

Table of Contents

Welcome to Discipleship Jr.!	4
This Quarter in Discipleship Jr. ...	6
Parent and Volunteer Letters	7
Use the Clues! Reproducibles	9
Lesson 1: God Promises a Savior • Genesis 17, 21 The Savior came from Abraham's family.	11
Lesson 2: From Shepherd to King • 1 Samuel 16; Acts 13:23 The Savior comes from a royal family.	20
Lesson 3: A Promise Is a Promise • Isaiah 7:14; 9:2, 6; 11:1–5; Micah 5:2 Prophets describe the Messiah—it's Jesus!	29
Lesson 4: Angelic Invitation • Luke 2:8–20 Angels invite the shepherds to worship Jesus.	39
Lesson 5: Jesus' Family Tree Has Many Branches • Luke 3:23–38 People waited a long time for the Savior.	47
Lesson 6: Call Him Jesus • Luke 2:21–38 The righteous recognize and honor Jesus.	54
Lesson 7: Prepare the Way! • Malachi 3:1–4 John the Baptist prepares the way for Jesus.	62
Lesson 8: Jesus, the Miracle Maker • Luke 17:11–19 We owe Jesus gratefulness and praise.	70
Lesson 9: Jesus, Always Kind • Matthew 20:29–34 Like Jesus, we can show kindness.	78
Lesson 10: Jesus—Build Wealth in Heaven • Matthew 6:19–21 We should store treasure in heaven, rather than here on earth.	86
Lesson 11: Jesus' Two Commandments • Matthew 22:35–40 Love Jesus first, and others next.	93

WELCOME TO DISCIPLESHIP JR.!

Discipleship Jr. is a Bible-based, in-depth program that harnesses the power of *FUN* to build young disciples through interaction with Bible truth and with each other.

A complete, multiage children's ministry program, *Discipleship Jr.* is packed full of interactive stories and drama, Scripture memory, and themed snacks and activities that will engage every child! It's guaranteed effective because its principles and methods of instruction are *teacher-tested* and *kid-approved!*

Intensive student-teacher interaction within a learning community that is relational and supportive makes *Discipleship Jr.* an ideal program for including children with disabilities. Hands-on learning activities are easily adapted to include all students. For more ideas about inclusion, an excellent resource is *Let All the Children Come to Me* by MaLesa Breeding, EdD, Dana Hood, PhD, and Jerry Whitworth, EdD, (Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2006).

PUTTING THE PIECES TOGETHER



Get Set. We know you're busy, so we provide a list of materials and what you'll need to prepare for your lesson. You'll also need a photocopy machine and some basic classroom supplies: white board, dry erase markers and erasers, paper, pencils, markers, butcher paper, scissors, glue, and index cards. When you see this icon 🧰 allow a little extra prep time.

Kids love to dress up! Many of our Bible lessons use costume props from the "Bible time dress-up box." This can be as simple as a box of items you gather from around the house or purchase inexpensively from a secondhand store. It should include: old sheet with neck hole (angel), fake beard, swords, headcloths and browbands, bathrobes, fancy "princess" dress, crown, decorative chains and belts for temple priests, shepherd's crook or stick, wolf ears, wigs.



Password, Please! (10 minutes)—Each week begins with an activity option to involve children as everyone is filtering into the class.

- The *Welcome Time Activity* will excite children's interest and help them connect with the Bible Truth for the week.



Climb In! (20 minutes)—Whole-group, interactive Bible lessons invite students ages 6–9 to participate in the entire lesson. Whether it's role-playing a hailstorm or squeezing through an obstacle course, kids will be engaged in exciting, hands-on lessons.

- Pre- and post-lesson discussion times encourage children to talk about their own life experiences and tie their knowledge to the week's Bible Truth.



Use the Clues!—Practice is an important part of learning, and helps us move information from short-term to long-term memory. Each week, kids are repeatedly challenged to remember the Bible truth. The first four weeks use the theme of a celebration—complete with a giant cake—to help kids practice and apply what they learn. Then kids will spin a game-show wheel to determine the type of question they'll answer. These "memory hooks" help the Bible Truth stick with kids for a long time to come.



Hide 'n' Seek Bible Memory (5 minutes)—Toe tappin' and finger snappin' ... there's nothing like the power of FUN to motivate children. Movement, rhythm, and role-play make it easy for kids to hide God's Word in their hearts (Psalm 119:11).



Prayer Hideaway (15 minutes)—Small-group prayer time for children. Wow! What an idea! Children break into small groups of three to five with an adult helper—we call them Lookouts. Using reproducible instruction cards (found at the end of each lesson), adults guide children to explore and practice new prayer skills. Together they'll share concerns, praise God, and practice the four activities of prayer: praise, ask, confess, thank.



(Optional) Treetop Treats and Activities (10 minutes)—You have options for snacks and activities tied to the theme of the lesson and in which lesson truths are practiced and shared. Look for the activity-level icon, which shows the level of mess, energy, or noise required for the activity!

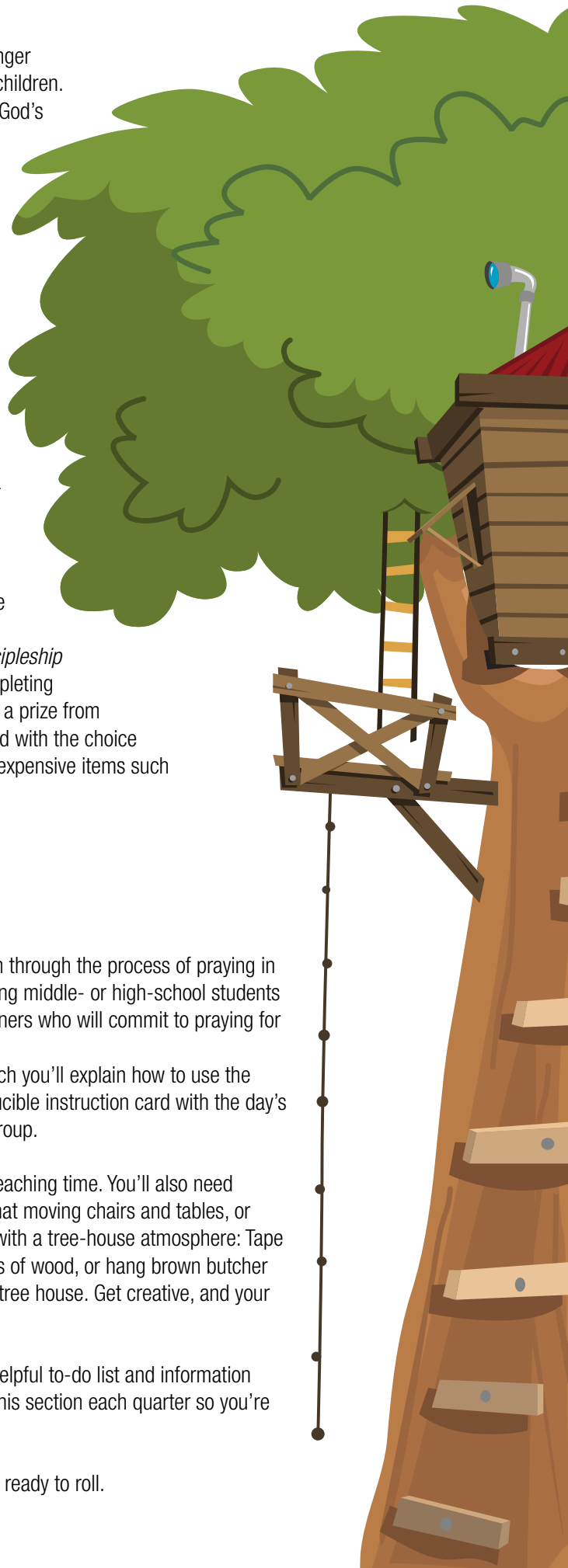


Zipline—Reproducible home-connection pages invite families to interact in and through fun activities and Bible memory. These pages can be found at the end of their corresponding lessons.

Are you looking for an additional way to motivate young learners? *Discipleship Jr.* includes an optional incentive program that rewards students for completing home-connection pages. Children return a signed *Club Pass* and choose a prize from the treasure box. If you have a new student, you might welcome that child with the choice of a treasure too! Simply cover and decorate a large shoebox. Fill with inexpensive items such as you might find at a party store.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- 1. Begin by recruiting Lookouts**—adult helpers who will guide children through the process of praying in small groups. Don't have enough adult volunteers? How about recruiting middle- or high-school students to shepherd a group? Also consider enlisting a few faithful prayer partners who will commit to praying for your class weekly.
Plan to have a brief training session with your new volunteers in which you'll explain how to use the imPACT model of prayer. Each week you'll give the Lookouts a reproducible instruction card with the day's prayer theme and prayer suggestions to use with children in a small group.
- 2. Set up your room.** You'll need a big area for your large-group Bible teaching time. You'll also need to identify spaces for each of your small prayer-groups. Don't forget that moving chairs and tables, or moving groups to a hallway is always an option. Make your room fun with a tree-house atmosphere: Tape homemade or store-bought leaves to the walls, add boards and planks of wood, or hang brown butcher paper and use black paint to create the look of the wooden walls of a tree house. Get creative, and your kids will love entering their very own "treetop" clubhouse every week!
- 3. Read This Quarter in Discipleship Jr....** (page 6). This page has a helpful to-do list and information specific to the current quarter of *Discipleship Jr.* Don't forget to read this section each quarter so you're prepared when kids arrive in your classroom.
- 4. Gather and prepare your materials,** set out your snacks, and you're ready to roll.



Bible Basis:

Genesis 17, 21

Bible Truth:

The Savior came from Abraham's family.




God Promises a Savior

Memory Verse: And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).


Note: Early elementary verse in **bold type**.

You Will Need:

- Celebration Calendar
- 1 poster board
- 8' sheet of butcher paper
- markers or crayons
- clean socks (1 sock each for half the class)
- gumdrops
- toothpicks
- a heavy book
- ZipLine #1* home-connection page
- Lookout Card #1*
- (optional) treasure box
- (optional) snack: flour tortillas, cheese sticks
- (optional) Activity #2: advent wreath, 3 purple or pink candles, 1 white candle, matches, purple and yellow construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, rulers

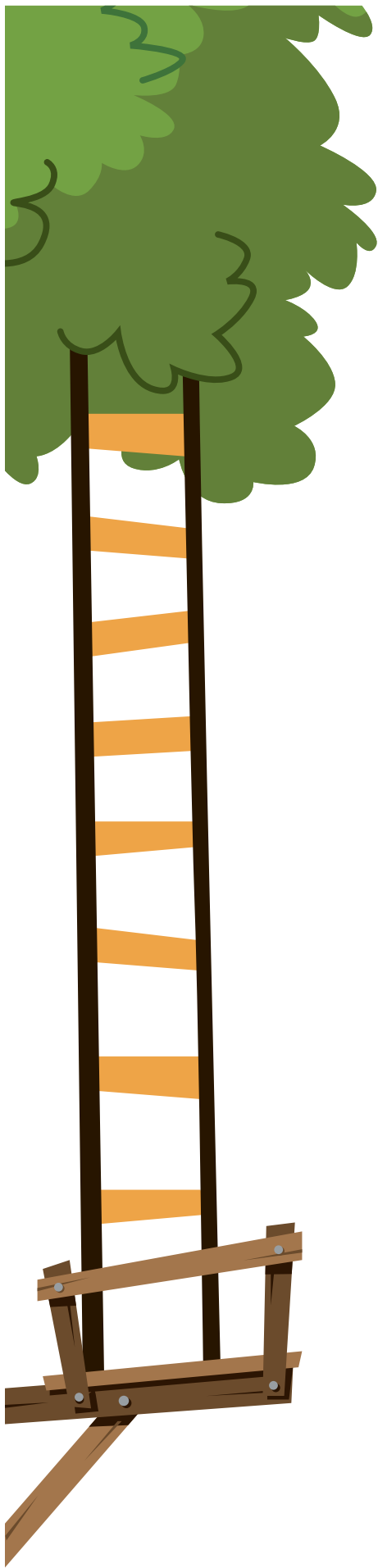
 When you see this icon, it means preparation will take more than five minutes.

**GET SET!****(Lesson Preparation)**

- Print today's Bible memory verse on a poster board: **And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14)**. Hang the poster at the front of the classroom.
- Make a copy of *ZipLine #1* home-connection page for each child.
- Make a copy of *Lookout Card #1* for each helper.
-  If using Activity #2, prepare the Advent wreath by inserting and securing four purple candles around the circle and placing the white one in the middle.
- Set out the Celebration Calendar and (optional) treasure box.
- Set up snack and outside play activities if you include these items in your children's ministry.

**PASSWORD, PLEASE!****(Welcome and Bible Connection)**

- **Objective:** To excite children's interest and connect their life experiences with the Bible Truth, children will make a mural about families and talk about their experiences expecting new babies.



Welcome Time Activity: Waiting for Baby Mural

- **Materials:** 8' sheet of butcher paper, markers or crayons

Tape the sheet of paper to a blank wall at children's eye level with a tub of markers or crayons on the floor beside it. As kids arrive, direct them to make pictures of families with children, including babies. As they draw, ask them to share any experiences they've had when waiting for new babies to be born.

Sharing Time and Bible Connection

When everyone has arrived, call children to the lesson area and welcome them. Introduce the lesson by discussing the following questions. As you talk, give every child the opportunity to say something. Acknowledge the families and babies children drew during the Welcome Time Activity.

- **What kinds of things do parents do when they know a new baby is coming?** (make a nursery, buy new clothes for the mother and baby, choose a name, etc.)
- **Show me with your faces how people feel when they find out a new baby is coming to their family.** Observe and affirm children's expressions.

A lot of you smiled, but no one laughed. The Bible tells us about someone who did laugh when God said he and his wife would have a baby. This was amazing news! This baby was the beginning of a new family—and from this family would come the One whom God promised to save people from their sin.



CLIMB IN!

Bible Discover and Learn Time

Genesis 17, 21

- **Objective:** Children will study Genesis 17 and 21 to learn how God promised a Savior from the days of Abraham as God's solution to our sin.
- **Materials:** gumdrops, toothpicks, a heavy book

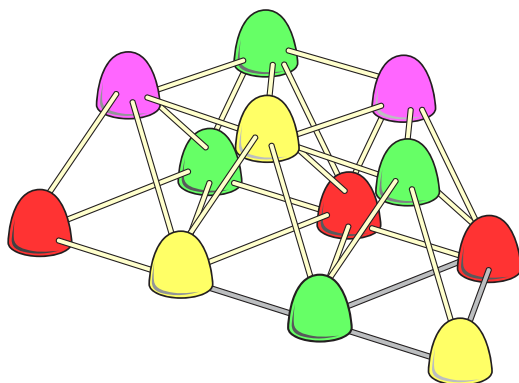
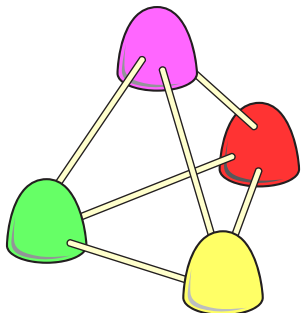
When God created the first people, he had a wonderful friendship with them. But Adam and Eve did something that broke that friendship. Do you know what it was? (Adam and Eve sinned, they ate fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil when God told them not to) **That's right. Adam and Eve sinned against God.**

Sin was a problem no person could solve. Only God could do that. But God had a plan—and it was a very good one. His plan began a long, long time ago with a covenant. What's a covenant? Let children respond. A covenant is a promise between two people or groups of people. Each person agrees to do something, and both must keep his or her side of the agreement. How about if you and I make a covenant? I have this bag of gumdrops. Show them. I agree to share these gumdrops with you today. But you must agree to listen very well to the Bible story and answer some questions later. That's our covenant. Do you all agree? Allow children's response. Of course, your covenant is just with me about a few gumdrops.

In Genesis 17, God made a covenant with a man named Abraham. In Abraham's time, many people served false gods. But Abraham worshipped only the one true God. He agreed to serve God and no one else. That was Abraham's part of the covenant.

In return, God agreed to give Abraham and his wife Sarah a huge family. And from Abraham's family would come the Savior of the world. How Abraham laughed! How could he and Sarah have a huge family? Abraham was already ninety-nine years old, and they had no children.

Abraham laughed because he thought God's promise was impossible. Why, that would be like saying these tiny toothpicks and gumdrops can hold the weight of this heavy book five inches above the table. Do you think they can? Show children the gumdrops and toothpicks, and then pass around the book for children to feel its weight. Ask a volunteer to try to stack up gumdrops and toothpicks on a table. **We can't get the stack high enough. It seems impossible.**



What God said seemed impossible too. But God wanted the Savior to come from Abraham's family, and God always does what he says he will do. Nothing is impossible for God. Gather children around the table. Pass each child several toothpicks and gumdrops and give them a few minutes to try to build a support for the book. If no one is successful, demonstrate how to build a pyramid of toothpicks with a gumdrop at each joint. Connect several pyramids to form a sturdy structure. Place the textbook on top and see how it holds. **It wasn't impossible, was it? We understand how this experiment works because triangular structures are so strong, but God can do impossible things that no one can explain.**

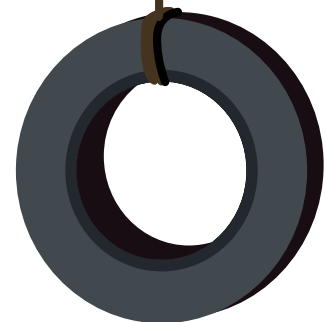
Did God keep his part of the covenant? Yes! The next year, when Abraham was one hundred years old, he and Sarah had a baby they named Isaac. Isaac grew up and had children of his own. The family grew and grew until one day, generations later, a Savior was born, just as God had promised. God had a plan to free us from our sin, and God used Abraham's family in that plan.

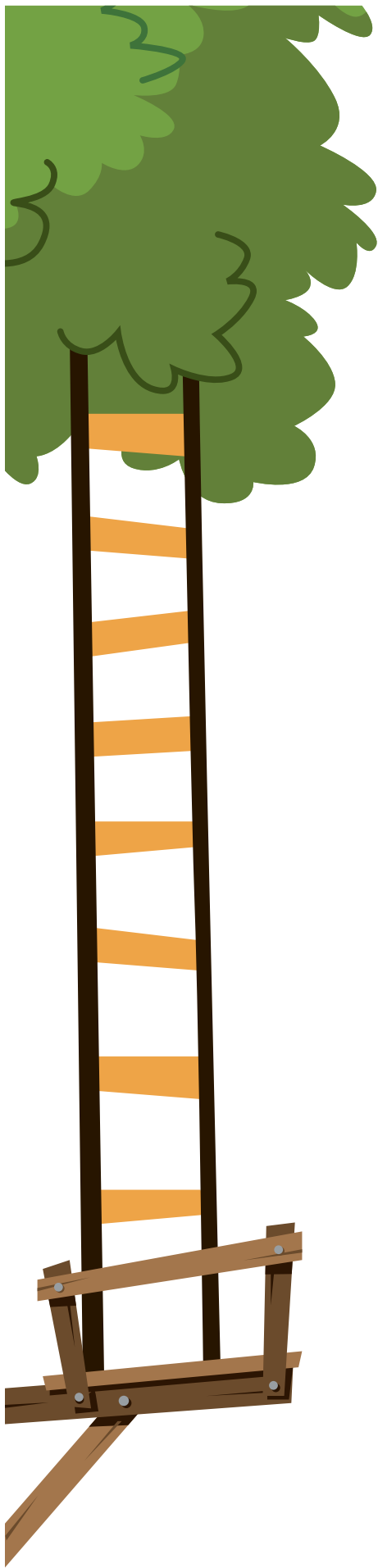


USE THE CLUES! (Bible Review)

Let's find out what you remember.

- **What's a covenant?** (an agreement between two people)
- **Why did God make a covenant with Abraham?** (it was the start of his promise to send a Savior, Abraham's family was the beginning of the family line of the Savior)
- **What did Abraham do when he heard God's plan?** (he laughed)
- **How did God keep his part of the covenant?** (he gave Abraham and Sarah a baby even though they were already very old)
- **What does this story teach us about God?** (he can do the impossible, God had a plan to take care of our sin)





If children kept their part of the covenant by listening well to the story, let them eat the gumdrops from their triangles if they desire, and distribute the rest evenly among the class. **You kept your part of the covenant, so I'm keeping mine.**

Show the children the Celebration Calendar and explain that for the next four weeks, the class will open one door to find a symbol from that Bible lesson. The symbol will help them remember what they learned from the Bible that week. **What do you think is behind the door for today?** Let children call out their guesses of the picture under today's door. Choose a child to open door #1. **How does a baby remind us of today's story?** (God kept his promise to give Abraham and Sarah a baby, the baby was the start of God's promise to send a Savior)



HIDE 'N' SEEK (Scripture Memory)

1 John 4:14

- **Objective:** Children will hide God's Word in their hearts for guidance, protection, and encouragement.
- **Materials:** clean socks

Read the verse from the poster. Then have the children read it with you as you point to the words: **And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world (1 John 4:14).**

Give half the children (the stronger readers) a sock and show them how to make a sock puppet by slipping the sock over one hand. Pair up a younger child with each puppeteer. The puppeteer will teach the other child the verse, phrase by phrase. After a few minutes of practice, have the other child take the sock and repeat the verse to the partner using the puppet.



PRAYER HIDEAWAY

- **Objective:** Children will explore and practice prayer for themselves in small groups.
- **Materials:** copies of Lookout Card #1 for each adult or teen helper

Break into small groups of three to five children. Assign a teen or adult helper to each small group and give each helper a copy of *Lookout Card #1* (page 18) with ideas for group discussion and prayer.



TREETOP TREATS: Babies in a Blanket (Optional Snack)

- **Materials:** flour tortillas, cheese sticks

Pass out a tortilla and a cheese stick to each student. Have them lay the cheese in the center and bundle up the tortilla around it like a baby being wrapped in a blanket. Talk about how different life would have been for Isaac compared to life for kids today (no toys, no TV or video games, living in a tent, walking long distances, etc.), and how Isaac was the beginning of God's promise to send a Savior.

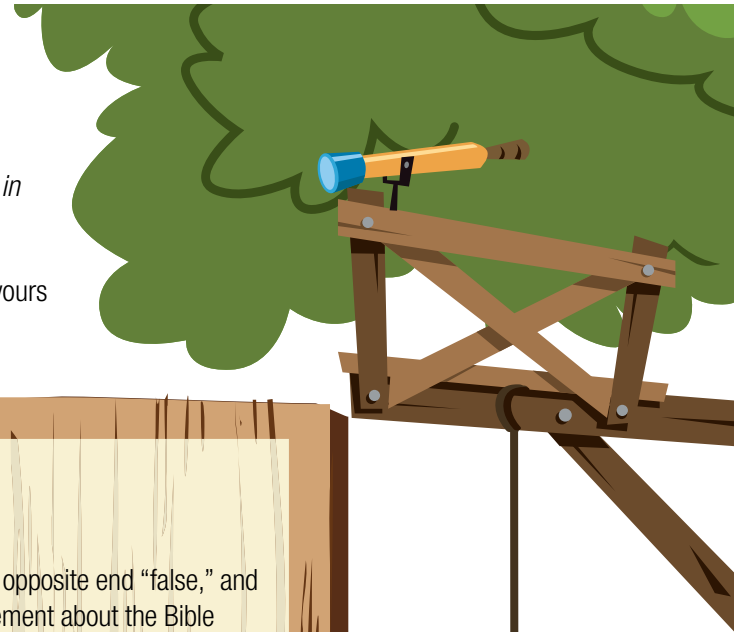
Note: Always be aware of children with food allergies and have another option on hand if necessary.



APPLICATION

- **Objective:** Children will have opportunities to show how the lesson works in their lives through activities and home-connection pages.

Some children's ministries may allow children to play outside at this point. If yours does not, choose one of the following activities.



1 2 3 True or False

Designate one wall or end of the playing area as the "true" side and the opposite end "false," and then gather children in the middle of the playing area. You'll read a statement about the Bible story, and children will run to either the true or the false end, depending on what they believe about your statement. For false statements, ask children what would make it true. You can add more variety by having children move in other ways, such as crab walk, hop, shuffle, etc.

- God made a covenant with Isaac.** (false, it was with Abraham)
- Abraham laughed when God said he and Sarah would have a baby.** (true)
- Abraham didn't think God could do the impossible.** (true)
- Abraham was very young when God made a covenant with him.** (false, he was already old)
- God's plan was for the Savior to come from Abraham's family.** (true)

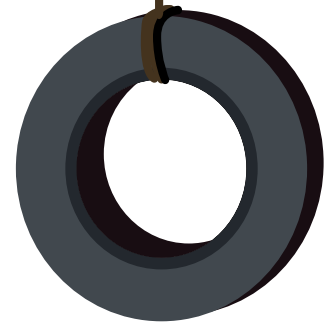
1 2 3 The Advent Wreath and Candles

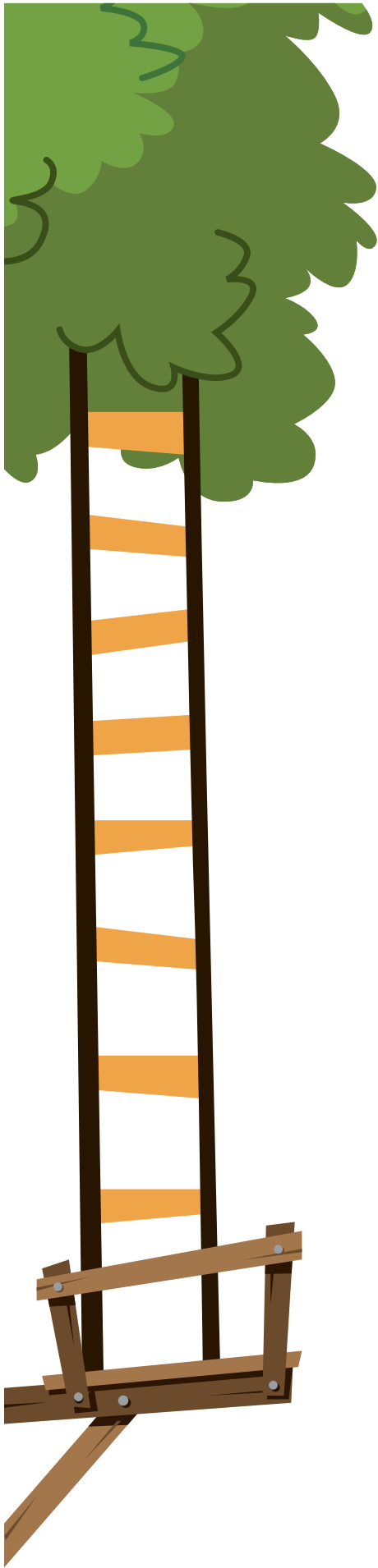
- **Materials:** Advent wreath with 4 candles, matches, purple and yellow construction paper, scissors, glue sticks, rulers

The weeks before Christmas are a celebration called Advent. Advent means waiting for something important. It's a time to think about the coming of Jesus. Today and the next three weeks, we'll participate in Advent by lighting one new candle each week. Light one purple candle. **The first candle in the Advent wreath reminds us of hope. This candle stands for the hope the prophets' messages gave, the hope for eternal life.**

If desired, hand out purple and yellow construction paper. Students will trace a ruler to draw a long purple candle. They can cut out a small yellow flame to glue to the top. Have them write "Messiah, Savior, Jesus" on the candle. Encourage them to use these as bookmarks to remind them of God's plan that was fulfilled in Jesus.

Blow out the candle when this activity is finished.





ZIPLINE

(Home-Connection Page)

Give each child a *ZipLine* page. Each week you can take home a *ZipLine* page and do the activities and practice the memory verse. When you've done those things, ask an adult to sign the pass (point it out). Bring back the pass and you can visit the treasure box (hold up box). Distribute the home-connection pages and bookmarks (if made) just before children leave.

ZIPLINE — HOME CONNECTION #1

God Promises a Savior



Prayer Challenge

At least two times this week, talk to God by praising him for doing what seems impossible to us. Each time, name one thing he's done that's impossible for people.



Memory Verse

And we have seen and testify that **the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world** (1 John 4:14).

Note: Early elementary verse in bold type.

Think and Do

Count on a calendar how many days it is until Christmas. That's the day we celebrate Jesus coming to earth to be our Savior. Make a paper Christmas ornament or Christmas card and put it in your room. When you see it, you'll remember that even though it's a few weeks until Christmas, you know it's coming. It will also remind you that God promised to send a Savior—and he did!

Word Search

P	C	O	V	C	L	I	G	H
R	L	A	U	G	H	M	P	C
O	U	B	M	S	G	P	S	O
M	N	T	S	V	A	O	A	V
I	S	A	A	C	F	S	B	E
S	A	F	R	G	R	S	R	N
E	V	R	A	R	D	I	A	A
N	I	S	H	N	M	B	H	N
V	O	E	T	E	S	L	A	T
S	R	A	V	I	L	E	M	D

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Please check off the items your child completed this week.

- Prayer Challenge
- Bible verse memorized and recited to an adult
- Think and Do
- Word Search

Adult Signature: _____

CLUB PASS

Find these names and words from the Bible story:

- Abraham
- Sarah
- Isaac
- covenant
- laugh
- impossible
- promise
- Savior

LOOKOUT CARD #1

This week your group heard from Genesis 17 and 21 that God promised Abraham the Savior would come from his family. They learned how God made a covenant with Abraham, and God's promise of a Savior began when Isaac was born. Lead your group in prayer using the following four activities:

- **Praise.** **God made a covenant with Abraham and kept it.** Allow students to praise God for always keeping his promises.
- **Ask.** **God asked Abraham to follow him, even though others around him believed in false gods. People today believe in many other things besides the one true God.** Lead students in asking God to make them strong in their desire to follow only him all their lives.

- **Confess.** **Do you remember how Abraham laughed when God promised he would have a son, even though he was really old? We all sometimes forget that God can do anything. Think of a time you haven't trusted God to do what might seem impossible, and tell him you're sorry for that.**
- **Thank.** **God sent the Savior he promised, even though it took a long time to happen.** Have students thank God for keeping every one of his promises, including his promise to send Jesus. Children can be thankful in a general way or for specific instances.

Remember that no child should be forced to pray, but do encourage and invite each one. After praying, talk quietly with the children in your group until the next activity.

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Celebration Cake Window Picture

Door #1

