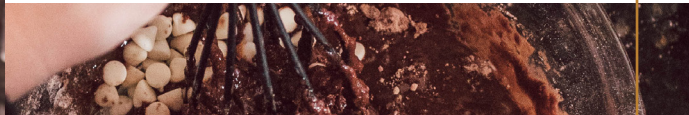
## ACTIVITIES: POLKA DOT COOKIES

It is always encouraging to know that God always keeps His promises. For the activity this week, with the help of your friends or family, you are going to bake together. Sometimes the sweet things in life take time. Just because it takes time, doesn't mean that the sweet things of God are not coming. We see that with Simeon and let us be reminded together this season that "sweet things" will be yielded in its time.

*Recipe on next page*

1 (21.2 oz) package fudge brownie mix  
½ cup vegetable oil  
2 large eggs, lightly beaten  
1 cup white chocolate morsels

Combine the first three ingredients, stirring well. Stir in morsels. Drop dough by rounded teaspoonfuls about 2" apart on baking sheets. Bake at 350 degrees for 8 minutes. Let cool two minutes; remove to wire racks and let cool completely. Makes about four dozen. Eat, share, and enjoy the reminder and the merriment.



## PRESCHOOL: CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Take an evening or two and drive around at night and look at Christmas lights and decorations. Check local news outlets for most decorated places to see during Christmas. (ex. Opryland Hotel is free if park at the mall – can walk inside hotel and explore inside lights also). Remember that the light that shines the brightest this Christmas season, is the light of Jesus that came to dwell with us. Let the Christmas lights you see remind you of the true light of Christmas.

## KIDS: JOY TO THE WORLD

### Items needed:

- Black construction paper
- Chalk
- Cotton balls
- Gold sequins
- Glue

1. Create a scene that represents what the shepherds must have seen with a multitude of “heavenly host” in the sky. The scene represents this light of the gentiles, whose name is Jesus. Glue cotton balls to black paper to represent sheep and gold sequins for the stars in the sky that announced the arrival of the true light of Christmas.
2. Draw the shepherds and angels with chalk.
3. Write “joy” at the top of your scene and underneath the “light of the world.”
4. Remind your family that Jesus is the reason for joy during the holiday season and that He is the light that has come to dwell with us so that we can be a part of the Kings’ family.

