**Advent Lessons**

Week 1- **HOPE**

**Scripture:** Isaiah 9:6-7, John 1:9

**Objective:** Children will learn about the hope of the promised Messiah as prophesied in the Old Testament.

**Materials**: wrapped box (See Procedure. Keep box for subsequent lessons.), Bibles, mural paper, markers, yarn, LED candles, Advent Wreath, Christmas card supplies for Mission Project

**Preparation:**

1. On individually wrapped pieces of candy, place a label with the message, *The Messiah has come!* on each piece of candy. Fill a box with the candy. Wrap the box in Christmas wrapping paper.
2. Make a timeline by cutting a 8- foot piece of yarn. Lay the yarn piece on the floor in a straight line. Tape both ends to the floor. On separate index cards, print: *Genesis, Psalms, Isaiah, Matthew, Luke, Revelation, Old Testament, New Testament.* Place cards along the timeline. Old and New Testament cards can be placed below the line. Place a small manger on the timeline right before “Matthew” to separate Old and New Testaments.
3. Cut a large sheet of mural paper (about 10 feet).
4. Set up Advent Wreath with LED candles.

**Procedure:**

1. Welcome children. Pass the gift box to each child. Invite children to guess the contents. After each child has had a chance to guess. Place the box on the shelf. **Say:** *It’s hard to wait, isn’t it? Advent is about waiting and preparing for the celebration of Jesus’ birth.*
2. Give each child a Bible. Help children find Isaiah 9:6-7. Ask a volunteer to read the verses. **Say:** *Jesus had not yet come to earth during Old Testament times. Isaiah was a prophet. God told Isaiah what would happen in the future.*
3. Direct kids to the timeline. (Point to Genesis on the timeline.) **Say:** *In the beginning God created everything. People chose to disobey God throughout the Old Testament. God would punish them and forgive them, but they continued to sin. In the books of prophecy, like Isaiah, God promised to send a Messiah who would save them from their sins. Who is the Messiah? (Jesus) God kept his promise! In Matthew and Luke, we read about the birth of Jesus.*
4. **Say:** *The people in the Old Testament had hope that the Messiah would come. They waited and hoped a long time for the Messiah. Then, Jesus came into the world! Now, through Jesus, we have hope. We have hope that God will do what he promised.*
5. Lead children to write promises that God has given on mural paper. Emphasize salvation and eternal life.
6. Lead children to gather around the Advent Wreath. Turn on the first LED candle (purple). Turn off the lights. Read John 1:9. **Say:** *The first Advent candle represents hope.*
7. Pray, thanking God for giving us hope through Jesus.

**Mission Project**- Make Christmas cards with encouraging messages and scripture. Send to individuals who need the hope of Jesus.

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