

Walking Guide

“Shalom! This means Hello, Good-bye, and God’s Peace with You. You will be hearing that a lot tonight. I am _____ (name) of _____ (City) and you are my family. (If you are a woman guide you can say this- “My husband , _____, of the family of David, has fallen ill and I am here to fulfill his duty to take his family back to place of his birth, to be counted and taxed as decreed by Caesar Augustus.) Pick an adult (Preferably a male) to carry the lantern at the back of the family to keep us together and light the way.

NOTE: the soldier will give you the number of your family. You will be asked many times the number in your family.

STATION ONE – MAP:

As you show your family the Holy Land map. Show where your family comes from. Also tell your family occupation and facts of the town that you chose to hail from. Talk about your route to Bethlehem.

It has taken us nearly _____ days to get here to Jerusalem and should get to Bethlehem tonight. We must not tarry; we must arrive in Bethlehem tonight. (To figure out the time it took to get to Bethlehem figure your family could walk up to 15 miles a day on good days.)

Remember, you are of the family of _____ and there are _____ of us. Come family, stay close and we will be on our way.

STATION TWO (MARY AND JOSEPH):

The message here is Mary and Joseph are traveling to Bethlehem yet tonight and she is “with child”.

Example.

JOSEPH: Shalom. Come, warm yourself by the fire.

GUIDE: Shalom. That is very kind of you. I am _____ from _____ and this is my family. We are on our way to Bethlehem.

JOSEPH: And we are too. I am Joseph and this is my wife, Mary. We are from Nazareth. We have stopped to rest awhile. This has been a hard journey for my wife- she is with child. We are going on not Bethlehem yet tonight to find lodging.

GUIDE: Your wife must be very weary. We intend to go into Bethlehem yet tonight, too. Our journey cannot be far. Perhaps we will see you at the Inn. Take care, my friends. Shalom.

*** Do not stay here too long, we do not want our guests to get in a conversation with Mary regarding the “Virgin Birth”, etc. Use a “donkey” conversation if conversation starts that way and then be on your way.

OPTIONAL STOP (ON THE ROAD BEFORE SHEPHERDS):

You do not want to take your group too far if there is a group at the shepherds. We do not want to be “involved” with the angels until it is their time. A good “gimmick” here is to walk back in the middle of your

group to talk and this causes them to turn to you and away from what is going on ahead with the angels. Some background info could be used here.

“This road is very dark. I am afraid there may be robbers and thieves along here. Let us stay very close. Before dark, did you happen to notice their vineyards of grapes on the hillside? (You can compare the crops with yours back home., etc.) I am not sure we can see Rachel’s grave, Jacob’s beloved wife, as we pass by, it is so dark.

You know we are going to have to think about replenishing our supplies. Maybe we could replace that broken jug you broke at the river. Rachael (name one of the guests). And Joshua (guest), you could probably use some sandals, if we like what we see. ETC. (This sort of prepares them to get involved in the village.

STATION THREE (SHEPHERDS AND ANGELS):

The message (the theme of the evening—to hear the announcement and find the Savior) is given here. Stop long enough to hear the trumpet, the angel announcement, and angels sing. Then listen to the Shepherds plan to go immediately to Bethlehem to find this Baby. On approaching, the Guide should position him/herself so the trumpeter can see the GUIDE’S lantern swing (a signal to the trumpeter to begin playing.).

SHEPHERDS: Shalom, Travelers. Come, share our fire. It is a cold night.

GUIDE: Shalom and thank you. Can you tell us how far it is to Bethlehem?

SHEPHERDS: It is just over those hills. Not far.

GUIDE: (Be swinging your lantern) Do you know if the Bethlehem Inn is still there?

TRUMPET SOUNDS, ANGEL SPEAKS, ANGELS SING

SHEPHERDS: (All speaking at once) Let us go and see if we can find the Savior that the angels sang about.

(Relate a feeling of astonishment and wonder with guests and shepherds—can be involved with all the shepherds and confusion.)

OPTIONAL STOP (ON ROAD BEFORE REGISTRATION-COUNTING TENT):

If another family is waiting outside or has just gone into the tent you may want to use some more background information and talk with your family.

GUIDE: Remember family, that all of Palestine is under Roman Rule. We may not be very welcomed in the village by the Roman soldiers. Do as they say, remember your family name and where you are from. Children, remember, the soldiers will not hurt you. Do not be afraid. We are family and we will protect each other. We will try to do as they say.

STATION FOUR (REGISTRATION TENT):

Soldiers may stop you outside of the tent and harass your family. Soldiers will direct this station—Guide responds. When you enter the tent go to the far side and stand at the exit door. (You should do this at each tent you enter on the journey. Besides making it easier to lead your group out, it also gives you a position to see ahead and how better to space your group.).

SOLDIERS: Halt!... Who goes here!

GUIDE: (Answer according.)

You will be asked to register your family. You will write your Biblical name and the number in your family—in Roman numerals—on the scroll. This is where your family is being counted so Caesar can levy future taxes. Outside you may have to linger a while until your group gets back together. Sometimes the soldiers detain some family members for a bit. If family is worried just tell them not to worry because when the soldiers think about having to feed them, they may release them.

ROMAN NUMERALS

1...I	4...IV	7...VII	10...X	20...XX	40...XL	50...L
2...II	5...V	8...VIII	11...XI	25...XXV	49...XLIX	100...C
3...III	6...VI	9...IX	12...XII	30...XXX		

STATION FIVE (THE INN):

GUIDE: (at the Bethlehem Inn sign) I see the Inn is just ahead. Let us get shelter for the night. It looks like it might be crowded. Let's get our children up in front and perhaps they will take pity on us and make room for our family;;Better yet, why don't some of our children go up and knock on the door and ask if they have room for our family?

INNKEEPER: here he gives the message that he has no room—he's even turned away a young couple and she was "with child". He said that he suggested that the couple should try the stable on the other side of town. He also tells us to go there too.

GUIDE: You argue and plead—but to no avail.

Come family. If there is no room for us perhaps, we can find something in the village, and maybe we can even get our taxes paid tonight so we can get an early start tomorrow. We may have to go to the stables too.

OPTIONAL STOP: This message may be given anytime before you get into the village.

GUIDE: Remember the villagers will probably be very anxious to sell their wares, since they must pay their taxes, too. We need some supplies. Matthew (a guest) you have a keen mind. Please help barter and get some grain for our journey home. Also, we must be sure that we have enough money to pay our taxes. It would probably be a good idea if we would ask the vendors to hold our choices until the morning and we can pick them up before we leave. Just tell them to hold for the family of _____.

STATION SIX (FISHERMEN):

GUIDE AND FISHERMEN will exchange greetings and FISHERMEN will engage the guests in conversation. GUIDE may have to help if you have a quiet group—enough to get them started. Admire the catch, ask appropriate questions, etc. The FISHERMEN like to tell BIG fish stories and strange things that have happened

while they were fishing. GUIDE needs to watch forward and move the group when the family ahead goes into the House of Benjamin.

STATION SEVEN (HOUSE OF BENJAMIN):

This is a house of refuge—a good Jewish family—they will be very hospitable to your family. They interact with your family, try to engage the children in a game, ask you to stay and eat with them, etc. This is a good traffic flow regulator—watch ahead—or a soldier may order you to move on. In fact, move on ANYTIME a soldier asks you to move. You do not need to act pleased, but they are watching ahead and controlling traffic.

The Mezuzah is a little box that was placed on the door post of every Jewish home. It contained a scroll that was inscribed with the Shema. The Shema is the first great law of the Hebrews and it taught them how to think about God. “The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.” Deut. 6:4-5) This lesson had to be learned by all Jewish boys before they could go to school. The Mezuzah containing the Shema was touched each time someone went in or out of the house to remind them of the great law.

GUIDE: Shalom, thank you for inviting us into your home. We have been travelling for ____ days and my family is very tired. What are you fixing? It smells so good.

SHEPHERD’S WIFE: We are fixing lamb stew. We will be eating as soon as my husband, a shepherd gets home. You are welcomed to stay and eat with us.

GUIDE: Your husband? Is he one of the shepherds just north of here? We saw him and he has a story to tell you! Ad lib

STATION EIGHT (IN THE VILLAGE):

The Village is the biggest area the tour goes through and is very important in giving our guests “the experience” of the Holy Night encounter. Interaction between Guides/Village People/Guests is very important. It is the difference between boredom and enthusiasm. Work hard to get your family involved, Use your background information.

One thing you need to mention to the family is that a *denarius* is a wage for one day’s labor and that 80 *lepta* would make about one *denarius*. This may make them more confident to get in and barter. Both GUIDE and VILLAGER should study the background examples on money and measurements so they will know what to expect.

The soldiers will “help” you move from one shop to another. Please follow their lead. Some things you can say in the village.

GUIDE: Refer to your family by biblical names and ask for help in selecting items. At the rugs you might ask your family how many need a sleeping pallet or mat because you will have to sleep on the ground tonight.

At the sandal maker you might ask your daughter, Rebecca if she wants to check out the sandals. Since hers are worn out from the trip.

Ask Dorcas if she thinks one of the baskets would be big enough to carry your wheat home.

Ask Rachael about a new water jug since she broke yours down by the river yesterday.

Ask Joshua to check out the sandals...Benjamin the wood products, etc.

Other questions you might ask the VILLAGERS:

Where do you get your wool?

What do you use to get that beautiful color of dye?

Do you have any figs, pomegranates, olives today?

Is your wood, wheat, produced from this area?

We heard angels on the hillside who sang of a Savior being born here. Have you heard anything about this? (This could be a good topic of conversation, but of course do not let the Roman soldiers hear us speak of this—they would be upset!

STATION NINE (HOLDING TENT):

More than one family group will probably be here at a time. The SOLDIERS will “direct” the activity here. Although SOLDIERS will demand quiet here, it seems natural that families would want to converse. If GUIDES can initiate and control the conversation in a Biblical context it could take some pressure off the SOLDIERS and make the wait less stressful. Always be prepared to be reprimanded by the SOLDIERS and if you see the situation is “out of hand” then obey the SOLDIERS. Attempt to keep your family “under control”. If you see any of “your” children-frightened you might suggest to their parents, they could take the child around the tax tent and meet the group when you come out.

STATION TEN (TAX TENT):

The SOLDIERS will be “in charge” here and you will be directed to do what you need to do. GUIDE will speak only when spoken to inside this tent. A family member may be put in the stocks or knee before the Publican. Once the Publican levies the tax and tells your family what you owe, you go forward and pay what is “required”. Be sure to have coins to pay taxes at the table. Go quickly. Also, they will be stamping your scroll. *Coins are picked up at The Pines if the GUIDES need them.

GATHER TOGETHER STOP (JUST BEFORE THE SYNAGOGUE):

You will need this stop to “collect and redirect” your group. They will be quite “hyper”. When all get out of the tax tent you might just wait quietly a minute until they realize you want to speak—then speak quietly and calmly.

GUIDE: Family, what a relief! We have paid our taxes and we have enough money to purchase supplies when we go back home. Please put your scroll away. We do not need them anymore tonight. I see a synagogue ahead. I think perhaps we should try to stop in and listen as the Rabbi reads and teaches. Occasionally women are allowed in the synagogue—perhaps we will be welcome tonight. Remember, women and girls, we must stand in the back and the men will do the talking.

TAXES: Jesus was born into the most heavily taxed nation the world has ever known. The religious taxes alone were more than any modern economy could bear. After paying their “church dues” you would think the Jews

would not have anything left for the Government. The Greeks, and the Syrians after them, took for themselves 1/3 of the produce of the land and ½ of the fruit of the trees. Herod also taxed the Jews. Rome had to have its cut too. There was a Roman water, city, meat, salt, road, house tax, and a frontier tax (tax on goods passing through a city or town). Roman taxes were harvested by “tax gatherers” or publicans.

STATION ELEVEN (LION OF JUDAH SYNAGOGUE):

A SCRIBE will welcome you inside. Go to the exit door. Occasional they will blow on the ram’s horn to announce the approaching Sabbath. SCRIBES will say the following and hopefully the men of your family will respond. Give them time—if no one does then the GUIDE may answer. Sometimes you may think this is a lot of conversation, but it is enough of a diversion to calm the family down and prepare them for the rest of the journey.

SCRIBE: Shalom. Welcome to our Synagogue—the Lion of Judah. Scribe will ask a few questions. We want you to know about our synagogue. It is a community meeting place, a place of teaching and house of prayer and worship, and sometimes used as a court of law. We have _____ here practicing his Hebrew letters in the sand. What have you written _____? Boy responds, “The Holy One.” Note: Young boys are not always available---especially at late hours.

You will notice we have a seven candle Menorah, representing the seven days of creation, on the ark behind the veil. The Torah is kept in the ark when it is not being used and the setup is such that when you look across the Menorah you are looking in the direction of Jerusalem. _____ will you read to us from the Torah? It would be appropriate for us all to offer a word of praise to the LORD before you continue your journey. Will everyone please say together “PRAISE BE TO GOD” or “HEAR O ISRAEL, THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE LORD”. We wish you well as you go on your journey. Shalom.

The SCRIBES will be watching ahead to the groups at the stable and release your group accordingly.

BETWEEN THE SYNAGOGUE AND MANGER:

You need this space to allow your family to prepare themselves to approach the manger. It is a beautiful scene. Make sure they all see it. Note the serene calming effect has on the group. If you choose to speak it could be something to impress upon them the sacredness of the moment.

GUIDE: I would like to pause here just a moment in this calm and peaceful setting and consider where we have been tonight. We have heard the message on the hillside of the coming of a Savior. We have traveled through the village with all its noise excitement and harassment. And now we come to this spot and we can look ahead and see the Star, the Baby—God’s Promise. Our life can be a lot like this moment as we get closer to our Lord, we can feel that Peace...Come, let us go to the manger.

STATION TWELVE (THE MANGER):

Place yourself at the north (right) side of the stable so you can see ahead and know when to go to the WISE MEN. Make sure that children are up in front so they can see. Your group may stand quietly, or you may start them singing “Away in the Manger” or “Silent Night”. You may want to repeat John 3:16 or speak briefly of the ways God tried to get our attention and finally sent His Son to show us the Way.

When you leave the manger be sure that the group ahead has gone on and the WISE MEN have time to go “back” so they can turn and come from the “east” again. Gather the children in front again because we want them to interact with the WISE MEN.

STATION THIRTEEN (THE WISE MEN):

The WISE MEN will try to speak to the children, and the GUIDE should be near to pick up if children need encouragement or do not respond.

GUIDE: Look family, I see travelers from the East.....Shalom.

WISEMEN: Greetings! We have been traveling for a long distance. We are seeking a Babe who is born that will be the King of the Jews. Have you seen such a Baby? (Hopefully, the children will respond—if they do not, just encourage them.)

GUIDE: I see you have brought gifts.

WISE MEN: We have brought gold for His Glory...Frankincense for the fragrance of His Life...and sweet smelling Myrrh. Come, our journey has been long and dangerous, and we must find the King. God peace be with you.

This Station concludes the traditional Christmas story. GUIDES will come out of character at the next stop—The Cross.

STATION FOURTEEN (THE CROSS):

If there is a REASON for the Holy Night, this is it! Do not pass up a chance to acknowledge that Christ was born and did live and died that we might know that He is our Savior. If you find it hard to organize a testimony or invitation you may want to use the example, but listen to your heart, speak sincerely, and make it your own words. You will “go out of” your Holy Walk character and be YOU, the CHRISTIAN, at this station.

GUIDE: It is appropriate that we stop here before our journey ends. For if we had not had the cross—His death and resurrection—Jesus’ birth would have been like any other birth.

Tonight, we have shared with you our understanding of the Holy Night. You have been a wonderful family and “gone along” with the pretending just great. It was a pleasure to be your GUIDE. But now I urge you not to pretend. This is for real. I wish for each of you the Peace and Joy of God’s Love and His promise of Eternal Life. And I am sure many of you here know this assurance—that you are never alone.

But if there is someone here who is still searching for this Peace, this Savior, like the WISE MEN were searching, I want to invite you to ask Jesus to be your Savior now. A Savior that will guide you, comfort you, and be with you always. I can not accept this gift of life for you. As a family, we can not accept this gift from you. You must ask. Jesus will not come to you with being asked. It would be the best Christmas gift ever.

May you ALL have God’s Peace, Joy, and His Promise of Eternal Life!

Our last stop will be the “Empty Tomb”. After that you will go to the Hospitality Tent for refreshments and board the bus back to the Bremen High School. Thank you for being a part of the Bremen Holy Walk. We pray that it has been a blessing for you to attend. Let us go.

FINAL STATION (EMPTY TOMB):

In the Empty tomb your group will have a moment for reflection and the most important reminder that Christianity is a belief that is based on a Risen Savior. No other religion in the whole worships a Living God. In the Empty will be a leader or preacher that will BRIEFLY talk with your family. Then close with a Prayer.

AFTER THE EMPTY TOMB:

Now that GUIDES are out of character it is time that you can share anything about the Walk. Be sure to always speak on the positive slant. Speak in terms of the Bremen Christian Community, the desire to share this as a gift to all who come, and the blessing it gives to each of us who participate.

Perhaps you would like to know more about your group, where they are from, if they have been before, etc. Then take your family to the Hospitality Tent and say Shalom and Merry Christmas. Thank you for being a part of my family.

PRAISE THE LORD!

YOU MADE IT!!

SHALOM!!!

THANK YOU!!!!