



THE TIME IS RIGHT

God's Incredible Plan • U9#4 1st-3rd Grade • April 12, 2026

Concept

God's plan and timing are perfect.

Goal

Students will learn that God has perfect timing. He sent his Son Jesus at the perfect time too!

Passage

Isaiah 46:9-11

Key Verse: "When the time was right, God sent His Son..." Galatians 4:4

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Introduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>"The Near East in the First Millenium B.C." large laminated map</i>• <i>Magnets or poster putty</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed 11" x 17" black & white maps, 3/CT class• <i>"Spread of the Early Church" large laminated map</i>• Magnets or poster putty• People and peace symbols, 1 of each page/CT class• Markers• Scissors <p>Optional Activity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Ball</i>	<p>Activity Stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Printed clock, 1/child• Cardstock clock hands with printed key verse, 1 pair/child• Markers• Brass fastener, 1/child• Scissors• 3 hole punches

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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"The books of Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther tell us what happened in the last 100 years of Old Testament history. Ezra and Nehemiah tell of the return of some of the Jewish captives to their own land. They tell how the people rebuilt the Temple and then the wall of Jerusalem. The book of Esther tells events that happened to the Jews who remained in Persia during this period of time...

"Then, from Nehemiah and Malachi to the beginning of the New Testament times, 400 years passed. During this time, no biblical prophet spoke or wrote. These years are often called "the years of silence." But they were far from silent! A lot of changes were going on...

"Palestine was conquered first by one and then another and then another world power. Alexander the Great from Greece conquered Palestine and the lands around it. He introduced the Greek language and customs to Palestine. . .Some of the conquerors of Palestine allowed the Jews to worship as they wished, but one of the rulers, Antiochus, tried to force the Jews to adopt Greek customs and worship... Because of the terrible things Antiochus was doing, the Jews revolted and fought victoriously for their independence. The Maccabee family who led the revolt became the new rulers.

"The Jews' independence did not last long. Palestine was soon conquered by the expanding Roman empire. The conquering Romans killed the Jewish priests as they were ministering at the Temple. This and other acts made the Jews hate their Roman conquerors. They hoped their promised Messiah would come soon and free them from Roman rule.

"At last the stage was set for the coming of the Messiah. God chose a time when the wonderful message of the coming of the Saviour could be spread quickly throughout the entire world. When the Greeks were in power, they had established Greek as a common language for the lands they conquered. When the Romans were in power, they built a great network of roads. The good news about Jesus could be sent throughout the world.

"And now—after 400 years without any new messages from God's prophets—the time had come! The stage was set. The Son of God was about to leave His home in heaven and be born as a baby in Bethlehem. He was about to come to earth to be our Saviour--just as God had promised over and over again in Old Testament times." [1]

[1] Frances Blankenbaker, What the Bible is All About for Young Explorers, Gospel Light, 1986, pp. 212-215.

Set Up

Use the heavy magnets to hang the 2 large maps on the white board. Please do NOT use tape on the white boards or push pins with the maps; poster putty is okay.

Incorporation Lg. Group

ACTIVITY STATIONS

- **Craft – “Time is Right” Clock**
 - **Instructions:** Give each child a printed clock, hands, brass fastener, and markers or crayons. Color clock face if desired. Punch a hole in the square end of the hands. Assemble hands on face with brass fastener through hands and black dot of clock face.
- **Game - Class Favorite**
 - **Instruction:** Pick a favorite game that the kids enjoy playing that will get them moving around before the lesson!
- **Mission Prayer**
 - **Instructions:** Talk about and pray for Oasis Giving campaign.

Introduction Lg. Group

All year we have been talking about God’s Incredible Plan. After He created this world and everything in it God didn’t go on vacation. He has been involved since the beginning of time! He loves all the people He created and He has a very big plan for us. We’ve been talking about God’s “chosen people,” the Jews, for a long time now. Remember God promised that through the Jewish people the entire world would be blessed with something very special. That “something” was really a “someone”—Jesus. Jesus is the most important part of God’s Incredible Plan. But He hadn’t come yet. Our lesson is about the period of time when the Jews waited and waited for the Messiah, Jesus, to come. This period of time is called “the years of silence” because there was no prophet like Elijah or Daniel to give the Jewish people any messages from God. Even though the people didn’t hear from God, a lot of things were happening to prepare the way for Jesus, the Messiah, to come.

Last week we talked about Nehemiah who took some Jews back with him to Jerusalem from Persia. (Show on map.) They rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem and Nehemiah became the governor. But Persia was still in control of Jerusalem and Judah. Over the years everyone wanted the little piece of this land because it connects Europe, Asia, and Africa; it is in a good spot. (Show on map.) Alexander the Great beat the Persians and gained control of much of the world. Because Alexander spoke the Greek language, he made that the language of all the land so most of the people learned to speak Greek. After almost 300 years, the Romans came across the Mediterranean Sea and took over the land of Israel. The Roman ruler treated the Jews so badly that they wondered, “When will God send the person who is going to save us, the Messiah that He promised us?” You know what? That is just what God was preparing to do.

Lesson Continued

God knew the perfect time. That is what our key verse says: "When the time was right, God sent His Son. . ." (Galatians 4:4). But why was the time right? Let me give you an example.

Is it ripe yet?

Who likes to eat bananas when they are super green in color? Do you think that banana is ready to eat when it is green? Okay, who likes to eat bananas that are brown and squishy? Do you think bananas like that are at the right stage for eating either? So how can you tell when a banana is ripe and good to eat? (Take various answers- yellow, etc.) I think we know how to pick a good banana! And I bet that this perfect banana we are describing would not have been ready just a day or two ago. If we looked at it tomorrow or the next day we'd say it's too ripe. I think if you and I can tell just the right time to eat a banana, then the God who made the world and everything in it would know the perfect time to send Jesus to the earth. Let me tell you about the time God chose.

Transition

The Drama Team is going to present a skit about 2 angels discussing when Jesus would come to earth.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Drama

Skit "When's He Comin'?" performed by Drama Team

Rationale: To remember the content of the lesson through an experience/dramatic play/activity

Transition

The angels in the skit told us what happened to make the time right. We are going to get into three groups and talk about why the time was exactly right. Then each group can pick someone to tell the class about what they've learned.

Lesson Lg. Group

Why was the time right?

Instructions: Divide into three groups. Each group will receive a map. The language group will place people symbols on their map. The peace group will place the peace symbols on their map. The roads group will use markers to draw roads on their map. Each group will learn one of the following reasons why the time was right for Christ to arrive on the earth. Each group will pick one person to show their map to the rest of the class and explain what his/her group learned.

Language. At one time this whole area spoke several different languages. But Alexander the Great took the Greek language which was then spoken throughout the huge Roman Empire. This meant that when Jesus came to earth to tell people about God, ALL the people could understand what he said.

But more important, Jesus' disciples and Paul were able to spread the news about Jesus. They were able to travel great distances throughout the known world and be understood because everyone spoke Greek. Paul also wrote letters to all the churches in the Greek language. Let's look at some of the cities on the map. There is Rome, Jerusalem, Ephesus, Corinth, Philippi, Thessalonica, Colosse, etc. Glue the drawings of people on the cities scattered over the map.

Peace. During the time of Christ and for some time after, the world was basically at peace because most of the world was under the control of the Roman Empire. Because there was no war the disciples and Paul could easily travel from city to city and tell people about Christ in this one huge empire. This time was known as the Roman Peace. Look at the "Spread of the Early Church" map on the white board. We can follow Paul's journeys through the Roman Empire. Glue the peace symbols on the black and white map.

Roads. During the time of the great Roman Empire many roads were built. These roads made it easy for people to travel to hear about Jesus. The disciples, Paul and others could travel quite far to tell the good news about Jesus dying on the cross for our sins. During this time many churches were started. Look at the "Spread of the Early Church" map on the white board. Look at the cities where Paul and the disciples traveled. Starting in Jerusalem, draw on the black and white map roads connecting the cities for all of Paul's and the disciples' journeys.

Let's talk about what it's like to know and wait for the right timing. Has your mom or dad ever told you that the time is just not right for something? Is it hard for you to wait for the timing to be right? Can you think of some things that you know for sure when the time is right? How about when you're baking cookies? What about when you're very tired?

What are some things that you can't know for sure? Do you know when we will have our first snow in the winter? Do you know how many apples will grow on an apple tree? There are many things we don't know for sure, but God does. When the time is right, He will let us know or make it happen.

Good News

So at exactly the right time God sent Christ to the earth! People spoke the same language, there was peace between people, and there were roads throughout the Roman Empire. "When the time was right, God sent His Son..." (Galatians 4:4). All these things worked together so that the good news of Jesus spread quickly through the world. What a wise and powerful God we have!

Lesson Continued

Transition

Learning Activity# 2 Sm. Groups

Optional Activities

Why am I so glad that this news about Jesus spread around the world? Because I got to hear the good news! What is the good news? (Get kids' response.) The good news is that God sent Jesus to the earth for a very special purpose. That purpose was to make it possible for us to be His friends. We can't be His friends because we sin. But Jesus made it possible for us to be His friends when He was punished for all the sins of all people at one time when He died on the cross. When we tell God that we want Christ's death to be the punishment for our sins we become His friends and know we will go to heaven to be with Him when we die.

Let's get into small group to talk about what we have learned and to pray.

Read Isaiah 46:9-11

- What are some promises of God we learned this year? Can you think of some promises He has already kept? How about promises that are yet to happen?
- If you believe God could make certain things happen so the world was ready for Jesus to come, how does that help you believe God can make certain things happen in your life?

Let's pray

Game: SPUD

Instructions: The object of this game is to survive several rounds without getting hit by the ball. (It is much like the game pig or horse in basketball.) Everyone gets in a circle and is given a number.

Round One

An adult begins by standing in the middle of the circle and throws the ball up in the air. When ball is in the air, the center person (the adult for this first round) calls a number out loud. Everyone is permitted to run/scatter as soon as the center person releases the ball (so they won't get tagged by the ball). The child with that number needs to catch or get the ball as quickly as possible, stop, and yell "SPUD." When he/she yells SPUD, everyone must stop in their tracks. At this point, the center person is permitted to take 3 giant steps towards anyone he/she wants to hit with the ball. Whoever gets hit gets the first letter in SPUD. This completes the first round.

Round Two

The person hit by the ball now becomes the center person. Repeat round one instructions. The last person remaining wins the game.