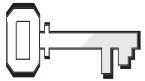


As You Have Promised, Lord



References

Luke 2:21-38;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 50-58



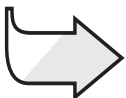
Memory Verse

“Jesus Christ . . . by his
grace gave us eternal
encouragement and
good hope”
(2 Thessalonians 2:16, NIV).



Objectives

The children will:
Know that grace gives
us hope.
Feel hopeful for the
New Year.
Respond by every day
looking beyond problems
to the great future
Jesus will provide.



The Message

Jesus gives us hope.

Monthly Theme

God is our best Friend.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Mary and Joseph take Jesus to the temple to be presented to the Lord according to Jewish law. The Holy Spirit moves Simeon to visit the temple that day. Simeon had been waiting, looking for the Consolation of Israel—the Messiah. He blesses Jesus and says that he is ready to die because he has seen God’s salvation. The prophetess Anna also recognizes Jesus as the Promised Messiah. She gives thanks to God and speaks about the Child to all who are looking forward to the Messiah.

This is a lesson about grace.

God’s grace gives us hope. Without God’s grace the human race would be destined to eternal destruction. Because of Jesus, we can look forward to eternal life. What a blessed hope! On a daily basis, this hope from Jesus helps us to rise above problems and to focus on His ultimate plans for us.

Teacher Enrichment

Eight days after His birth, Jesus was circumcised and given the name “Jesus” as the angel had directed (Luke 2:21). When He was about 40 days old, Mary and Joseph took Him to the temple for the dedication service, which required a sacrifice. “Joseph and Mary were poor; . . . they presented only the offering made by the poorer classes” (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 52).

“Simeon apparently belonged to the group of humble and devout searchers of the Scriptures, such as Zacharias and Elisabeth, Joseph, Mary, the shepherds, Anna, the wise men, Joseph of Arimathea, and a few others. It was to these faithful ones who were looking for the Messiah that Heaven made known the appearance of the Messiah” (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 702).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 9.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Options	up to 10	A. <i>Tug of War</i> B. <i>Balloons Away!</i> C. <i>Balloon Stomp</i>	long rope, masking tape, adult helpers, Bible balloon and string for each child, electric fan balloons, small prizes for everyone, Bible
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	<i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> container used last week anchor-shaped cutouts (see p. 143)
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	two senior citizens (one man and one woman), Bible-times costumes, index cards bowl or basket, paper, markers/pen, Bible Bibles, names of children on slips of paper, a bowl
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Musical Mikes</i>	microphone (real or pretend), chalkboard or dry erase board, chalk/marker, a cassette or CD player, Christian Christmas music or someone playing piano, Bible
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	A. <i>Anchored in Jesus</i> B. <i>Anchors Away</i>	photocopies of hot air balloon drawing (see page 142) on heavy paper, string or yarn, anchor cutouts (see page 143), Jesus stickers balloons, helium, Bible correspondence school cards or invitation to church on index cards, string or yarn, hole punch

***Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.**

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Have them begin the Readiness Activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- long rope
- masking tape
- adult helpers
- Bible

A. Tug of War

With masking tape, make a dividing mark on the floor. Form two teams with at least one adult per team. The children line up in teams, one behind another, on either side of the divider, and facing the other team. Each team's strongest player, the anchor, stands at the back of the team with a long rope wrapped around him/her. (For safety reasons the anchor should be an adult.) Instruct the children to grab the rope and pull as hard as they can. Their object is to drag the other team across the mark on the floor. (Note: Do NOT allow the children to wrap the rope around their wrists. Serious injury could occur.) After two minutes or after one team wins, gather everyone around you to debrief.

Debriefing

Ask: **What happened when you played Tug of War?** (They dragged us, or we dragged them, etc.) **Why is the person at the end called the anchor?** (Because he/she is the strongest, etc.) **What did you hope the anchor would do for you?** (Keep us from being dragged away.) **What is hope?** (A feeling that what is wanted will happen.) Read aloud Hebrews 6:19. **Hope is like an anchor for our lives. It helps us feel secure and helps us not to worry. Who can give us hope?** Read aloud 2 Thessalonians 2:16.

Today's message says:



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Say that with me.

You Need:

- balloons
- string
- electric fan

B. Balloons Away

Have the children blow up and tie off their balloons. Let them bat the balloons around for a minute. Then ask for the balloons to be kept still.

Debriefing

Say: **We are like balloons.** Turn on the electric fan. Invite one child to hold a balloon in the air stream. **How are you going to keep your balloon from flying away?** (Tie it to something; etc.) **Yes, you need to anchor your balloon so it won't get lost.** Help them anchor their balloons and then briefly turn the fan on again to test their anchors. Turn the fan off and say: **When we anchor our lives, we don't anchor them down; we anchor them up. How do we do that?** (We depend on Jesus to keep us safe.) **Hope is like an anchor. It helps us not to get "blown away" when things get rough. It helps us to look above our problems to our Helper. Jesus is our anchor. He gives us hope.** Read aloud 2 Thessalonians 2:16. **Today's message says:**



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Say that with me.

C. Balloon Stomp

Each child ties a balloon to their ankle. The object of the game is to stomp on and break other people's balloons without letting anyone else stomp on yours. Tell them you have a reward for the winner.

You Need:

- balloons
- small prizes for everyone
- Bible

Debriefing

When all but one balloon has been broken, give a prize to the winner *and to every-one else*. Ask: **What did you hope for at the start of this game?** (I hoped no one else would break my balloon; I hoped I would get a prize; etc.) **Did this game end the way you hoped it would?** (Yes; No.) **God's grace is like this game. Did you all get a prize?** (Yes.) **Does this give you hope?** (Yes.) **God's grace is like that—it's for everyone who chooses Jesus.** Read aloud 2 Thessalonians 2:16. **Yes, Jesus, by His grace, gives us hope. And that's today's message:**



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Review the memory verse and acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Redeemed" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 68)
- "Anywhere With Jesus" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 45)
- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 40)
- "Jesus Keeps His Promises" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 41)



Mission

Share a story from *Children's Mission*. Ask: **Who in the story has or needed hope?**



Offering

Say: **Our offering goes to help others learn of Jesus so they, too, can have hope.**

You Need:

- container used last week



Prayer

Give each child an anchor-shaped cutout. Have them write the name of someone who needs hope. Allow time for silent prayer, asking each child to pray for names on his or her anchor. To close, have an adult pray out loud that God will help the whole class to anchor their hope in Him.

You Need:

- anchor-shaped cutouts (see page 143)

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- two senior citizens (one man and one woman)
- Bible-times costumes
- index cards

Experiencing the Story

Invite two older members of your congregation to play Simeon and Anna. Ask them to dress in Bible-times costumes. In advance, give them a copy of this section of the lesson and ask them to prepare by reading Luke 2:21-38 and *The Desire of Ages*, pages 50-58. When they come into Sabbath School, make them feel welcome.

The children will study the Bible story as they ask Simeon and Anna a series of numbered questions. Copy the following questions on index cards (be sure to include the numbers), and give them to the children. Have them ask the questions in numerical sequence.

Welcome your visitors to class by saying: **We have two special visitors with us today. Let's find out who they are.** (*Prompt the person who has the first question.*)

Questions:

1. Who are you?

Simeon: Gives his name and tells about his longing to see the Messiah.

Anna: Gives her name and tells about herself—that she is very old, her husband died while she was still young. She is a prophetess.

2. Did you go to the temple a lot? How often? Why?

Simeon: Says he went every day because he was hoping to see the Lord. God had told him that he would see Jesus before he died. He didn't want to miss Him.

Anna: Worshiped there night and day, fasting and praying. God was most important in her life. She also witnessed to the people who went there.

3. What did you hope for most in your

life?

Simeon: "We hoped to see the Messiah with our own eyes."

4. Why did you hope for that? Did you really think you would see Him?

Simeon: "The Holy Spirit revealed to me that I would not die before I saw the Consolation of Israel—the Messiah."

Anna: "For both of us, our hope was anchored in God's promises and in the Scriptures. We had both studied the prophecies and knew it was time for the Messiah to appear."

5. Was your hope rewarded?

Both: (*Nod and be enthusiastic!*) "Yes, we saw the Messiah with our own eyes."

Simeon: "I felt impressed by the Holy Spirit to go to the temple one day, and I saw these poor parents bringing their first-born son to the temple for dedication. They were so proud of Him. Suddenly I knew that this Baby was the Messiah."

6. What did Jesus look like?

Anna: "He was a tiny baby, only about 40 days old. He looked like any other baby. Jesus looked sweet, but there was no halo or holy light around His head."

7. Was this baby what you hoped for?

Simeon: "Yes, only better. I had not expected a baby, and I had not expected that He would be poor. But knowing that this was the One who would save us from sin was all that really mattered. And sending a baby was a wonderful idea. Everyone loves a baby."

8. Were there crowds around the baby?

Anna: "No. Nobody else knew who it was. The priest had held up the child for blessing, but he didn't recognize this child as special."

9. Simeon, what did you do when you saw the baby?

Simeon: "I took the baby in my arms and blessed Him. I held Him a long time. I didn't want to give Him back."

10. What was the blessing?

Simeon: "I'll read it to you. It's found in Luke 2:29-35." (*Reads the text.*)

11. Anna, where were you when Simeon was blessing the baby?

Anna: "I was in the temple. When I saw Simeon with the baby I, too, knew that it was the Messiah."

12. How did you feel when you realized you had received what you had hoped for all your life?

Anna: "I felt confidence in God; I knew God had answered my prayers; I wanted to shout and sing."

13. What can you tell us about hope?

Simeon: "Jesus still is the Hope for all of us. His grace gives us hope."

Anna: "He keeps His promises. We can still trust in God. Sometimes we have to wait until our hope is rewarded. But Jesus anchors our life and gives us hope when we choose Him."

Simeon: "We can believe the Bible. God keeps His word. Jesus gives us hope."

Give the children a chance to ask questions of their own. Be sure to have them thank your visitors for coming.

Debriefing

Say: **Do you think Simeon and Anna were disappointed when they saw that the Messiah was a tiny baby?** (No, everyone loves a baby.) **If you had been in the temple that day and had seen Simeon and Anna excited over what looked like an ordinary baby, what would you have thought?** (I might have been curious; I might have wanted to see what was going on; etc.) **What if you had been the priest who had just dedicated Baby Jesus, thinking He was an ordinary baby?** (Accept responses.) **What would you have thought of Simeon and what he said?** (I might have been curious; it might have made me want to go study the Scriptures.)

Today we are waiting for Jesus to

come again. Some of our grandparents and great-grandparents hoped to see Him. They didn't, but we should not give up hope. He *will* come again because He promised He would. And Jesus keeps His promises. Will you remember our message? Let's say it together.



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Memory Verse

Before class, write each word of the memory verse (2 Thessalonians 2:16) on a different slip of paper. For large classes, make more than one set. Put the papers in a bowl. Have the children sit in a circle. Pass the bowl around the circle. After each child has a word, have them rearrange themselves so the memory verse is in order. Then have them put their slips of paper down and say their word when it is their turn. Repeat the process until the children know the memory verse.

Bible Study

Put the name of each child in the class on a slip of paper and place the papers in a bowl. Say: **We will read some "hope verses" from our lesson story Bible verses. I will ask a question and the person whose name I draw will read the Bible verse answer—or you can choose someone to read.**

1. **What was Simeon hoping for?** Luke 2:25 (the Consolation of Israel) Explain the word *consolation*.
2. **What did the Holy Spirit tell him?** Luke 2:26 (He wouldn't die until he had seen the Lord.)
3. **Did Simeon get what he hoped for?** Luke 2:29-32 (yes)
4. **Who else had been hoping to see the promised Saviour and saw Simeon holding Baby Jesus?** Luke 2:36-38 (Prophetess Anna)

You Need:

- a bowl or basket
- paper
- markers/pen
- Bible

You Need:

- Bibles
- names of children on slips of paper
- a bowl

5. With whom did Anna share the good news that the long-hoped-for Messiah had arrived? Luke 2:38 (with all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem)

Debriefing

Ask: **How would you feel if you just happened to be in the Temple when Simeon and Anna found Baby Jesus?** (curious, happy for them that they found Jesus at last) **Do you think that you would have been one of the people who “were looking forward to**

the redemption of Jerusalem”? (don’t know; yes; maybe)

Jesus is coming again. The Bible calls His coming the “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13). **Are you really looking forward to seeing Him? Why?** (He has done so much for me; I love Him, and want to be with Him, etc.) **In a world that seems hopeless, who gives us hope of a better future? Let’s say our message.**



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- a microphone (real or pretend)
- chalkboard/dry eraser board
- chalk/marker
- cassette or CD player
- Christian Christmas music (CDs or tapes) or someone playing the piano
- Bible

Musical Mikes

Sit or stand in a circle. Play some Christian Christmas music. Have a microphone, real or pretend, to pass around the circle like a musical mike. When the music stops, the person holding the mike has to tell their resolutions for next year. Or tell what they hope to do or become next year. For instance: I hope to be on time for Sabbath School next year.

Keep a record of the resolutions on a chalkboard. Ask for a show of hands from the others who would also agree with the resolution being added to the board. Affirm all suggestions.

Debriefing

It seems that we are all hopeful at the beginning of a new year. But what if problems block our hopes from coming true? Should we give up all hope?

(Accept their responses, but remind them that even the best intentions go astray.)

Let’s read Hebrews 6:19 together.

(Allow time) **And if you look at verse 20, you will find that this hope-anchor connects with Jesus, the solid, trustworthy, unmovable One. So, should you give up all hope when things go wrong?** (No.) **Why?** (If my hope-anchor is connected to Jesus, He will give me patience and courage to hang on until He makes my hopes come true.) **How does that make you feel?** (better, encouraged, etc.)

When a boat anchors, where does the anchor go? (down) **When you anchor your hope in Jesus, in what direction does your anchor go?** (up) **When you know that your life is anchored in Jesus, only then do you truly have hope. Why? Because . . .**



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Sharing the Lesson

A. Anchored in Jesus

You Need:

- photocopies of hot air balloon drawing (see page 142) on heavy paper
- 4" (10 cm) lengths of string or yarn
- anchor cutouts (see page 143)
- Jesus stickers

Glue one end of a 4" length of string or yarn to the balloon's basket. To the other end, attach the anchor cutout. Attach a Jesus sticker to the bottom

of the anchor. As the children complete their balloon, they can practice saying the memory verse.

Debriefing

Do you know a person who could use some encouragement this week? (Allow time.) **Do you yourself ever feel discouraged?** (Yes, sometimes, no.) **The best thing for a person who feels discouraged is hope. Take your hot air balloon home and share it with someone who needs hope.**

Encourage someone to come up front and show his/her hot air balloon with the anchor/Jesus sticker, and say the memory verse.

Jesus gives hope for the New Year. People need to connect with Him to enjoy this hope. But lots of people will not know about the hope unless we tell them our message. And what is it today?



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

B. Anchors Away

Give each child a helium-filled balloon with a string attached and a Bible correspondence school card or invitation to church. Have the children punch a hole in one corner of the card and attach it to the string.

Say: **This card has a message of hope. Many people do not have the hope of Jesus. They may never know it unless we share it with them. Let's go outside and release our balloons.**

Outdoors, gather the children around, pray that the cards will bring hope to someone, and release the balloons on the count of three. Then return to the classroom.

Debriefing

Do you ever feel discouraged? (Yes, no, sometimes.) **The best thing for discouragement is hope. Today we have learned that Jesus can give us true hope. When we know Him, we can enjoy this hope. Many people may never have the hope of Jesus unless we share it with them. When you see someone who looks sad this week, share today's memory verse with them.** Say the memory verse together, then say: **And our message for today assures us that:**



JESUS GIVES US HOPE.

Closing

Read aloud Jeremiah 29:11. In prayer, thank Jesus for giving us hope for the future.

You Need:

- balloons
- helium
- Bible correspondence cards or invitation to church on index cards
- string or yarn
- hole punch

You Need:

- Bible

As You Have Promised, Lord

References

Luke 2:21-38;
The Desire of Ages,
pp. 50-58

Memory Verse

“Jesus Christ . . .
by his grace
gave us eternal
encouragement
and good hope”
(2 Thessalonians
2:16, NIV).

The Message

Jesus gives us
hope.

Johnnie and Katie were so excited. Grandma was coming today! They watched by the window. Then the phone rang. It was Grandma. A big storm had come up. She wouldn't be able to come today. Tomorrow the storm would be over; then she would come.

Johnnie and Katie were disappointed. But they knew that Grandma would keep her promise.

Many years ago, Simeon and Anna waited and waited for the Messiah to come. They had hope! They believed He would come. But would they recognize Him?

Simeon's heart was restless. He tried to walk a little faster as he climbed the temple mount. People courteously moved out of the way for this old man with a mission.

The Holy Spirit was leading Simeon to the temple. As he walked, Simeon remembered a day long before. The Spirit had made an important promise. “You will not die before you have seen the Messiah!” Simeon thought about this promise constantly. He would see the Messiah!

Simeon's breath grew short as he climbed, yet he smiled to himself. He didn't have much energy anymore. But that was all right; he had something better! He had hope—the hope of seeing the Messiah!

Simeon looked around as he entered the temple. Everything seemed the same as usual. The priests solemnly performed their duties. No excited crowds awaited the fantastic news. *The Messiah is here!*



Simeon passed a poor couple. The young mother cradled their child in her arms. They had brought the child to the temple for a special reason. He was to be consecrated to the Lord as the law required. Simeon smiled. He loved watching happy parents with their babies. It was a pleasant part of serving in the temple.

Suddenly Simeon stopped. There was something about this couple. He stopped to gaze closely on this particular baby. And all of a sudden he knew. He knew for certain!

With his face shining in anticipation, Simeon approached the couple. Beaming and nodding to the parents, he took the baby in his arms. Then he raised his eyes to heaven. The baby's mother and father watched in amazement. They noted the joyful glow on Simeon's face. They saw tears of thanksgiving trickling down his cheeks. They listened in amazement as he prayed.

“Now, Lord, as You promised, You may let Your servant die in peace. Because with my own eyes I have seen Your salvation!” Mary and Joseph smiled. This old prophet knew! He knew and understood their secret about the Messiah.

Just then an old woman, the prophetess Anna, stepped forward. This prophetess had been in the temple every day for years. She, too, had hoped to see God's promised Gift of grace. Anna joined Simeon in praising God for Baby Jesus.

Simeon and Anna were among the very first people to recognize that Jesus was the Messiah, the One all Israel hoped for. They were among the very first people to spread the news that He had come. Their Hope was *here!*

And that hope is ours today. JESUS GIVES US HOPE too.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- With your family, go near a place to find some boats. Or look at pictures of boats. What keeps the boats from drifting away? Read your Bible lesson together to learn about another kind of anchor.
- Read Hebrews 6:19. Where did Simeon and Anna find the Messiah?
- Read 2 Thessalonians 2:16 together. Make a cutout of an anchor. Write your memory verse on it. Put it where you will see it every day.
- Sing "In His Time" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 42). Thank Jesus for being your anchor.

Sunday

- For worship, read together Luke 2:21-24. Ask your parents to tell you about your baby dedication.
- This week, finish your "Jesus' Baby Book." Draw a picture of Mary and Joseph bringing Baby Jesus and two doves to the temple. Draw another picture of a priest holding Jesus and presenting Him to God. Write a title on each page.
- Teach the memory verse to your family.

Monday

- Read Luke 2:25-35 during family worship. Why do you think Simeon was so interested in Baby Jesus? (Check your answers.)
 - ___ He loved babies.
 - ___ All Israel was hoping for the Messiah to come.
 - ___ The Messiah would save the people from their sins.
 - ___ He wanted to see the Messiah before he died.
- Ask an older person to tell you about their hope in Jesus. Thank God for the gift of His Son.

Tuesday

- With your family, read Luke 2:36-38. Simeon and Anna knew that Jesus is a gift of grace. This means that: (Mark the true answers.)

___ Jesus gives us joy. ___ Jesus gives us forgiveness.
___ Jesus gives us hope.

- Find out more about anchors. Why do some boats need bigger anchors? Ask an adult to tell about a time Jesus was their anchor.
- Read or say your memory verse together.
- Sing "Redeemed" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 68).

Wednesday

- Tell your family one thing that you hope for next week, next year, forever. Ask them to share their hopes.
- How did Anna share her hope? Read Luke 2:38 together. How can you spread hope?
- Sing "We Are His Hands" (*Sing for Joy*, No. 129).

Thursday

- Talk about storms with your family. How would you feel if you were out in a small boat and a storm came up? Read Hebrews 6:19 together. What is our hope in Jesus like?
- Make a boat out of clay, wood, or paper. Make an anchor and attach it with a string. Float your boat in a basin of water. Blow to create a storm. How is this like problems in our lives? Read Hebrews 6:20, first sentence, together. Who is your anchor?

Friday

- Act out this week's Bible lesson story.
- Make the last page of your "Jesus' Baby Book." Draw a picture of Jesus coming in the clouds. Write on the page: "He will come again—the Blessed Hope!"
- Sing songs of hope together. Tell your hopes and resolutions for the New Year.
- Read Jeremiah 29:11 and Titus 2:13 together. What future does Jesus plan for you? For your family? Pray that God will guide you.