***Lesson 4: A Christmas to Remember (Make Your Own Nativity):***

 ***The Animals at the Manger***

**Scripture:** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” (Luke 2: 10-12)

**Lesson #4: What can we learn from the Camel at the Manger?**

**Leader:** Welcome! We are spending Advent learning from the animals who were there on the night Jesus was born! Let’s begin with a very special song!

(Play or sing the song *The Friendly Beasts.)*

**Leader:** And now (get out a microphone)… welcome to the News!!

**INTERVIEWER:** Good Morning and welcome to the Morning News.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

Today we have our final guest who was at the manger with Jesus.

This guest is a CAMEL.

Please put your hands together and Welcome our guest, a CAMEL.

(**CAMEL ENTERS AND IS CLEARLY EXHAUSTED**)

**CAMEL:** Thank you. You definitely saved THE BEST ANIMAL FOR LAST! I’m glad I had time to come here. I am very busy, you know.

**INTERVIEWER:** So, CAMEL, what keeps you so busy?

**CAMEL:** Are you kidding? I am what they call a “BEAST of BURDEN.” That means I carry heavy loads AND people at the same time.

**INTERVIEWER:** Heavy loads and people too! You must be very strong.

**CAMEL:** CAMELS are so strong and move so gracefully through the desert, people refer to us as “*Ships of the Desert.”*

**INTERVIEWER:** Wow! *“Ships of the Desert.”* That sounds very mysterious. I see why you are so busy.

**INTERVIEWER:** CAMEL, tell me about that hump on your back. I have heard you can go long periods of time without water. Do you store water in that hump on your back?

**CAMEL:** I am glad you asked me about my hump. Actually my hump is not filled with water at all. It is full of Fat! That Fat gives me energy and helps me survive in the heat of the desert.

**INTERVIEWER:** Your hump is full of FAT! AMAZING! Let’s move on to what you drink. How long can you go without drinking water?

**CAMEL**: I can go much longer than my friend, the donkey, without water. You may not believe this, but I can actually go **10 days** without drinking water! I am the most AMAZING desert animal, if I do say so myself!

**INTERVIEWER:** Tell me more about what makes you such a SPECIAL animal.

**CAMEL:** Are you ready for this? I can grow to be over 7 feet tall, counting my hump! And did you know I am a great runner? I can run 25 miles an hour! My mouth has a special thick lining that lets me eat thorny desert plants. Oh, and have you noticed my long eyelashes? They keep the blowing desert sand out of my eyes. I even have 2 eyelids. One just to keep out the sand!

**INTERVIEWER:** You are the most prepared animal for the desert I have ever seen! But it must be difficult in that heat carrying such heavy loads all the time. I’ll bet you don’t live very long. How long do CAMELS live?

**CAMEL:** This is another amazing fact about CAMELS. We live to be about 50 years old!

**INTERVIEWER:** Well, you certainly have convinced me how special you are! So tell me, CAMEL, what did you have to do with the birth of Jesus?

**CAMEL:** We CAMELS carried the Wise Men and their gifts to find the newborn King. We followed the STAR to Bethlehem, where baby Jesus was born. The gifts the Wise Men brought were for a King. Gold of course, but also sweet smelling oils like Frankincense and Myrrh.

**INTERVIEWER:** So you *were* a most special ANIMAL of ADVENT. You carried the Wise Men and their gifts to baby Jesus. How did that make you feel?

**CAMEL:** I’ll admit, I sometimes complain about all the heavy loads I have to carry. But that night, I didn’t complain at all. I felt honored to be there. Seeing baby Jesus was the most JOYFUL night in my life.

**INTERVIEWER:** What a beautiful story, CAMEL. I have just one more question. What would you like to say to the children watching this Morning News Report?

**CAMEL:** Well, I know kids are very strong, like camels! Sometimes life is easy and sometimes it is hard! But remember … you are strong! And Jesus is even stronger… well, with Jesus to help you, there is nothing you cannot do and nothing that will be too hard to get through! Disappointment, sadness, sickness … you are strong, like a camel! Don’t forget that!

**INTERVIEWER:** Great advice, CAMEL. You are correct! These kids are very strong! Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to be with us on the Morning News. Let’s give CAMEL a big hand for talking with us today.

**Scripture and Reflection:**

**Scripture**

**Leader:** It is now our sacred time.Let’s light our candle and set it in the stable. This represents the light of God. Now let’s get still … breathe in, breathe out. Listen to our Advent Scripture**.** *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.**This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”* (Luke 2: 10-12)

**Question of the Day:**

**Leader:** The camel is a very strong animal. Share a time that you were strong (physically, or emotionally).

(Kids share in person or if on line, type it into the chat box).

**Craft:** (Cut out the camel and star. Add them to the nativity.)

Remind the children that the camel carried the wise men and all of their things a long way. When they look at the camel in the nativity, we hope he will remind them of how strong they are!