



GOD WITH US



THE PROMISES OF ADVENT



INTRODUCTION: How to Use this Advent Guide

This Advent guide is designed to be followed weekly. Rather than committing to a new devotional, study, or activity each day of Advent, this guide is meant to offer truths for you and your family to soak in each week.

It has two components:

- 1) a guide for Missio Kids teachers to follow along with on Sundays, and*
- 2) a guide for families and/or individuals to follow along with at home.*

1) For Sundays

- ▶ Story
- ▶ Reflection
- ▶ Prayer
- ▶ Crafts/Coloring Pages

The first page of each week tells the story; a summarized retelling of a section of Scripture. Our teachers on Sunday mornings will read this to the kids. The next page includes a time of reflection with questions, a communal prayer, and instructions for the craft or coloring pages.

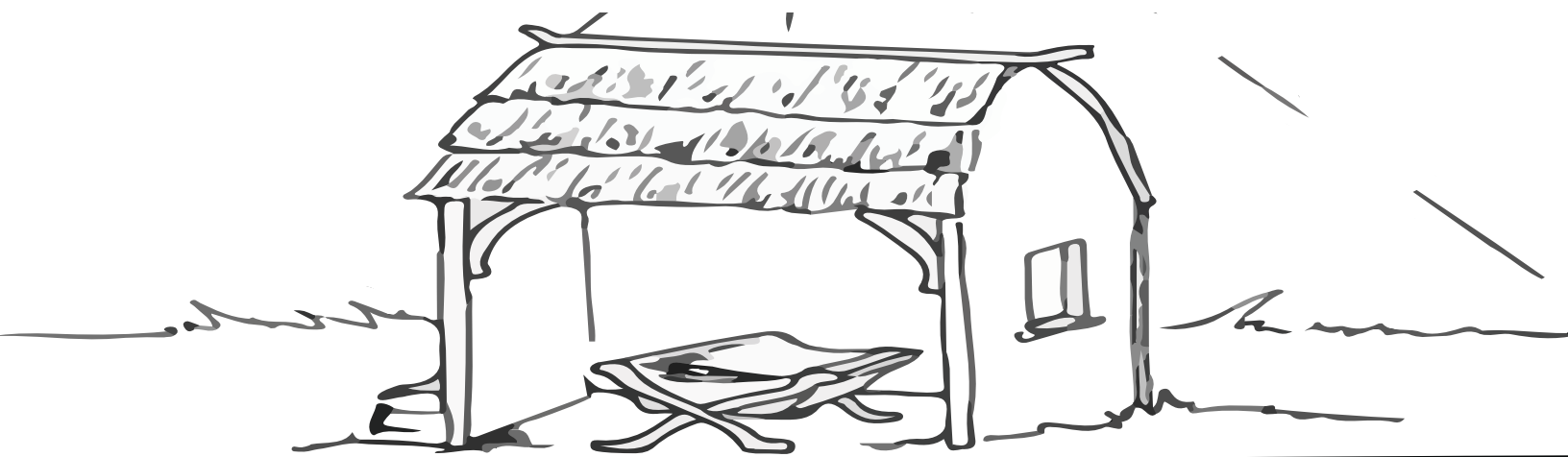
2) For Home

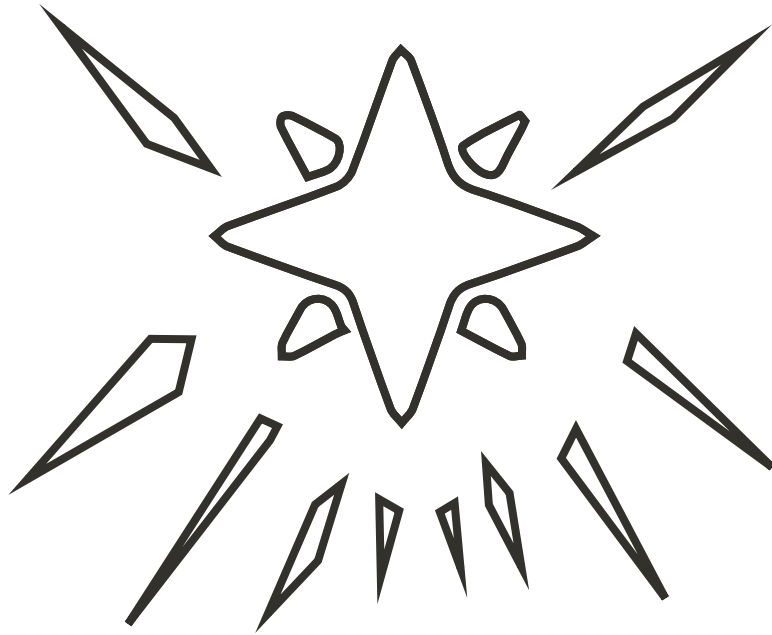
- ▶ Story
- ▶ True Story symbols
- ▶ Advent theme (*hope, peace, joy, love*)
- ▶ Activity ideas
- ▶ Song suggestions
- ▶ Additional Scripture
- ▶ BLESS Rhythm

The third page of each week is for use at home. It is encouraged for families or individuals to re-read the story during the week. You may even choose to go through the reflection questions the kids were asked on Sunday, but this up to you. After reading the story, ask which part of the True Story you just heard: Creation, Rebellion, Promise (Israel), Redemption, Church, or Restoration. Note: some sections may cover multiple parts of the True Story.

This will be followed up with more at-home reflection using the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love themes of Advent, ideas for at-home activities, songs you can sing or listen to online, an additional verse from Scripture, and finally, a suggested BLESS rhythm to practice that week as a family.

**For daily Advent readings for kids, follow the Jesus Storybook calendar on the last page.*





GOD WITH US



THE PROMISES OF ADVENT



In the beginning, God created a perfect world with no pain or sickness or death. He made special creatures, humans, to rule over and care for His world and to show the world what He is like. But, one day a serpent in the garden told them they could rule without God. So, they rebelled against God and ate from a tree that offered knowledge of what is good and not good. They wanted to decide for themselves, rather than trust God to tell them how to live. God warned them if they ate from that tree they would die, but they listened to the voice of the serpent instead.

Then the man and woman heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden during the breeze of the day, so they hid from Him in the trees. The Lord God called out to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid." Then God asked, "Who told you that you were naked? Did you take what I commanded you not to take?"

The man replied, "The woman you gave to be with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate." So the Lord God asked the woman, "What is this you have done?" And the woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

So the Lord God said to the serpent:

"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than any other animal. You will crawl on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life. You and your children will be enemies of the woman and her children. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."

He said to the woman:

"Having children will now bring you great pain. You will desire to be over your husband, yet he will rule over you."

And he said to the man, "Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree I commanded you not to: The ground is cursed. You will work in painful labor through thorns and thistles to get food from it. You will eat bread by the sweat of your brow until you return to the ground, since you were taken from it. For you are dust, and you will return to dust."

Before they left the garden, God whispered a promise to Adam and Eve: "It will not always be so! I will come to rescue you! And when I do, I'm going to do battle against the snake. I'll get rid of the sin and the dark and the sadness you let in here. I'm coming back for you!" And he would. One day, God himself would come.
- **Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 36)**



Reflection

The humans were made to be like God and represent Him to the rest of creation. They were meant to rule over creation as God ruled over them. They rebelled by trying to rule in God's place, without God.

Ask: What did God tell the humans would happen to them if they took from the tree they were not supposed to take from?

Ask: How did the man and woman respond to God when He came to the garden? When He asked what they had done?

Ask: God gave a consequence (a curse) to all three who rebelled against Him; the serpent, the woman, and the man. What were the curses for each?

Ask: God also gave a promise. What was it?

This moment marked the beginning of pain and suffering in the world, but God's promise also began a period of *waiting, longing, and hoping* for the day of rescue to come. We call this *waiting, longing, and hoping*: **Advent**.

Ask: What are you waiting, longing, and hoping for?

Prayer

God, You are good, right, and beautiful in all You do. Forgive us for rebelling against You like the first man and woman did. Thank You that You promised to come and rescue us and sent Your Son Jesus. Help us to trust You more with Your Spirit's power. Amen.

Craft

- ▶ There is a coloring page of a heel crushing the head of a serpent on **page 7**
- ▶ You can also color and cut out the Hope ornament on **page 8**

Which part of the True Story did we hear about this week?



The Hope of Advent

Read the Story from this week together as a family.

Ever since the first man and woman rebelled against God, His people had been waiting, longing, and hoping for the promise of His Rescuer to come and make all things right again. This is what 'advent' means. Our hope has come in Jesus, and we wait in hope for him to return to earth again one day.

- ▶ *Discuss as a family: How can we keep hope as a focus this season?*
- ▶ *What do you look forward to when Jesus returns?*

Activity Ideas

- ✓ Create an Advent wreath to use throughout the season.
- ✓ Create a nativity scene for your home. You may choose to add to the nativity each week, starting the stable this week, animals next, Mary and Joseph the third week, and the manger with Jesus the final week.

Songs to Sing

- ▶ O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
- ▶ Come Thou Long Expected Jesus

Scripture - Matthew 1:21

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

BLESS Rhythm

Bless. Listen. Eat. Speak. Sabbath.

Bless: We are blessed to be a blessing to others. How can you bring hope to someone this week who is facing circumstances where they find it difficult to have hope?





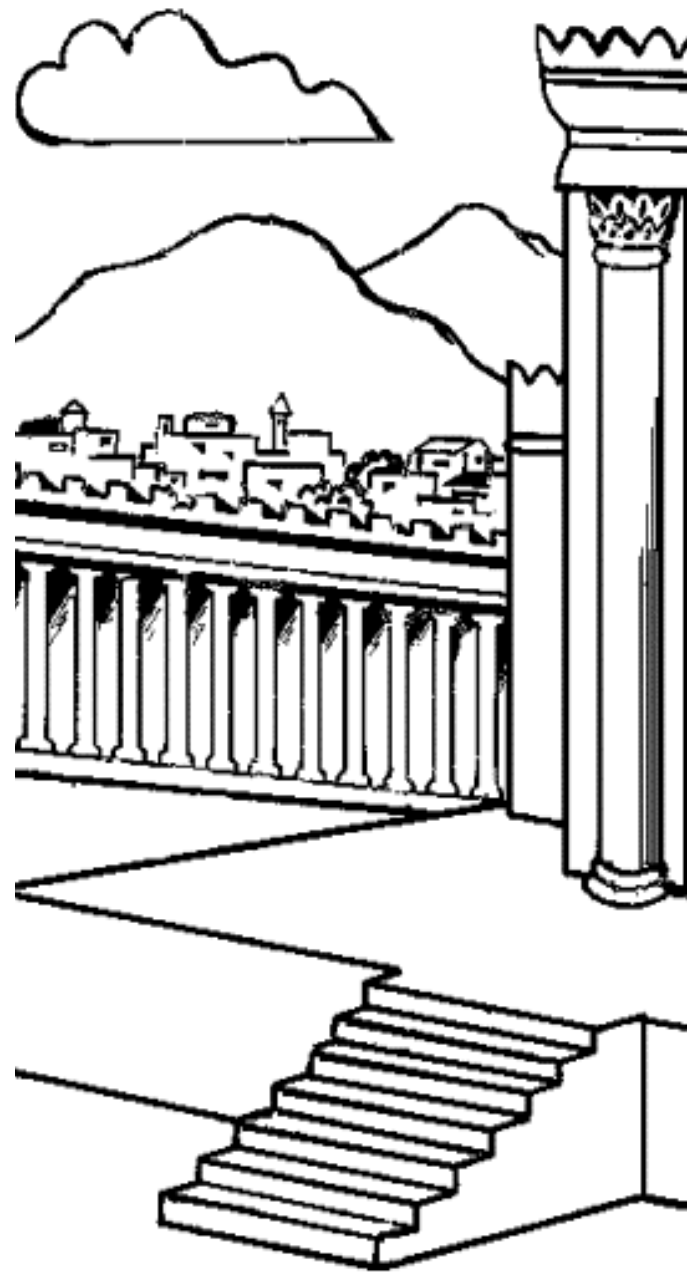
A long time had passed since the first man and woman rebelled against God. The rebellion had separated people from God and the world was now filled with hurt and death. But God's promise still remained that He would send a Rescuer one day to save them. God called a certain group of people to follow and trust Him and to show the rest of the world what He is like. These people were the nation of Israel. One of their best human kings was David.

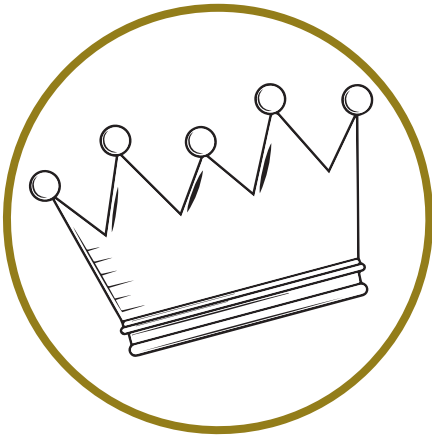
When David became king of Israel he told his friend the prophet Nathan that he wanted to build a house for God, called a temple. You see, God had the Israelites set up a tent many years before called a tabernacle that He could dwell in. Even though their rebellion separated them, God still wanted to be near to His people. The tent was mobile because His people were mobile, always on the move from their enemies. Now that they were settled into their own kingdom, David thought God should have a real house, better than David's palace.

It seemed like a good thought, and Nathan thought so too. At least, until God came and spoke to David later that night and told him to tell David a message. "You are not the one who will build a house for me, David. I do not need you to do that for me. Instead, I will make a home for you.

After you've lived your life on earth and pass on, I will raise up after you your descendant, who is one of your own sons, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for me, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be his father, and he will be my son. I will not remove my faithful love from him as I removed it from the king before you. I will appoint him over my house and my kingdom forever, and his throne will be established forever."

One of David's sons, King Solomon, did build a temple for God. But his kingdom didn't last forever. But many generations later, a child was born who was a descendant of David. His name was Jesus. He was called the King of kings and he lives forever as King over all creation. He said that he is preparing a different kind of home; one for both God and humans to dwell in together. One day, he will return and bring those who trust him as King into that home!





God said of David, "...one of his children's, children's children will be the King. And that King will rule the world forever... God chose David to be king because God was getting his people ready for an even greater King who was coming. Once again, God would say, 'Go to Bethlehem. You'll find the new King there.' And there, one starry night in Bethlehem, in the town of David, three wise men would find him." - **Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 120)**

Reflection

Even though humans rebelled against God as their King and tried to rule for themselves, God still wanted to be near them. When Israel became a nation, God was meant to be their King, but they again rejected Him and asked for a human king. God chose David as a king who would represent Him well. But David still wasn't perfect. God's people needed a better King to come one day.

Ask: How did God make His home with His people?

Ask: Why did God tell David not to build a better home for Him?

Ask: What do you think God meant when He said He would send another King out of David's descendants, whose kingdom would never end? Who do you think that King was?

Ask: What do you think God meant when He said the new, better, forever King would build a home for God and His people to live in?

God's people were *waiting, longing, and hoping* for the day this forever King would come. Remember, this *waiting, longing, and hoping* is called **Advent**. We are also in a season of advent, as we are *waiting, longing, and hoping* for King Jesus to return and make our forever home with God.

Ask: What should our lives look like while we are *waiting, longing, and hoping*?

Prayer

God, only You do what is good, right, and beautiful. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to be our true and better King. Fill us with Your Spirit so we can better serve our King, until the day He returns. Amen.

Craft

- ▶ Cut out and fold the house on **page 12** and glue to another paper as a base
- ▶ You can also color and cut out the Peace ornament on **page 13**

Which part of the True Story did we hear about this week?



The Peace of Advent

Read the Story from this week together as a family.

Most kings and rulers throughout history have done a poor job of leading people. Even the best of them, kings like David, still made horrible mistakes at times and caused destruction. We are waiting, longing, and hoping for the world to be made whole and right. God's True Story calls this type of wholeness - peace. Only the true King of all creation can bring this peace on earth.

- ▶ *Discuss as a family: What would the world look like if it had perfect peace?*
- ▶ *What are some small ways we can give a preview of that peace even now, by Christ's power?*

Activity Ideas

- ✓ Build gingerbread houses together and talk about how God is building a home for us.
- ✓ Continue building your nativity scene, adding the animals.

Songs to Sing

- ▶ It Is Well With My Soul
- ▶ Peace Has Come (*Hillsong*)

Scripture - Isaiah 9:6

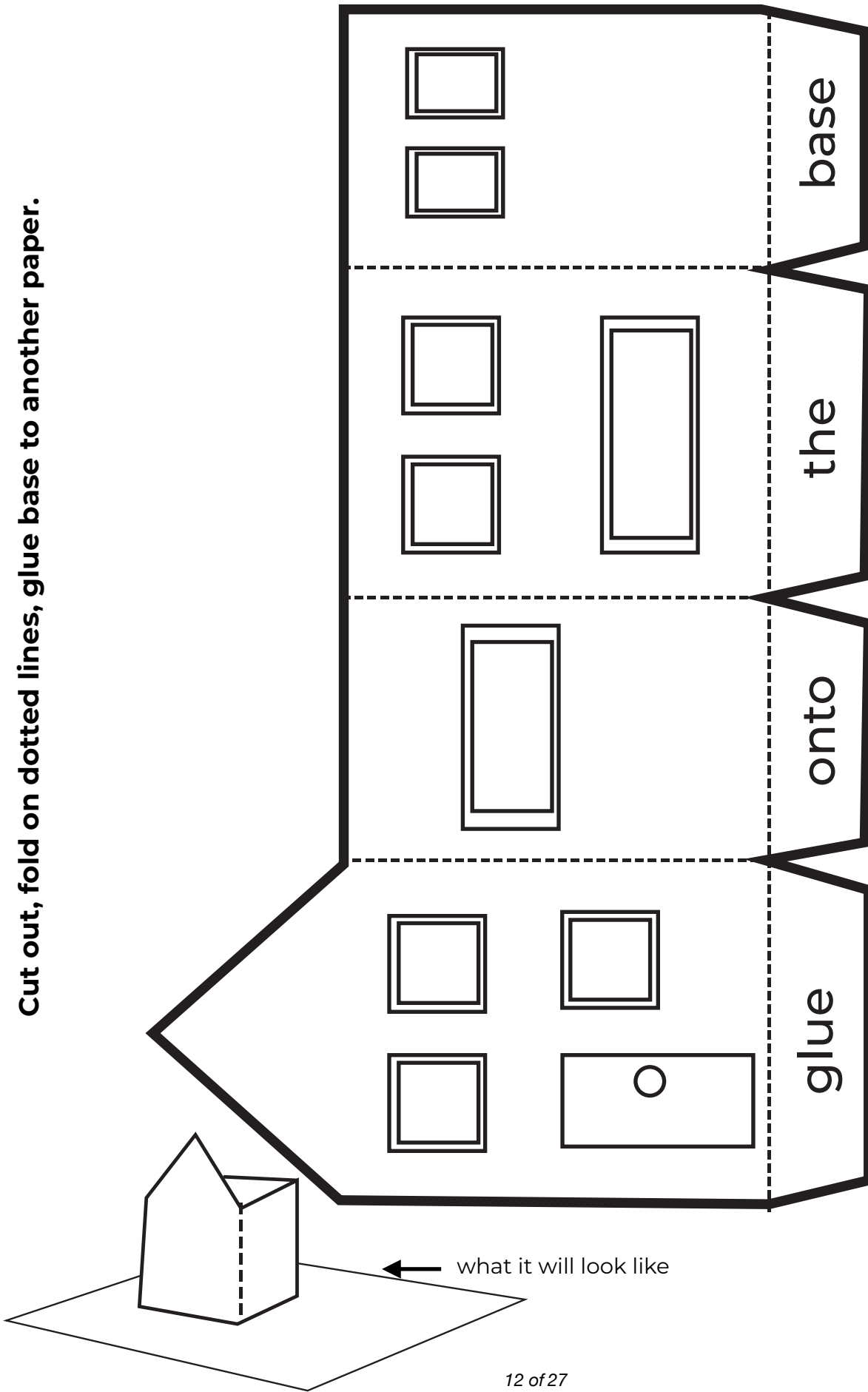
"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

BLESS Rhythm

Bless. Listen. Eat. Speak. Sabbath.

Listen: God spoke through a prophet and David listened. Take some time to listen to what God is saying now, through His word and Spirit. Ask God if there is someone lonely you know of who you can bless by sitting with them and listening to their story.

Cut out, fold on dotted lines, glue base to another paper.



The top is left open so you can fill your house. What will you fill your home with? Who will live there? Who will be invited? How does your home reflect how God is building a home for us?





God not only gave Israel a king like they asked for, but He spoke to them through prophets. These prophets were normal people who heard God speak and shared His word with others. One of these prophets was named Isaiah. God used Isaiah to speak to Israel because they kept turning away from God and listened to lies. God had Isaiah tell the people to come back to Him, but they wouldn't listen and they found themselves in a lot of trouble. God did not give up on His people, so He sent Isaiah to offer joy to the people, even in the midst of suffering, because one day His Rescuer would come and take their suffering upon himself.

One day Isaiah said to the people, "This is what the Lord our God says:

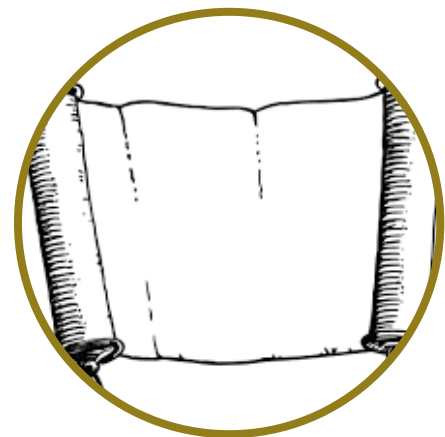
'Look, my servant the Messiah will be successful; he will be raised and lifted up and greatly exalted. Many will look unfavorably on him—his appearance was so disfigured that he did even not look like a man—but many nations will marvel at him. Kings will ultimately bow before him.'

Who will believe this message the Lord has revealed? He grew up like a young plant, a root out of dry ground. He didn't look impressive, or majestic, or desirable. He was despised and rejected by men, a man of suffering who knew what sickness was. We turned away, despised, and didn't value him.

Yet he bore our sicknesses and carried our pains; and we regarded him struck down by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced because of our rebellion, crushed because of our wrongs; his punishment brought us peace, and we are healed by his wounds. We all turned away like lost sheep; so the Lord has placed our punishment on him.

'My righteous servant will justify many, and he will carry their wrongs. He willingly submitted to death, and was counted among the rebels; yet he bore the sin of many and interceded for the rebels.'

But he won't stay dead - I will make him alive again! And, one day, when he comes back to rule forever... His fame will fill the whole earth - as the waters cover the sea! Yes, the Rescuer will come. Look for him. Watch for him. Wait for him. He will come! I promise. - **Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 149)**



Reflection

Israel's rebellion had brought them into some difficult circumstances. Other nations were taking advantage of them. Yet, God had not left His people - even when they turned their backs on Him.

Ask: Why do you think God spoke to the people through prophets?

Ask: Why didn't the people listen to Isaiah when he told them to turn back to God?

Ask: Even though the people kept turning away from God time and time again, God still loved them and pursued them. How could God be that patient and loving with His people?

Ask: God gave Isaiah a message that a Rescuer was coming one day to take away their pain and suffering. Who was this Rescuer?

Point out: The message said he would be like a root growing out of a dry ground. Israel was like the dry ground; as they turned away from the life of God they were dying. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to grow up out of Israel and bring new life.

Ask: The way he would take their pain is by placing it upon himself. Why do you think Jesus was willing to take all that suffering when he didn't deserve it?

This message through Isaiah was that God would take away pain and replace it with joy. Those who listened and believed this message continued *waiting, longing, and hoping* in **Advent** for the day of joy to come.

Ask: We, too, are waiting for Jesus to come back. How can we have joy even while we wait? (*Jesus has already come so we can trust he'll return / his Spirit fills us with joy in the meantime*)

Prayer

Father, thank You for replacing our suffering with joy. Thank you, Jesus, for taking our sin and shame upon yourself. Thank you, Spirit, for filling us with your joy. Amen.

Craft

- ▶ Follow the directions for healing hands on **page 17**
- ▶ You can also color and cut out the Joy ornament on **page 18**

Which part of the True Story did we hear about this week?



The Joy of Advent

Read the Story from this week together as a family.

Because God's people continued to rebel against Him, they brought judgement and discipline upon themselves. They were captured by other nations and were treated poorly. Yet, even in the midst of suffering, God sent them a message to bring them joy. One day someone would come to make it all right! We can hold onto that same joy, even when things aren't perfect in the world.

- ▶ *Discuss as a family: What is the difference between lasting joy and momentary happiness?*
- ▶ *How can we have joy in all situations?*

Activity Ideas

- ✓ Make a Jesse Tree as a family. This can either be:
 - a family tree you make showing Jesus' lineage (*Jesse was King David's father and an ancestor of Jesus - use Matthew 1 if you need genealogy*)
 - or an actual tree or branch you add symbolic ornaments to which help tell the story. There are lots of great how-to's online!
- ✓ Continue building your nativity scene, adding Mary and Joseph.

Songs to Sing

- ▶ Joy to the World
- ▶ Noel

Scripture - Isaiah 11:10

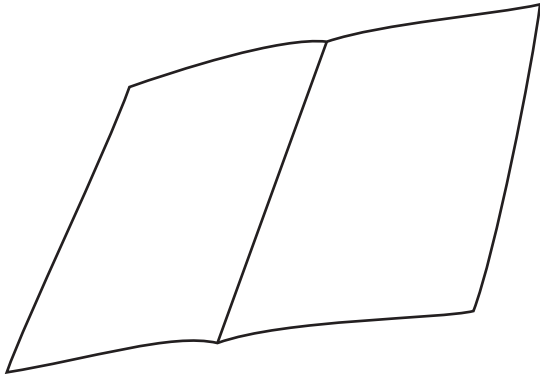
"On that day the root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples. The nations will look to him for guidance, and his resting place will be glorious."

BLESS Rhythm

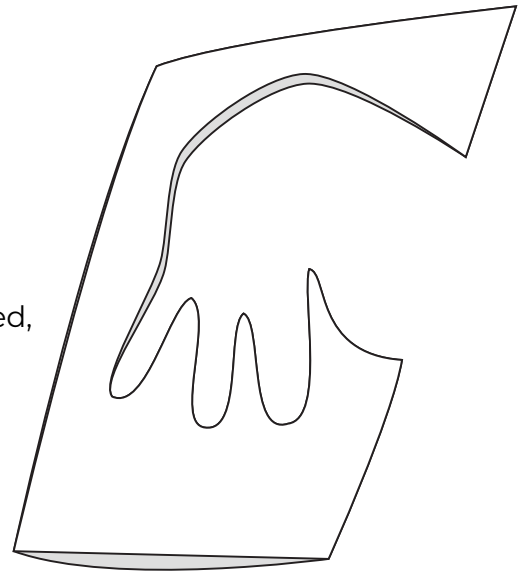
Bless. Listen. Eat. Speak. Sabbath.

Speak: God loves to speak His messages through people. How can you share the good news of joy that we have in Jesus with someone this week? Maybe you can draw out the True Story symbols to share the Story with a friend or neighbor.

Step 1) Fold a sheet of paper in half

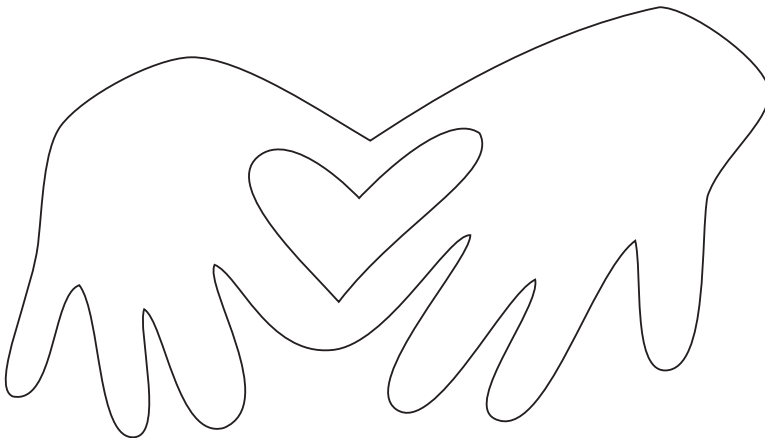


Step 2) Trace hand on one side. Make sure the tips of thumb and pointer finger are going off the edge of the paper.



Step 3) While still folded, cut out handprint.

Step 4) Unfold hands and notice the heart in-between fingers!



Step 5) Draw holes in the hands and/or place band-aids on each to show the wounds of Jesus which bring healing to us.



Hundreds of years passed since God first made the promise of a child being born from the woman and crushing the serpent's head. Then hundreds more after He made a promise to make Israel His people and bless the nations through them. And even hundreds more after He spoke through the prophets about the coming Rescuer who would take away their pain and sin. Finally, it was time to bring all of those promises together in one person; His own Son.

The birth of Jesus Christ came about this way:

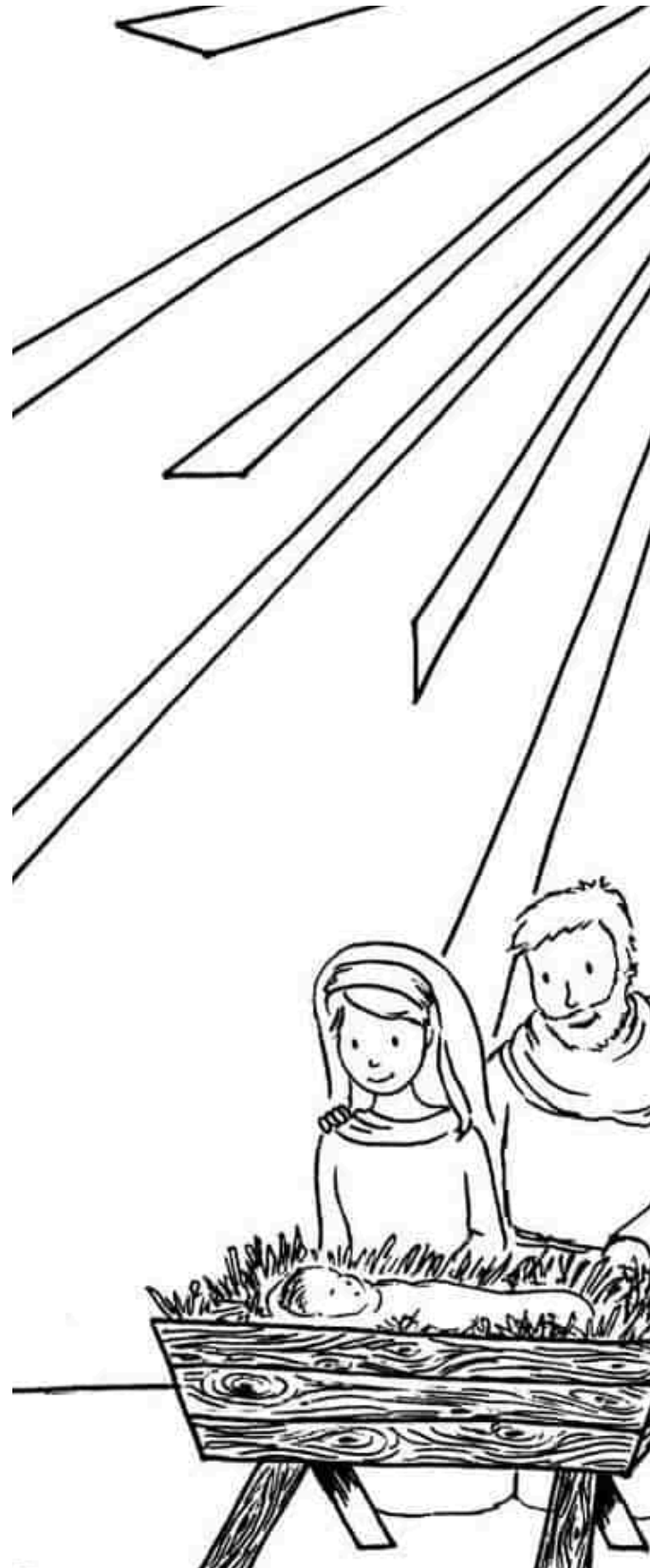
After his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, it was discovered before they married that she was pregnant from the Holy Spirit. So her husband Joseph, being a righteous man, and not wanting to disgrace her publicly, decided to divorce her secretly.

But after he had considered these things, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because what has been conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, Isaiah:

'See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, which is translated, "God is with us."'

Jesus was the Son of God born by the Holy Spirit - but he was also the son of Mary and Joseph. His ancestors were also Israelites who were exiled into Babylon, and before that one of his great great great grandfathers was King David, and his father Jesse, before that a woman who loved God named Ruth, and so on. In fact, the family tree of Jesus goes all the way back to Abraham, the man God chose to create the nation Israel out of... and even all the way back to the first man, Adam.





The God who flung planets into space and kept them whirling around and around, the God who made the universe with just a word, the one who could do anything at all - was making himself small. And coming down... as a baby.
- **Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 179)**

Reflection

After thousands of years of waiting, longing, and hoping for God's promised Rescuer to come, he came. But not at all in the way God's people were expecting. The Creator of all the universe made himself small and weak, being born as a human, in order to fulfill the partnership humans were meant to have with God from the beginning.

Ask: Why do you think God's promise of the Rescuer took so long to come? Did God interact with and provide for His people in the meantime?

Ask: Who was Jesus the son of? Why is it important that he was both the Son of God, born by the Holy Spirit, and a son of man, born to Mary and Joseph?

Ask: What was Joseph's reaction to Mary being pregnant before he realized God had given her the baby? What was his response after the angel appeared and gave him the message of Jesus?

Ask: What does Immanuel mean? Why is this a good name for Jesus?

Point out: God brought so many promises together in Jesus: he was the son of a woman who would crush the serpent's head but have his heel bruised (*defeating Satan, sin, and death on the cross*), he was the Rescuer the prophets told about, the better King out of the family of David, the only faithful Israelite who came out of Abraham's descendants, and on and on. But, God's people would still have to *wait, long, and hope* for Jesus to grow and fulfill all of these promises in his life, death, and resurrection.

Prayer

God, You have always been with us. You have never left Your creation alone. Thank You, Jesus, for coming down from your throne in heaven to be with your people. Help us to live like you, with your Spirit's help. Amen.

Craft

- ▶ There are instructions for a paper plate nativity scene on **page 22**
- ▶ You can also color and cut out the Love ornament on **page 23**

Which part of the True Story did we hear about this week?



The Love of Advent

Read the Story from this week together as a family.

When humans first rebelled against God, they were warned that death and sadness would come. Every human since is also guilty of rebelling against God; every time we doubt Him, every time we break one of His commands, every time we look to something else to satisfy us instead of Him, every time we try to gain approval, acceptance, or accomplishments in our own power outside of Him. God has every right to send us to our punishment of death. But instead, He keeps pursuing us with His love - to rescue us.

- ▶ *Discuss as a family: Have you ever experienced this kind of love from God? Talk about it.*
- ▶ *How can we, as a family/Church, show this kind of love to others so they will see God's love?*

Activity Ideas

- ✓ Make a Christmas care package for someone in need (*you can include cards the kids decorate, some kind of treat, a blanket, coat, or socks for warmth, etc. - get creative*)
- ✓ Finish the nativity scene for your home, adding the manger with Jesus.

Songs to Sing

- ▶ Hark the Herald Angels Sing
- ▶ Silent Night

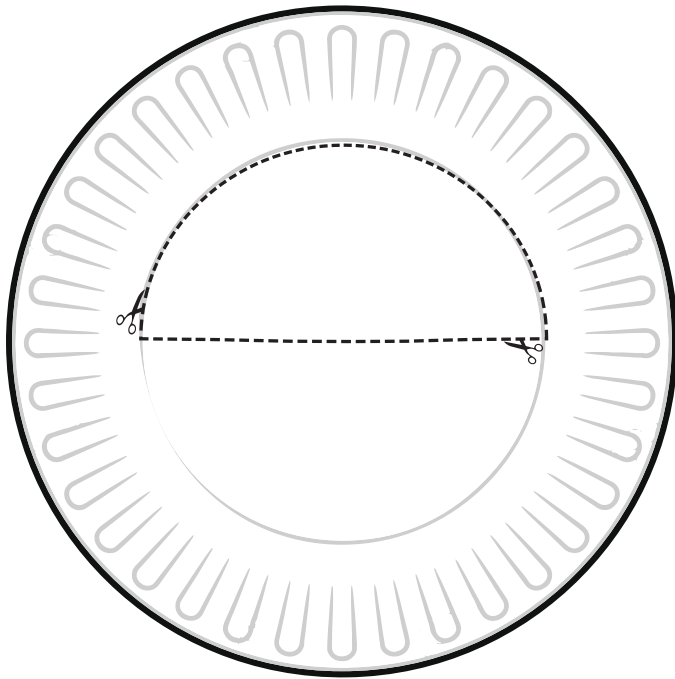
Scripture - Isaiah 9:6

"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

BLESS Rhythm

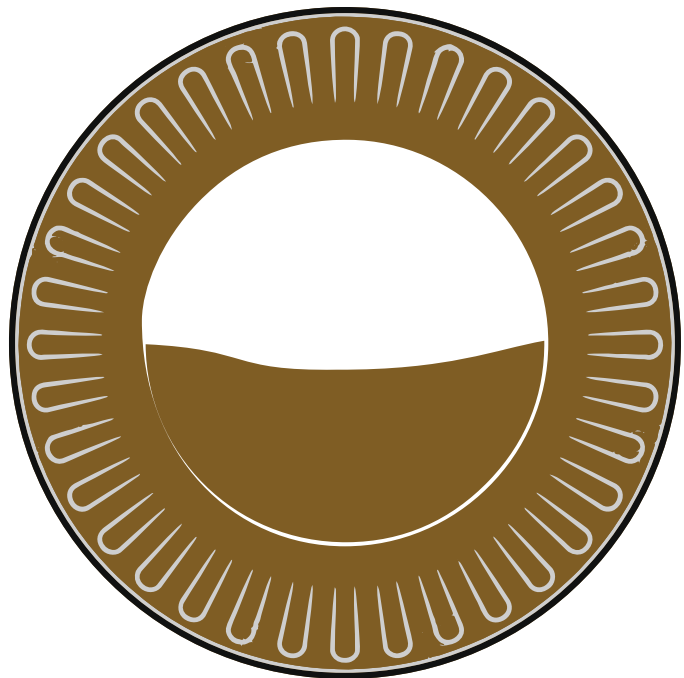
Bless. Listen. Eat. Speak. Sabbath.

Eat: It's Christmas time. You are probably going to share some meals with family and friends. Take some time to be intentional with those meals and remember that Jesus shared the table with the people nobody else wanted to be around. Are there opportunities to open your table up to others outside your family this holiday season?

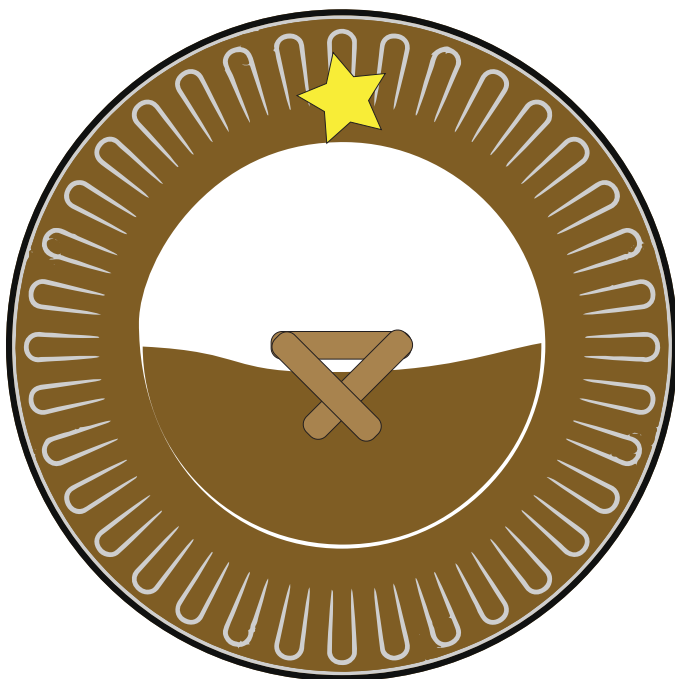


Step 1) Take a paper plate and cut out half of the inner circle.

Step 2) Color plate brown.



Step 3) Glue star on top and manger.
(You can use popsicle sticks or make out of the scrap paper you cut out.)



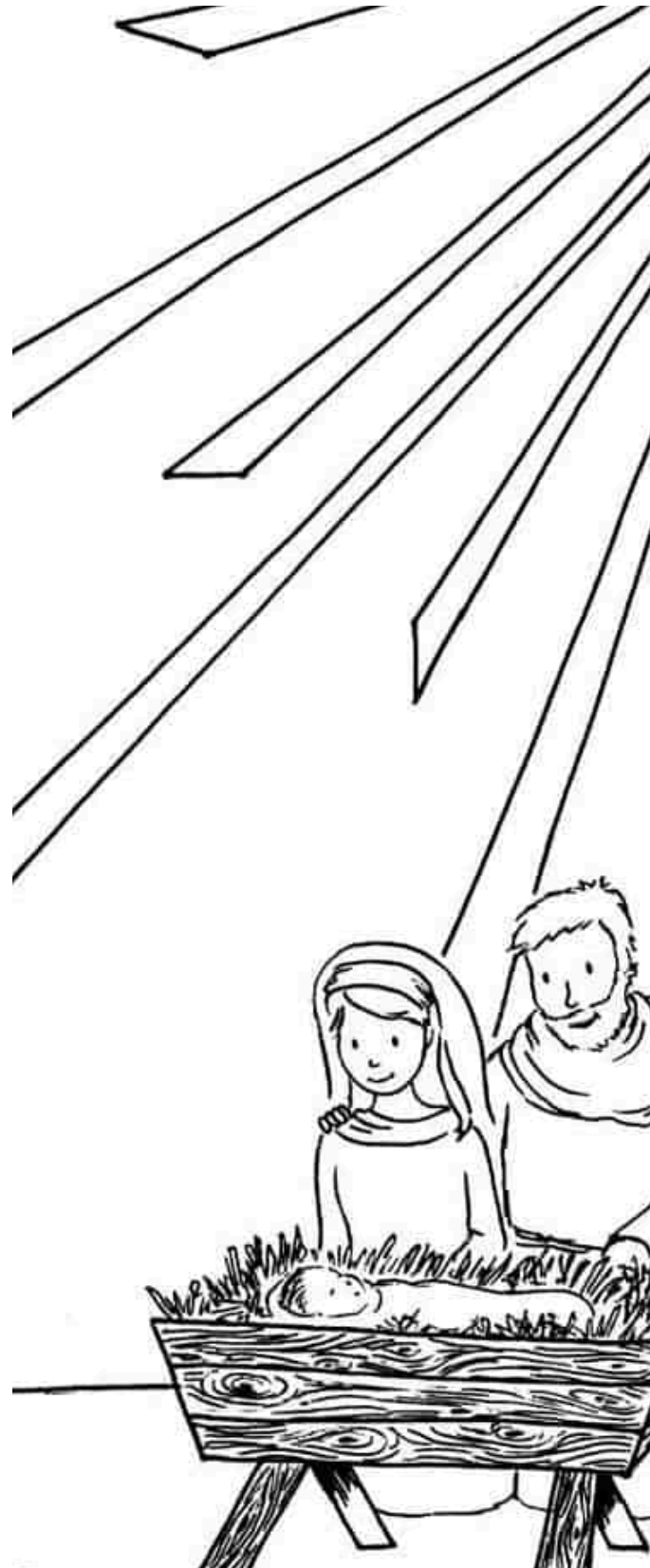


Jesus was born a helpless baby and experienced the suffering of humanity. As he grew into a man, he lived his life perfectly, trusting in God and partnering with Him as humans were meant to. He went around preaching good news to people, that God's kingdom had finally arrived on earth. Of course, there was still sin and sadness, but wherever Jesus went he left little glimpses of the kingdom; he healed people who were sick, he gave sight to the blind, and even raised the dead back to life! It's as if traces of heaven were following him around every he walked. Of course, this is how earth was meant to be, before it was broken by humanity's rebellion. And Jesus had come to make it right.

Unfortunately, the rebellion of humanity was still at work. Some of the religious leaders planned to kill Jesus, because they did not trust he was the Rescuer, God's own Son. And they succeeded. Jesus was nailed to two pieces of wood; a cross. They put a crown of sharp pointy thorns on his head to mock him. They didn't believe he was the True King they had been waiting for. They even stabbed his side to make sure he was dead. But this ultimate act of rebellion by humanity, was God's ultimate act of rescue.

On the third day after Jesus was placed in the tomb, the Spirit of God - the same Spirit who brought Jesus to earth as a baby, the same Spirit who Jesus and his Father created the whole world together with - breathed life back into Jesus' body and he got up and walked out of that tomb! Jesus then gave the gift of his Spirit to all who would trust in him and follow him as the True King.

He went back to be with his Father, but left us his Spirit. But he promised that he was going to prepare heaven for us, and that one day, he would bring it down to earth. He would reunite heaven and earth and make God's home with humans once again... forever. Until then, he wants us to be filled with his Spirit so we can share this good news with others, live like Jesus lived, and trust his promise that he'll come back- just as he made good on his first promise to come into the world.



I see a sparkling city shimmering in the sky: glittering, glowing - coming down! From heaven. And from the sky. Heaven is coming down to earth!

*Where is the sun? Where is the moon? They aren't needed anymore. God is all the Light people need. No more darkness! No more night! And the King says, "Look! God and his children are together again." - **Jesus Storybook Bible (p. 346-347)***



Which part of the True Story did we hear about this week?



God With Us Forever

Read the Story from this week together as a family.

God has always been King over creation - but one day all of the universe will know it! The knowledge of His glory will cover the whole creation like water covers the sea. This is what we are *waiting, longing, and hoping* for. This is the **Advent** we live in. When one day we can finally, fully, and forever experience *God With Us*.

- ▶ *Discuss as a family: What do you think the world will be like when Jesus comes back as King?*
- ▶ *What are some ways we can live like he is King even now? (because he is!)*

Activity Ideas

- ✓ Kids can decorate and cut out the God With Us ornament on **page 26**.
- ✓ Go outside and stare up at the clouds. Talk about how God has made the heavens and earth and what it means to wait and watch for Christ's return.

BLESS Rhythm

Bless. Listen. Eat. Speak. Sabbath.

Sabbath: It's probably been a busy holiday season for you. Take some time to rest. But not just to sit doing nothing surrounded by wrapping paper on the floor. Be intentional. Rest in the good news that Christ has come. Rest in the promise that he is coming back. Celebrate it!



Jesus Storybook Bible

an advent reading plan

adrielbooker.com

- Dec. 1: The Story & the Song
- Dec. 2: The beginning: a perfect home
- Dec. 3: The terrible lie
- Dec. 4: A new beginning
- Dec. 5: A giant staircase to heaven
- Dec. 6: Son of laughter
- Dec. 7: The present
- Dec. 8: The girl no one wanted
- Dec. 9: The forgiving prince
- Dec. 10: God to the rescue!
- Dec. 11: God makes a way
- Dec. 12: Ten ways to be perfect
- Dec. 13: The warrior leader
- Dec. 14: The teeny, weenie... true king
- Dec. 15: The young hero & the horrible giant
- Dec. 16: The Good Shepherd
- Dec. 17: A little servant girl & the proud general
- Dec. 18: Operation "No More Tears!"
- Dec. 19: Daniel & the scary sleepover
- Dec. 20: God's messenger
- Dec. 21: Get ready!
- Dec. 22: He's here
- Dec. 23: The Light of the whole world
- Dec. 24: The King of all kings