

LESSON 1
HOPE

LESSON AT A GLANCE

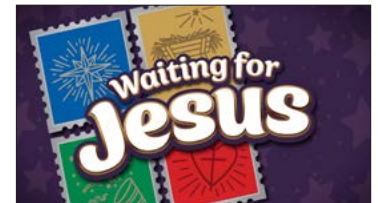
WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is Our Hope**SCRIPTURE:** Isaiah 7; Matthew 1**GOD'S BIG STORY:** Isaiah reminds God's people of God's promise to send a Messiah, and Jesus—Immanuel—fulfills the promise!**WORD OF WONDER:** Faith is being sure of what we hope for and sure of what we do not see.
—from Hebrews 11:1

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions
- Declaring God's Wonder
- Prayer of Invitation
- Worship: Go Tell It On The Mountain, Joy to the World (Glory to the King)
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Prayer and Blessing



Waiting for Jesus Preschool Spotify playlist



LESSON 1 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is Our Hope

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 7; Matthew 1

WORD OF WONDER: From Hebrews 11:1

All I hoped for on my eighth birthday was a pair of cowboy boots. I have a picture of the moment it happened. I ripped apart the wrapping paper, opened the box, and there they were! The picture shows me in swim trunks, my new cowboy boots, and an ear-to-ear smile. As I reflect, I see that my hope was deeper than the leather, thread, and soles of those boots. While my childhood was mostly great, there were times when I felt tame, and weak, and trapped. I hoped that when I pulled on those boots, I would feel like a cowboy—wild, tough, and free.

By necessity, hope is present when something better is not. The people who first heard the words of Isaiah or lived the story in Matthew's Gospel were people of hope. They hoped for a leader who could make them wild, and tough, and free in the face of suffering and feeling powerless.

Read Isaiah 7:10–14 and Matthew 1:18–24. As you read, what do you see that points to hope?

For hundreds of years before the birth of Jesus, God's people held onto hope. For over two thousand years after His birth, people have claimed the promise of our Wonder Truth: Jesus Is Our Hope!

How do you see Jesus providing the hope promised in Isaiah and Matthew?

What do you find yourself hoping for these days?

What might the children in your life be hoping for?

—Matt Irvine

Pastor and Editor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Isaiah was a prophet sent by God to warn His people in Judah of the judgment that would come if they didn't listen to God. Isaiah tells the people that God has a good future in store, with a coming servant who would show the way—a savior and messiah.

WHAT?

Israel and Judah were ruled by separate kings who were often disobedient and faithless. Isaiah's message of hope is for a restoration of God's rightful rule on earth. At the birth of a child named "Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14), the people would see that God is with them.

WHERE?

Isaiah was called to speak to Judah, the name of the southern kingdom after the division of Israel. Judah was also the tribe of King David and the tribe through whom the Messiah would come.

WHEN?

About 700 years before Jesus' birth, in the year Judah's King Uzziah died, God anointed Isaiah as a messenger. Later when Judah's neighbors threatened to invade, Isaiah prophesied of a hopeful future for Judah's King Ahaz.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

The Bible is the big story of God loving and redeeming His people through His Son, Jesus. Even when God's people disobeyed, He loved them, cared for them, and promised them a hopeful future. Jesus is the fulfillment of these promises: He is the hope that God promised!

LESSON 1 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is Our Hope

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 7; Matthew 1

WORD OF WONDER: From Hebrews 11:1

Welcome**Slide: Series Welcome Loop****As kids arrive...**

Walk around the room and welcome as many kids as possible by showing excitement that they have joined you. Give high-fives, fist bumps, encourage them to sit on the floor in their spots, and ask questions about their week.

Video: Countdown

Welcome kids to worship time. Introduce yourself by name.

Puppet Intro and Curiosity Questions

RESOURCES: Tac the Cat puppet

For this section, you can use the cat picture provided, or a stuffed animal cat, or a cat hand puppet.

Leader: You may remember our friend, Tac. He's always asking questions. He has a question for you, now. Are you ready?

Tac the Cat: Hi, kids! I'm really curious about something I heard the word advent at church. It kind of sounds like when an inventor invents something. Is that what it means?

Leader: No, Tac. It isn't quite the same. Advent means "coming" or "arrival of an important person." We celebrate advent around Christmastime to remember when Jesus came.

Tac the Cat: Well I wasn't there when Jesus came! When did He come?

Leader: God sent Jesus to earth many years ago, before we were born. We read about it in the Bible, and we can celebrate Jesus' coming even now.

Tac the Cat: How can we do that?

Leader: Some churches celebrate advent with an advent wreath and candle, when they light candles to help us remember Jesus. Some churches celebrate with special worship songs, decorations, and events.

Tac the Cat: That sounds so cool. I can't wait to celebrate advent and remember Jesus! I'm so glad He came to earth.

Leader: Yes, we'll learn all about it in our new series, Waiting for Jesus! We'll learn about the first time Jesus came to earth many years ago and about how He is coming back someday.

Tac the Cat: Really? Wow, that sounds so cool!

Leader: In today's story, we'll learn about some clues that were given a loooooooong time before Jesus was born—to help people get ready for Him. People had to wait a long time.

Tac the Cat: I don't like waiting a long time. It gets boring.

Leader: Yes, it can be hard to wait. God was with the people even when they waited for Jesus, and God is with us too.

Tac the Cat: I can't wait to hear that story! I'm going to go see if I can find more advent celebrating supplies so I can start celebrating! Bye, kids!

Have you ever been curious about something? Let's take a moment and think: Have you had to wait a long time for something? Allow the kids to respond. **Have you ever heard the word advent? How does your family celebrate Jesus during Christmastime?** Allow the kids to respond. **We all hear people say things and do things that we wonder about. Did you know that we can celebrate Jesus during advent time as we remember when God sent Jesus to earth? God sent Jesus to give us hope—that means knowing for sure that everything will be OK and that God is with us.**

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Today's Wonder Truth is **JESUS IS OUR HOPE**. Today, we'll discover what it means that Jesus is our hope.

Declaring God's Wonder

SLIDE: DECLARATION

Thank You, God, that You made me! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Make prayer hands, then point up and then to yourself.

And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Bring your arms down from above, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

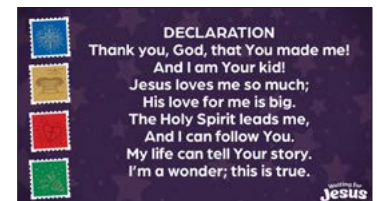
March in place like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. (Kids repeat words and motions.)

Put your hands up, shake your fingers, and celebrate ("praise hands").



Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, we invite Your Holy Spirit to lead us today. Teach us what You want us to understand. Help us to hear Your voice and know Your amazing love for us. Make us more like Jesus, who is our hope. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

Worship

Today we'll learn that Jesus was the hope of God's people long ago, and He is our hope today! No matter what we're going through, we can trust and worship Him!

WORSHIP VIDEOS: Go Tell It On The Mountain, Joy to the World (Glory to the King)

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible, and what do I see? (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

God's big story, waiting for me! (*Point to yourself.*)

Let's start by watching part of God's big story from the books of Isaiah and Matthew in the Bible. Isaiah is in the Old Testament, and Matthew is the first book of the New Testament.

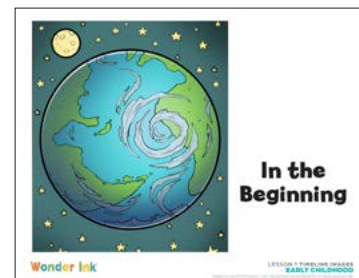
VIDEO: GODS BIG STORY

GOD'S BIG STORY SCRIPT

SUPPLIES: paper, scissors (prep only), tape, paper (optional), roll of wrapping paper (optional)

RESOURCES: Timeline Images (1 set/LG)

Ahead of time, print a set of the Timeline Images. Cut out the people pictures. You can tape the papers together on a wall to make a long timeline. You can even add extra paper in between (where the “700 years” is on the timeline) to show time passing between Isaiah and Jesus’ birth. Another option is to use wrapping paper as the background to your timeline. Unroll the wrapping paper and tape it on a wall (you can tape it backwards, so the blank side faces the kids) to make the long timeline. You will use this timeline for the first four lessons in this series and then add to it for the fifth lesson. Leave space at the end of the timeline to add on after the fourth lesson. In this lesson, you’ll use images 1–8 on the timeline.



This timeline will help us tell God’s big story and see that it’s one big story that takes a long time to happen! The beginning is really when God made the world and people and everything in it. But for this part of the story, we’re starting here (point to the beginning of the timeline) **a long, long time before Jesus was born.**

Many years before Jesus was born, God made a promise to King David. Can someone tape the King David picture to his spot on the timeline? Call up a kid to tape the King David picture to his spot on the timeline. **God promised that a forever king would come from David’s family someday. That family was part of a group of God’s people called the tribe of Judah. Can someone come tape the tribe of Judah to the timeline?** Choose a kid to come tape the tribe of Judah to its spot on the timeline. **But many years after God made that promise, the people were still waiting for a forever king to arrive. Look at all this time when the people were waiting.** Point to the spot on the timeline that shows the tribe of Judah waiting. **Their enemy came for them. God’s people were scared and sad. The people needed help!**

God wanted the people of Judah to trust Him. About 300 years after David was the king, someone else lived. Point to the “300 years” on the timeline. **God sent the prophet Isaiah to talk to His people. A prophet is a person who speaks God’s words to others. Can someone come put the prophet Isaiah up on the timeline?** Choose a kid to tape the picture of Isaiah on the timeline.

God spoke through Isaiah to help people know that they could trust God to keep His promises. Isaiah shared this special message with God’s people: a young woman who was not married will have a son and name Him “Immanuel.”

Immanuel is a Hebrew word that means “God is with us.” Isaiah’s message meant that a child who wasn’t even born yet was going to show people that God was with them! God was with His people. God had a plan to help them. Can someone come tape God’s promise next to Isaiah on the timeline? This is the promise that God’s people waited for! Choose a kid to tape the “God’s promise” picture to the timeline next to Isaiah.

Now look at the timeline and notice what comes next ... The people heard the promise. And they waited. And they waited. And they waited! Can you see how long they waited? For 700 years! So 700 years after Isaiah spoke to God’s people, they were still waiting for God’s promise to happen.

They waited for God's help. They waited for the promised child to be born. They waited for the forever King to come from David's family. The people had waited so long! But it was finally time for the forever King to come. Point to the spot on the timeline where Mary and Joseph will go.

A man named Joseph lived in a town called Nazareth. He was a carpenter. That means he built things. Can someone come put Joseph on the timeline? Choose a kid to tape the Joseph picture to the timeline. **Joseph was part of the tribe of Judah—a group of God's people.** Point to the picture of the tribe of Judah earlier on the timeline, along with King David. **He was a relative of King David. Joseph was going to get married to a young woman named Mary. Mary was going to have a baby. Who can come put Mary on the timeline?** Choose a kid to tape the Mary picture on the timeline. **Joseph did not know that Mary's baby was from God.**

Then one night, an angel from God came to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph not to be afraid to get married to Mary. The angel said, "... the baby inside of her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus, because He will save His people from their sins."

Joseph knew the words that God gave Isaiah so many years before. Point to the Isaiah picture and "God's promise" on the timeline. **God said that a young woman who was not married will have son. The baby was going to be called Immanuel, which means God with us.**

Now Joseph understood! Mary's baby was the hope for all the people! God was keeping His promise! Jesus was the Messiah, the forever King who would save them all! So, when Joseph woke up, he went to Mary, and they got married. We'll keep using this timeline every week and we'll see more and more of the story.

The promise of Jesus was for God's people who lived long ago and for us. Jesus is our hope too! When we choose to follow Jesus, we will live with God forever as His kids! Even when life is hard, we can remember and trust that God is with us. Even when we feel scared or sad, we can remember that God is with us. Even when we have to wait, we can remember that God knows us, loves us, and leads us. Jesus is our hope!

Connecting the Wonder Truth

SLIDE: WONDER TRUTH

Ask the following question to help kids connect the Wonder Truth to God's big story:

Our Wonder Truth today is JESUS IS OUR HOPE. Where did you see our Wonder Truth happen in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.

The Bible is the big story of God loving His people. Even when God's people disobeyed Him, He still loved them, still cared for them, and still promised them a hopeful future. God's Son Jesus is the fulfillment of these promises—He is the hope God promised!

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish the activity, pray with them and thank God for sending Jesus to earth for us.

God, thank You for sending Jesus to earth to be our hope. No matter what happens, we can trust that Jesus is with us and loves us. We love You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands are open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: God knows you and loves you more than you can imagine! May He fill you with hope today and always! And may the hope of Jesus shine in you so that others may see the love of God in you!