

A CHILD IN THE MIDDLE EAST




MAP: Together, find the Holy Land and then Bethlehem on the giant map

INTRODUCE

There is a church in Bethlehem called “House of Bread”. That’s what “Bethlehem” means in Hebrew! (In Arabic it means “House of Meat”)


SHOW: PHOTOS FROM THE HOUSE OF BREAD CHURCH

 Show the photos from the folder “House of Bread photos” on our Advent Resources webpage. What are the similarities/differences between your church and theirs?

INTRODUCE SAT-7 KIDS

SAT-7 has friends called Pastor Issa Al-Zoughbi and his wife, Diana. He is the pastor of House of Bread church in Bethlehem. They have a 2-year-old granddaughter who loves watching the SAT-7 KIDS channel! They speak in a Middle Eastern language called “Arabic”.

They said “Our granddaughter, Joanna, aged 2, loves SAT-7 KIDS shows with children’s songs and dancing. She likes teaching programmes as well.” Do you like singing Christian songs and dancing to them?


 **Watch: Show the video “SAT-7 KIDS Montage”** (find it in the Advent Resources webpage) and ask the children to look out for any children’s shows they recognise. This video shows samples of some of the programmes SAT-7 KIDS broadcasts to share God’s love with children around the Middle East and North Africa.

DISCUSS: Does SAT-7 KIDS look like a channel you would like to watch? Do you think the children in the MENA like watching SAT-7 KIDS?

BIBLE STORY: Continue the Christmas story as we enter Bethlehem from Luke 2:1-20 (The Birth of Jesus, and the Shepherd’s Visit)


MEMORY VERSE

“...a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.” Luke 2:11, NIV

 Check out “How to remember a memory verse” on the Advent Resources webpage

PRAY AND REFLECT


- Pray for children across the Middle East and North Africa, and invite each child to colour in a card bauble and write their name on the other side, and hang on the prayer bauble line
- See the *Joy to the World* prayer guide for prayer point ideas

 Check out “Creative ways to pray with children” on the Advent Resources webpage




MAP: Stick the HOLY LAND sticker on the map, to show the children which country they learnt about today

CRAFT: POSTCARDS

 Design and help to write a postcard to send to children from the House of Bread church. Send the postcards back to the SAT-7 UK office, and we can send them on for you! (see "Postcard Template" printable on the Advent Resources webpage)

EXTRA CHALLENGE

 Watch the "Jesus Loves You" video from the Advent Resources webpage, and create a similar video with the children

KEY STAGE 1 (5-7 YEARS) SESSION TWO

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DISCUSS: Does SAT-7 KIDS look like a channel you would like to watch? Do you think the children in the MENA like watching SAT-7 KIDS? Do you think it’s a good way to tell children in the MENA about Jesus?

BIBLE STORY: Continue the Christmas story as we enter Bethlehem from Luke 2:1-20 (The Birth of Jesus, and the Shepherd’s Visit)

MEMORY VERSE


“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Luke 2:10-11, NIV

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DISCUSS: What do you think of SAT-7 KIDS as a channel, after watching that sample video? Do you think it’s a good way to reach children with the Gospel?

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WHAT'S UP WITH BETHLEHEM?



READ: Micah 5:2

Encourage young people to delve into the context around a passage they are studying. So let's ask these questions about Micah. Ask the young people and see whether they know the answers before you offer them.

1. Who wrote Micah?
2. When was Micah written?
3. To whom was Micah written?
4. In what style was Micah written?
5. Why was Micah written?

JESUS' GREAT, GREAT, GREAT ETC. GRANDMOTHER'S RESTING PLACE

READ: Genesis 48:7

- Way back in Genesis, Bethlehem is already marked as special when Jesus' direct ancestor, Rachel, is buried there
- She is a key figure in Jesus' birth as his ancestor, being buried in the place where he is born

CHOSEN HOME FOR A FOREIGNER

READ: Ruth 1:1-18 (focus on vv. 17-18)

- Ruth was a foreigner, a Moabite
- She didn't belong with the Jews, and yet she chose to live in Bethlehem and make it her home
- She chose to live and die there
- She chose to follow the one true God
- She was also a direct ancestor of Jesus

BIRTHPLACE OF A KING

READ: 1 Samuel 16:4-13

- Not only was the great King David born in Bethlehem, but what other significant thing happened to him there?
- He was anointed as King in Bethlehem with the blessing of God
- He is also used as a flawed foreshadowing of the true King Jesus to come, but that's a whole other Bible study!
- And, of course, he is a direct ancestor of Jesus Christ

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

READ: Luke 2:1-7

- Here is the event that well and truly put Bethlehem on the map, to this day in 2019
- The birth of God in the flesh: Jesus Christ
- Such a humble little town with humble people:
 - The resting place of Rachel – a second wife of a Jew, and barren for a time before divine intervention
 - The chosen home of Ruth – a pagan foreigner
 - The birthplace of David – a shepherd boy, and runt of the litter
 - The birthplace of Jesus – a baby conceived out of wedlock and laid in a manger

YOU MAY BE SMALL, BETHLEHEM, BUT...

READ: Micah 5:2

- Do you see the pattern?
- God uses the small things for His great purpose of salvation

READ: Philippians 2:5-11

JOY IN SURPRISING PLACES

READ: Micah 5:2

- We sing “Joy to the world” at Christmas because of an event that happened in Bethlehem
- People back then didn’t expect the purest joy to be born in such an insignificant place as Bethlehem
- Back in Micah’s lifetime, joy didn’t seem to be something the Jews were experiencing much!
- Yet Micah surprises them, and us, by speaking of joy in the midst of persecution from the Assyrians
- He speaks of a promise and protection from God that not even the Assyrians can destroy: a relationship with God, and eternal salvation
- The Middle East and North Africa is under persecution today, just as it was in Micah’s time
- Yet, there is joy erupting in surprising places in the region...

EXPLORE: Read some of the stories of joy from the *Joy to the World Prayer Guide* – such as Mona from Libya, Adnan from Yemen, or Christians in Iraq

BETHLEHEM TODAY

- SAT-7 have friends in Bethlehem, and one family is Pastor Issa Al-Zoughbi and his wife, Diana
- He pastors a church called “House of Bread”, serving the community of Bethlehem
- Their 2-year-old granddaughter loves watching our SAT-7 KIDS channel
- They said, “Our granddaughter, Joanna, aged 2, loves SAT-7 KIDS shows with children’s songs and dancing. She likes teaching programmes as well.”



LOOK: Take a look at pictures of the church family of House of Bread on our Advent Resources webpage

PRAY AND REFLECT

Pray for Christians in Bethlehem, and invite each young person to colour in a card bauble and write a prayer on the other side, before hanging it on the Prayer Bauble Line

WHAT NEXT?

Here are some ideas:

- Write a letter of encouragement to Pastor Issa Al-Zoughbi and House of Bread church in Bethlehem, and send to SAT-7 UK to be passed on
- Watch “SAT-7 KIDS Overview” (2 mins) (See Advent Resources webpage). Do you think satellite TV is a powerful way of reaching children in the MENA with the Gospel?