

TODAY'S TOPIC:
Lunar New Year

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.



THINKING JOB: Ask a “thinking job question” to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

What is something I want to get rid of?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Images or videos of Lunar New Year• If possible, red envelopes with Chinese coins		Know Lunar New Year is an important Asian holiday about clearing the old and welcoming the new.

ASK: Do you have anything you want to get rid of? Maybe it is something broken, something you've outgrown that doesn't fit, something you don't like, or even something that isn't good for you. Maybe you have a thought or a habit you want to get rid of.

ASK: Did you know there is special holiday about getting rid of what you don't want or need to make room for things that are new and better? It is Lunar New Year's which started on February 10 this year and lasts for 15 days. Lunar New Year is also called the Spring Festival and is a time to remove the bad and old energy and thoughts and welcome the good and new energy and thoughts. Many Asian countries including China, Korea, and Vietnam celebrate Lunar New Year, as well as people with roots or a special interest in Asian culture.

TELL STORY: There are many inspirations for Lunar New Year – honoring our ancestors, worshiping gods, getting rid of evil spirits, and praying for a good harvest. But there is also a story that inspired this holiday in China.

According to tales and legends, Chinese New Year started with a mythical beast called the [Nian](#) (a beast that lives under the sea or in the mountains) during the annual Spring Festival. The Nian would attack the villagers in the middle of the night. One year, all the villagers decided to hide from the beast. An older man appeared before the villagers went into hiding and said that he would stay the night and would get revenge on the Nian. The old man put red papers up and set off firecrackers. The day after, the villagers came back to their town and saw that nothing had been destroyed. They assumed that the old man was a god who came to save them. The villagers then understood that the Nian was afraid of the color red and loud noises. Then the tradition grew when New Year was approaching, and the villagers would wear red clothes, hang red lanterns, and red spring scrolls on windows and doors and used firecrackers and drums to frighten away the Nian. From then on, Nian never came to the village again.

SAY: Today, many of the ways people celebrate are tied to the story.

1. People put up red decorations especially on windows and doors
2. They buy new clothes and shoes that are red (red underwear locks in good luck!)
3. They set off firecrackers and fireworks.
4. There are special meals (dumplings) and parades with lots of drums (the dragon dance and the lion dance and lantern festival) and gifts.
5. You do not clean during the celebrations in case you throw away your good luck with the trash.
6. You do not use sharp objects in case you cut off your upcoming luck.
7. You do not cry or fight to smooth your path in the new year.
8. You eat dumplings to increase your wealth and prosperity.
9. Red envelopes with money inside are given to people, especially children, as a sign of luck, protection, and prosperity for the next year. (show example – everyone gets to take one home!)

ASK: We said this holiday is about welcoming new and good thoughts energy. What are some new and good thoughts you want to have? Are there any thoughts you want to get rid of?

SAY AFFIRMATION

AFFIRMATION –I let positive sounds into my mind and body. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .