

# Adventures with GOD!

## A BIRTHDAY PARTY (A.1.WINTER.8)

Biblical Reference	2 Corinthians 9:15, John 1:1-14
Key Verse	2 Corinthians 9:15
Key Concept	I can give Jesus a gift.
Educational Objectives	At the end of the class today, the children will be able to: 1. Name the best gift we can receive 2. Express what gift they want to give Jesus 3. Say the Bible verse

### Life Application

Today we will celebrate Jesus' birthday. The children will be able to experience the reality of the good news of his birth. Through games and typical food that was eaten during the time of Jesus, they will experience what it was like to celebrate birthdays. The focus of the class is that God has given us the best gift ever. What gift can we give Jesus? Each child can think about what they are willing and able to give.

### Possible Activities and Class Plan

Activity	Materials	Time
Opening Prayer	Candle	1 minute
Activity	boxes, wrapping paper, ribbon, tape	10 minutes
Bible Story	Illustrations, Bible, another face	10 minutes
Party	balloons, gifts, cake, games, etc.	30 minutes
Gift	Crayons, aluminum foil	10 minutes
Closing Prayer	Candle	1 minute

# Adventures with GOD!

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Opening Prayer

Gather children around a candle and explain that we are entering into a special time with God. Encourage the children to hold their hands out in front of them palms up as a sign they are ready to receive what God has for them today. Light the candle

**Prayer:** God we light this candle remembering: you made light, you made us, and you are with us now. Amen

(For safety sake, you may wish to extinguish the candle after the prayer)

**Activity:** Decorate the room as you would for a party (balloons, streamers, etc.) When the children arrive they will see the decorations and be surprised. Tell them that today you are celebrating a birthday. Each one of them is going to make a present to bring to the party. In this lesson you will find illustrations of things that they can make. Then they should put them in a box and wrap them. Help them to wrap the presents.

**Bible Story:** (John 1:1-4) Explain that Jesus is God and Jesus has always been and Jesus made everything in the world including you and me. Jesus also loves us and gives us the gift of life. Today we will celebrate Jesus who is the best gift ever given.

**Party:** Celebrate Jesus' birthday party in a way that is easy to teach people that Jesus as a real person, like them. When Jesus was a boy, they surely celebrated his birthday, just like we have birthday celebrations. In the following pages you will find various ideas for games that were some played by children in the time and part of the world where Jesus lived. In the Jewish parties there was always music, so this would be a good time to sing. You can bring instruments or make instruments. For example, put some beans in a paper plate and tape another paper plate over it. Use tambourine if you have them available.

It would be great to have a cake with candles and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus. Each child can explain what he or she would give to Jesus.

You can also recite the Bible verses you've learned this trimester as a gift to Jesus. Really make it a celebration that the children remember.

**Gift:** The instructions are found in the following pages. Each child can make one

### Closing Prayer

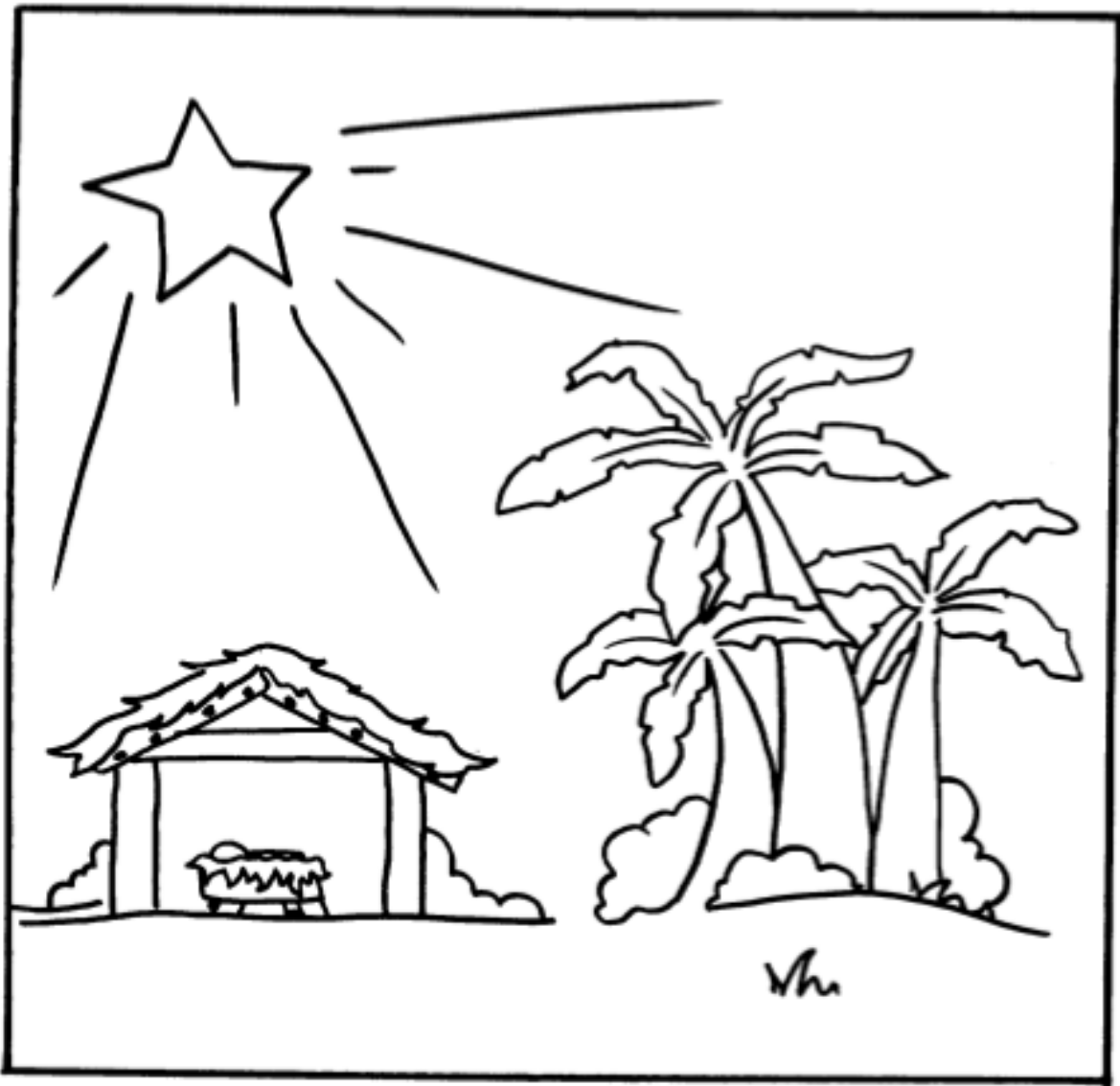
Gather children around the candle again. Light the candle

**Prayer:** Thank you God for loving us, Thank you God for sending your son Jesus into the world.

# Adventures with GOD!

## GIFT

Color the illustration and glue over the star a star that's been cut out of aluminum foil so that the light reflects off of it.



# Adventures with GOD!

## INFORMATION SHEET

### The parties during the times of Jesus

People who lived during the time that Jesus lived, loved celebrations. There were parties for almost every important event: when a visitor came, when a child stopped nursing, on a person's birthday, etc. They loved to have a reason to celebrate and do things differently than the everyday routine.

Typical foods - bread, olives, cheese, fruit, vegetables

The bread was never cut with a knife but people tore off pieces using their hands.

They ate beans and lentils very frequently.

They drank milk and made yogurt. They had butter and cheeses.

Meat and fish were rarely eaten and were considered more of a luxury. They only ate meat on celebration days. In the Old Testament they didn't eat eggs, but they did in the time that Jesus lived.

Fruits - olives, grapes, melons, nuts

They used honey to sweeten their food. They also made juice out of grapes and jelly for their bread.

The salt was taken from the Dead Sea. They used it to give flavor to their foods and preserve their meat.

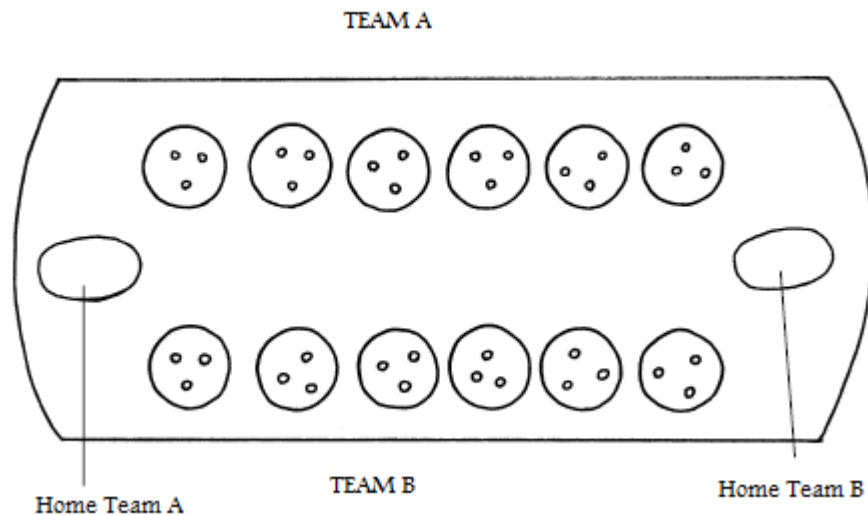
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## GAMES

In Biblical times, there wasn't a lot of time to play. The children were very busy, so the games they played were more than anything to help develop the body and the mind. Generally the games were activities that they did outside of their homes. The games they played outside included running, jumping, throwing rocks, games with balls. One of the table games the children played was called Kalah or Mancala (instructions below).

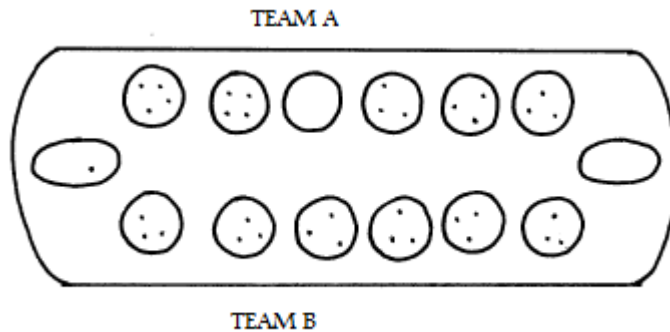
## KALAH/MANCALA

1. The Mancala 'board' is made up of two rows of six holes, or pits, each. If you don't have a Mancala board handy, an empty egg carton is perfect. Three pieces -- marbles or stones -- are placed in each of the 12 holes. The color of the pieces is irrelevant. Each player has a 'home' to the right side of the Mancala board. Cereal bowls work well for this purpose.



# Adventures with GOD!

2. The game begins with one player picking up all of the pieces in any one of the holes on his side. Moving counter-clockwise, the player deposits one of the stones in each hole until the stones run out. If you run into your own home, deposit one piece in it. If you run into your opponent's home, skip it. If the last piece you drop is in your own home, you get a free turn.



3. If the last piece you drop is in an empty hole on your side, you capture that piece and any pieces in the hole directly opposite.
4. Always place all captured pieces in your home.
5. The game ends when all six spaces on one side of the Mancala board are empty.
6. The player who still has pieces on his side of the board when the game ends captures all of those pieces.
7. Count all the pieces in each home. The winner is the player with the most pieces.