God’s Big Story: Advent Week 1

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| scripture focus |
| Micah 5:2-5; Malachi 3:1, 4:2-5 |

big picture

God’s people were eventually able to return to the land of Israel – but they were no longer the great and proud nation of kings they had been. Instead, they were overshadowed and controlled by the empires of Persia, Greece, and finally Rome. God continued to send prophets to them: Micah and Malachi were two men who dropped clues about the Rescuer that Israel waited and longed for. Micah prophesied that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem and be a descendant of King David. Malachi was the last Old Testament prophet, and his book ended with a prophecy about a Preparer who would help pave the way for the Messiah to come. Next week, we’ll hear more about this Preparer, as God’s rescue plan finally begins to take place on earth.

|  | storybooks | bible readings |
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| read aloud | *Jesus Storybook Bible:* p.144-151 (“Operation No More Tears!”) | Micah 5:2-5aMalachi 3:1, 4:2-5 |
| discuss/ ask | What is something you’re excited about or looking forward to? Why? Is it easy to wait? Why or why not?What kinds of things do you do to prepare for something you’re waiting for? (For example, if you’re waiting for a new baby or a new pet, what would you do? Or if you’re waiting for a birthday or a big trip, what would you do to prepare?)What do you do to prepare while you’re waiting for Christmas to come?The Israelites were waiting for the Messiah, the Rescuer, to come. How was their waiting different than just waiting for Christmas or a birthday? What hints did they get about the Messiah to come – how would they know how to recognize him? How could they be ready for the Messiah to come – what could they do to prepare themselves? How do you think we can prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus?What is something that you think the whole world might be waiting for? How do you think we might prepare ourselves for what we’re hoping for? |
| do together | Light the first Advent candle (the candle of hope). Talk together about waiting and what you hope for. Read the Scripture passages or the Storybook Bible, and sing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.” If you would like more guidance, there is a family Advent script available [here](http://childrensministry.com/wp-content/uploads/media/1602078/advent_candle-lighting_devotions_for_families.pdf). |