

# PARENT AND TEACHER GUIDE

## *A Helping Hand*

Themes Found in This Story:

- Disabled in Africa
- Reliance on God and others

### **The Story:**

*A Helping Hand:* Madala meets Santo, a turtle who can only get around with the help of others.

The parent/teacher may read the story aloud, or print the story for the children to read or follow along.

### **Characters in this Story**

Madala (mah-DAHh-lah)

He is a chameleon from the country of Zambia. His name is the respectful way to say “old man” in the Chinyanga language.

Omulonga (oh-moo-LOHN-gah)

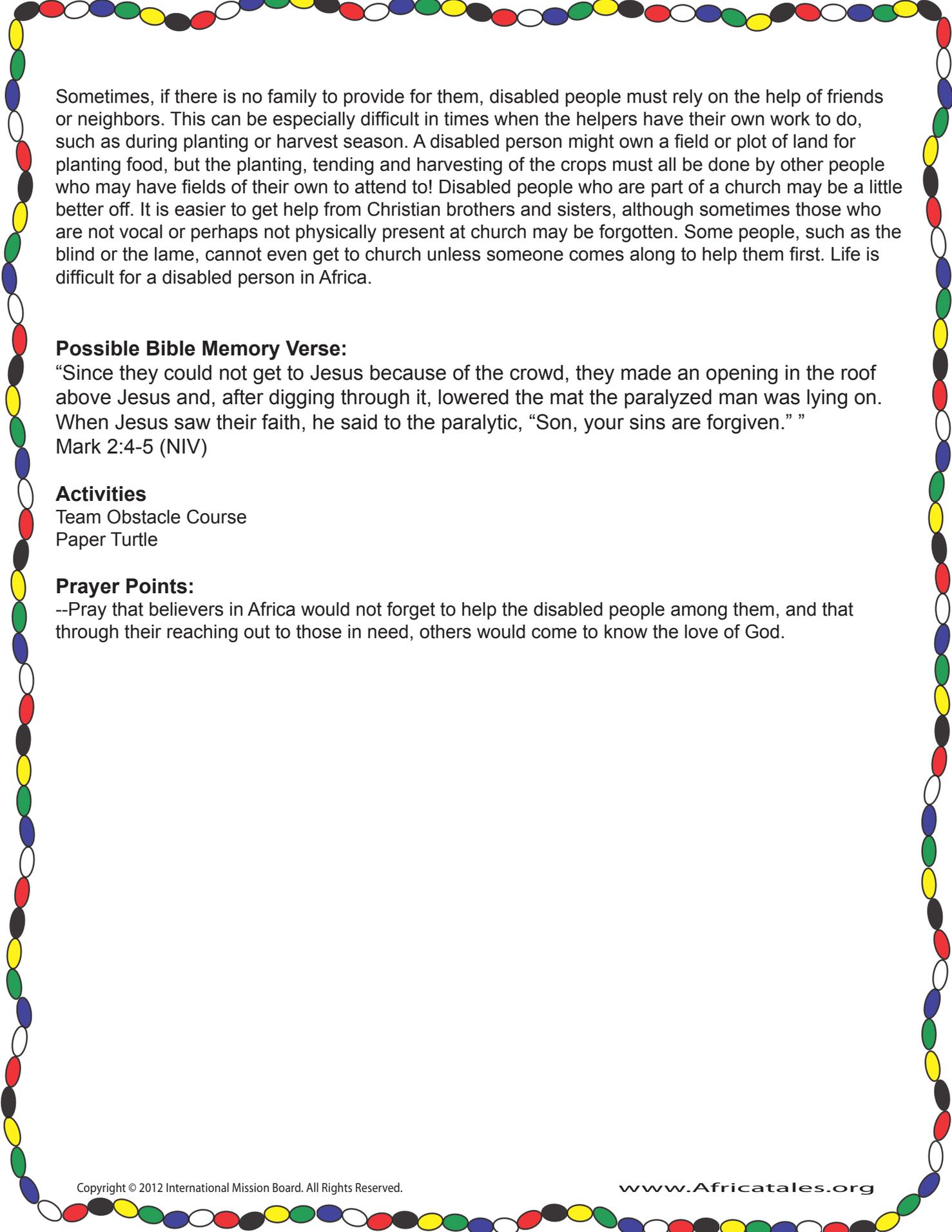
She is a Black-Footed Penguin from Namibia, and is an immigrant new to the area.

Santo (SAHN-too)

He is a Loggerhead turtle from Mozambique. His name is the Portuguese word for “blessed”. Because he has flippers instead of feet, he must rely on his friends to get around on land. He represents the disabled of Africa.

### **Background Information**

Santo is a loggerhead turtle, a type of sea turtle, and his flippers aren't much use in getting himself around on land. His character represents the many people of Africa who are physically disabled. In many places in Africa, particularly in rural or lower-class areas, there is no structured support system for the disabled. There is no government-sponsored program or Medicare. The disabled must rely entirely on the kindness of family members. They often have no means of supporting themselves because they cannot work, so food, housing and even medicine must be provided by others. Many disabled people also have trouble getting around. Things like wheelchairs are almost always too expensive for a family to provide, and in many areas where the roads are no more than sand and potholes, a wheelchair would be of little use anyway. People who cannot move themselves around physically will find themselves trapped in their home or yard, waiting on the convenience of others to get around.



Sometimes, if there is no family to provide for them, disabled people must rely on the help of friends or neighbors. This can be especially difficult in times when the helpers have their own work to do, such as during planting or harvest season. A disabled person might own a field or plot of land for planting food, but the planting, tending and harvesting of the crops must all be done by other people who may have fields of their own to attend to! Disabled people who are part of a church may be a little better off. It is easier to get help from Christian brothers and sisters, although sometimes those who are not vocal or perhaps not physically present at church may be forgotten. Some people, such as the blind or the lame, cannot even get to church unless someone comes along to help them first. Life is difficult for a disabled person in Africa.

**Possible Bible Memory Verse:**

“Since they could not get to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” ”  
Mark 2:4-5 (NIV)

**Activities**

Team Obstacle Course  
Paper Turtle

**Prayer Points:**

--Pray that believers in Africa would not forget to help the disabled people among them, and that through their reaching out to those in need, others would come to know the love of God.