

date: __12/17/17

Bible Passage: 2 Samuel 7; Matthew 1; Isaiah 7:1–14
(Joseph)

God Is Hope

REMEMBER VERSE

**For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
Isaiah 9:6**

Inspire

Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives

During college, I tried to knock out at least one class each summer. One year I took a required class: Old Testament. For six weeks that summer I sat in the hot sun every day and read my hefty black King James Bible. I read so extensively mostly because I wanted an A.

But while reading one day, I suddenly felt a surge of awe that made me want to fall on my face right there on the sidewalk. For a second I couldn't even think straight as I stared at my fat Bible. This story I had heard my whole life was suddenly so big! I had an overwhelming sense of how far-reaching and wonderful God's story is—so multi-layered and multi-connected. And I felt buoyed with a new sense of joy and hope.

This continual sense of awe and joy in reading The Big God Story gives me hope that I will daily discover more and more about how amazing God's love is. That I will experience what the Scripture says: God's "compassions ... are new every morning" (Lamentations 3:22–23). That God will be faithful to His promises today and in the future because He has been faithful to His promises in the past.

I have hope that I will forever stand amazed by this God, who takes such great pains to weave a story of love for His people, and for me.

Tori Funkhouser
ROCKHARBOR Church

Equip

Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage

Many of us probably skip over the genealogies when reading through Matthew and Luke. But these lists of names actually contain an important message of hope for us.

The key to deciphering this message takes us back to the time of the Jewish captivity when Judah had a king, Jeconiah, who was so wicked that God cursed his bloodline, saying, “None of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah” (Jeremiah 22:24–30). The problem was that this was the royal line from David. The Messiah had to come from this line. How would God get around His own blood curse and provide a Messiah through the line of David? It actually took a miracle.

God had promised David that his throne would never end (2 Samuel 7:13). With this blood curse, this promise seemed to be in jeopardy. What God did, though, was allow the royal bloodline to continue down through Jeconiah all the way to Joseph, the husband of Mary. This is reflected in the genealogy in Matthew, which ties Jesus (through adoption by Joseph) to the royal line of David. But there is no blood descendant of Jeconiah that would sit on the throne, since Jesus is not Joseph’s actual son. So, Jesus is the legal heir to the throne of David.

But what of the bloodline? If Jesus did not share the bloodline of David, would He still be considered heir to the throne? In the Luke genealogy we see that Jesus, through His mother, Mary, does share the blood of David, but through David’s son Nathan, who wasn’t a part of the royal line and therefore wasn’t under the blood curse.

Therefore, Jesus is related to David in two different ways. He is entitled to the throne both by blood and by legal title. This could only have been accomplished through the miraculous virgin birth. These genealogies reveal a sovereign God who has an incredible message of hope for us.

Support

Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word

Isaiah 9:6, which begins “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given,” so clearly describes Jesus that it’s hard to believe it was written hundreds of years before His birth! The more we read these prophecies about Jesus, the more we discover how clearly God spelled out His plan to bring a Savior: God gave His people signs to look for; God gave them facts about Jesus’ character and His physical appearance; and God gave them descriptions of Jesus’ life, mission, and purpose. God did this so people could know Jesus was the Messiah for whom they’d been waiting for so long.

As you prepare for this lesson, take time to savor the fact that God gave us these prophecies to show us His plan and to really think and pray about what these prophecies mean to you. What is God trying to show you about His love and His story? How does this give you hope? Pray God would give the children hope through His love, His saving plan, and His goodness as you share with them this part of The Big God Story.

SMALL GROUP
SECTION**EXPLORE//** 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.

What Is It?

In this EXPLORE, children will receive descriptions to help them guess an object in the room.

SUPPLIES

- Index cards (10)
- Pen or marker

SET UP

Before the children arrive, take a look around your room. Identify 10 objects and describe each one on an index card without revealing the name of the object.

RELATE

In the Old Testament, God gave certain people special messages, called prophecies, to share with His people. Many of the prophecies were about the promised Messiah. But by the time Jesus, the Savior, came to earth, many people didn't recognize Him even though God had given them many clues about Him over the years.

In our own lives today, sometimes we think we understand what's being described to us, but we really don't. Today let's play a game that gets us thinking about describing things.

Put children in two teams, and give each team five of your prepared cards. On your signal, have the kids on each team go through the cards one at a time and try to figure out the object described on each card. When the teams finish, go through the cards with them to see if they made the correct guesses. The team with the most correct answers wins the game.

LARGE GROUP
SECTION**DISCOVER//** 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.

Traditions and Remember Verse

SUPPLIES

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)
- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6

Connect

Question

What do you hope for this Christmas?

The Big God Story

Bible Passage: 2 Samuel 7; Matthew 1; Isaiah 7:1–14

Storytelling Technique: Building a Family Tree

God Is Hope

SUPPLIES

- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Leaf and Birds template](#) (see Resources)
- [Family Tree images](#) (see Resources)
- [Family Tree Reference diagram](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Dictionary
- Butcher paper (5'–10')
- Construction paper (at least 6 sheets green, 2–4 sheets blue)
- Scissors
- Tape
- Marker (black)

SET UP

From the butcher paper, cut out a tree trunk and about a dozen branches. From the green construction paper, cut out a couple dozen leaves. From the blue paper, cut out a few birds. Print the six Family Tree images (King David, Nathan, Solomon, Mary, Joseph, and Jesus) and cut them out. Also print the Family Tree Reference for

yourself as a guide to show you where to place the images on the Family Tree and where to draw lines between them.

RELATE

Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds. **What does hope mean? What does it mean to hope for something?** Interact with responses. **Great thoughts.** Get out dictionary, flip to the page with the hope definition, and read the definition aloud. Or, read the following definitions from www.merriam-webster.com: “to cherish a desire with anticipation” and “to expect with confidence.” **Have you ever hoped for something to happen?** Interact with responses. Then share an age-appropriate story about how God has given you hope.

During our previous time together, we heard how God’s Son, Jesus, came to be with us. Prior to His arrival, people had been hoping for the promised Savior for hundreds of years. And as they waited, God prepared their hearts for His arrival. God sent prophets to share His message with the people, to tell them a Savior would come. We call these messages prophecies. Isaiah was a prophet, and God used him to reveal more of His plan to send the Messiah. God also revealed His plan through the second king of all Israel—a king named David.

King David loved God with all of his heart, and God blessed David with an unimaginably wonderful promise. God promised that Jesus would come from David’s family tree! Just like you and I have a family tree that shows all of the people in our family, Jesus has a family tree too. Today we’ll build His family tree together. Attach trunk of Family Tree to the wall—low enough so kids can reach it.

Ask children to turn to 2 Samuel 7:12 and follow along. **God said, “When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you ... and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever”** (2 Samuel 7:12–13). Place branches and leaves on Family Tree. Optional: Have a few volunteers help with this.

Wow—this was huge news! David was excited about this promise! Over and over again he praised God, saying, “How great you are ... There is no one like you, and there is no God but you” (v. 22). **David praised God for His love and the hope of His promise.** Place David image at top of Family Tree. **That’s what it feels like to have hope! When you have hope, you can’t help but worship God. And who gave David hope? Allow responses. Yes, God did. He’s the one who gives us hope.**

King David asked God to keep this promise. David said, “Keep forever the promise you have made ... so that your name will be great forever” (vv. 25–26). **Does God keep His promises? Allow responses. He sure does! God doesn’t say one thing and do another. He always keeps His promises!**

As God kept His promise to David, David’s family grew and grew. David had many sons, and two of them were Nathan and Solomon. Solomon became the king after David died. Place Nathan and Solomon images on Family Tree below David and draw lines from them to David. **Many years passed. Then the big moment arrived—the moment when God came to earth to be with us. He came as a baby born to a young woman named Mary.** Place Mary image on Family Tree below Nathan and draw a line from Mary to Nathan. **But Mary wasn’t alone. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph.** Place Joseph image on Family Tree below Solomon and draw a line between Joseph and Solomon.

Let’s take a look at Matthew 1, the first chapter of the first book of the New Testament. In this chapter we get to read about Jesus’ family tree. Place Jesus image on Family Tree below Mary and Joseph and draw lines from them to Jesus. **Who was on this family tree? Pause for answers. Yes: King David!** Refer to David image on Family Tree. **Who else was on the family tree? Who else came from the family line of**

David? Allow responses. **Joseph, who would be Jesus' adopted father!** Refer to Joseph image on Family Tree.

Joseph was a little confused when he heard the news about Mary. But one night, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. Encourage kids to turn to Matthew 1:20 and follow along. **The angel said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife ... 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" (Matthew 1:20–21). Joseph did what the angel said and married Mary (Matthew 1:24).**

Long ago, before Mary and Joseph were even born, God promised David that Jesus, the Savior, would come from his family line. That came true through both Mary and Joseph! Mary, who gave birth to Jesus, was related to King David through David's son Nathan. And Joseph, the husband of Mary, was related to King David through the royal line of David's son King Solomon. God made all this happen because He is in control! And He sent the Savior people had been waiting for: Jesus, the hope of the world.

Because of Jesus, we can be forgiven of our sins and adopted into God's family. As God's family, we're able to help care for one another and worship Him together!

God gave His people promises, and He was faithful to keep them. Because God was faithful to fulfill His promises in the past, we know He will be faithful to keep His promises now and in the future. If time permits, share an age-appropriate story about a time God's promises gave you hope during a difficult time. **Do you want to know something else? We have even more to hope for: Jesus promised that He would one day return, and one day we'll be with Him forever and ever!**

SMALL GROUP SECTION

RESPOND// 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond through creative activities and games.

Reflect: God Is Hope

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

Questions for Younger Kids

- **Why do we need hope?** 2 Corinthians 4:16–18
- **How does Jesus give us hope?**
- **How can we seek hope when things aren't easy?** Psalm 10:17; 94:19
- **How has God given you hope?**

Questions for Older Kids

- **What's the difference between a hope and a wish?**
- **Why do we need hope?** 2 Corinthians 4:16–18

Read Romans 5:2–5 aloud while the kids follow along, or have a volunteer read the verses.

- How does knowing this change the way we live?
- The prophecies about Jesus were told hundreds of years before they came true. What does that tell you about God?
- Why do you think God gave the Israelites prophecies about Christ's birth?
- How has God given you hope?

BLESS// 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing may be prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Blessing cards (see Resources)
- Bible
- Card stock (1 sheet for every 4 children)
- Scissors

PREPARE AHEAD

Print the Blessing cards onto card stock and cut them apart, making one card for each child.

RELATE

Open a Bible and read Psalm 31:24:

Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the LORD.

Children, may you be filled with the everlasting hope that only comes from God. May you trust that He will be with you all the days of your life.

Give each child a Blessing card to take home. Our parents need God's hope too! They need to be reminded that He will care for them.

This week, try to find an opportunity to bless your parents. You might send them an encouraging verse from the Bible or pray for them however God leads you. If you have trouble figuring out what to say or how to bless your parents, you can use the Blessing card to help you.