

Explore It

FOR LEADERS



HOPE

Isaiah 9:2-7 A new day is coming

In the Christian calendar Advent starts four Sundays before Christmas Day, often in November, and is marked with the lighting of an Advent wreath in church. However, December is a time for Advent calendars. Advent is an important part of the annual celebration of Christmas and the birth of Jesus. The word 'advent' means someone or something really significant is coming; for Christians the season of Advent is a time of preparing and waiting for the birth of Jesus.

Each child will need:

- ➔ Bible verses or Bible references PDF – see Action It section
- ➔ An envelope or a jar
- ➔ Decorating resources like Christmas stickers and glitter glue
- ➔ Scissors and pens/pencils
- ➔ Paper and sticky tape (optional if using the jar)

Start It

● **Say:** The film *Back to the Future* was recently made into a West End musical, but the original film was in the cinema back in 1985 – way before any of you were born! In the second film (1989) Marty, the main character, travels 30 years into his future ... to 2015.

Ask: How many years ago was 2015?

● **Say:** So, Marty travelled into his future, which is actually six years ago for us (time travel is very confusing!). The following clip shows what people in the 1980s thought life might be like today.

Watch the clip and discuss whether they were right or not.

Video

Back to the Future Part 2 (2/12) Movie CLIP - Hill Valley, 2015 (1989) (1 min 57 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d68yRIE9OvQ>

● **Say:** It's difficult to know what things will be like in the future and often the only thing we can do is have a good guess.

Ask: What do you think the world will be like in 30 years' time?

Sing It

Put your hope and trust in God; he is always with you and will take care of you.

'Hope' Kids worship song by Allstars Go (3 mins 50 secs)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r_t5xitQjlc

Tell It

🗨️ **Say:** During Advent we prepare and wait for the birth of Jesus. In many churches an Advent wreath is placed with five candles, one for each of the Sundays leading up to Christmas and one for Christmas Day itself. Many people have their own Advent wreaths at home, and there is some more information about how to make your own in the Explore Together handout.

🗨️ **Say:** For each of the four sessions leading up to Christmas we will be looking at a different theme linked to Advent. Our song for today was all about hope, and that's our theme for today.

Ask:

- ➡️ How would you describe hope?
- ➡️ What kinds of things are you hoping for?

🗨️ **Say:** The Israelites had been waiting for a very special person to arrive for a very long time. This person, Jesus, would lead them and help connect them with God. But even though they tried, no one could predict the future to know exactly when he would arrive.

🗨️ **Say:** Although we are thinking about the birth of Jesus, our Bible story today happened around 700 years before he was born. When God wanted to tell his people something important, he would use someone called a prophet and give them special messages to share with people. Our prophet for today is Isaiah.

Video

Isaiah – God's Story by Crossroads Kids' Club (4 mins 02 secs)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e-hZA0f0RH8>

Discuss:

- ➡️ What is a prophecy? (A prophecy is when God makes a promise and tells us something important or something that is going to happen in the future.)
- ➡️ What kinds of things did Isaiah tell the people about God?
- ➡️ What was the most amazing prophecy that God told Isaiah?

Screen share: Isaiah 9:2-7 (ICB)

**'Now those people live in darkness.
But they will see a great light.
They live in a place that is very dark.
But a light will shine on them.
God, you will cause the nation to grow.
You will make the people happy.
And they will show their happiness to you.
It will be like the joy during harvest time.
It will be like the joy of people
taking what they have won in war.
Like the time you defeated Midian,
you will take away their heavy load.
You will take away the heavy pole from their backs.
You will take away the rod the enemy uses to punish your people.
Every boot that marched in battle will be destroyed.
Every uniform stained with blood will be destroyed.
They will be thrown into the fire.
A child will be born to us.
God will give a son to us.
He will be responsible for leading the people.
His name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Powerful God,
Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.
Power and peace will be in his kingdom.
It will continue to grow.
He will rule as king on David's throne**

and over David's kingdom.
He will make it strong,
by ruling with goodness and fair judgment.
He will rule it forever and ever.
The Lord of Heaven's armies will do this
because of his strong love for his people.'

Discuss:

- ➔ How do you think the people felt when Isaiah told them what was going to happen?
 - ➔ How long did the people have to wait for Isaiah's prophecies to happen?
 - ➔ Do you find it difficult to wait for things? Do you think you could wait 700 years for something?
 - ➔ What do you think made the people keep believing and hoping that Isaiah's prophecy would come true?
- 💬 **Say:** The people knew that no matter how long they had to wait, God would keep his promise to them.

Action It

- 💬 **Say:** In our Bible verses today we read the promise given by God to Isaiah.

**'A child will be born to us.
God will give a son to us.
He will be responsible for leading the people.
His name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Powerful God,
Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.'**

— Isaiah 9:6 (ICB)

- 💬 **Say:** Throughout the Bible we are reminded of God's promises, and during December we will look at a different promise each day.

Promise jar/envelope

Explain to the children that they will be making a promise jar/envelope so that they can read one of God's promises each day of Advent in December. There are two options: the full Scripture verses (ICB) or the Bible reference.

Ask the children to decorate their envelope or jar. For the jar, if you don't have stickers or glitter glue, children can draw their own decorations on paper and stick them to the jar with sticky tape.

The children then cut out all the Bible promises, fold up each one and put them into their jar/envelope.

Pray It

Ask the group to share some of their hopes for the future and some of the prayers they are waiting for God to answer. When the group have shared, then ask them to promise to pray for each other over the coming week. Close this time in prayer.

Explore It

Remember to send home the Explore It (For Me) and Explore It (Together) ideas for children and families.