



God Promises to Send the Messiah, Part Two

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–25; 2:1–12; Micah 5:2



LESSON GOAL

Students will trust God and His Word, which tells about Jesus, the Messiah.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Explain what a prophet and prophecy are.
- Describe the three parts of the sign of Isaiah 7:14 and its fulfillment in Matthew 1:23.
- Identify the Messiah's place of birth according to Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:6.
- Explain why we can trust God's Word regarding Jesus.

KEY VERSE

"Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

APPLICATION

- Humbly obey Christ the King.
- Trust God to fulfill His promises.
- Worship Christ as Lord and Savior.

NEXT WEEK

God Reveals the Messiah
Read Matthew 1:18–25 and Luke 1:26–38.

Symbol Key



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul.... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

It is obvious that in the plan of God, the incarnation of the second person of the Trinity was neither a surprise nor an afterthought. In fact, the birth of the Messiah was planned before the foundation of the world and was foretold in numerous Old-Testament passages. This Messiah would become a man, Jesus Christ. With regard to this lesson, it should be noted that Matthew takes specific Old Testament prophecies (Isa. 7:14; Micah 5:2) and proves that Jesus is the Messiah because He fulfilled these prophecies.

These prophecies unmistakably identified Jesus as the Christ. They also served to mark Jesus with the seal of God, as it was God Himself who ultimately authored the prophecies (Matt. 1:22, “spoken by the Lord through the prophet”). Any Jew who knew the prophecies regarding the Messiah and investigated the origin and life of Jesus would have been confronted with the truth. But it takes more than knowing the truth for someone to believe. It also takes the Spirit of God changing a person’s sinful heart. The account of the visit of the wise men in Matthew 2 shows this to be true. Herod and the chief priests and scribes had a curious visit from foreigners with a remarkable query: “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matt. 2:2). Yet Herod and the chief priests and scribes failed to have faith. Indeed, Herod even sought to kill the Messiah.

Prophecy plays an important role in the book of Matthew. “Matthew points out fulfillments of OT prophecies no less than a dozen times (cf. 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:14, 35; 21:4; 26:54–56; 27:9, 35). He quotes from the Old Testament more than 60 times, more frequently than any other New Testament writer, except Paul in Romans” (John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* [Nashville: Word Publishing Group, 1997], 1394 n. 1:22). This emphasis should not be a surprise, considering that of all the Gospels, the book of Matthew is particularly Jewish. The Old Testament was important to Matthew’s faith as a Jew. And being convinced of who Jesus was, he believed in Him and communicated this faith to his readers.

The Prophecy of Isaiah 7:14: Immanuel, “God with Us”

During the reign of King Ahaz (735–715 B.C.), Isaiah made a significant prophecy. Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, had joined forces to hold back the growing power of the Assyrians. They tried to persuade Ahaz to join them. Ahaz refused, and as a result, they attempted to capture Jerusalem, the capital of Judah. Jerusalem was a heavily fortified city that was difficult to overthrow. These combined forces failed to take the city. Jerusalem was a key city of commerce on the trade routes through the region, and the king of Syria still wanted to control it. He pulled his troops back into Ephraim, waiting for a better time to strike. This left the people of Judah extremely afraid.

Additional Reference Materials

*The MacArthur Study
Bible* by John MacArthur

The prophet Isaiah records this event and relays an important message from the Lord (Isa. 7:1–16). He told Ahaz that Rezin's campaign would not succeed. The Lord Himself would protect the nation of Judah. The Lord asked Ahaz to choose a sign that would confirm His word, but Ahaz refused. So the Lord chose a sign for him, but it was a sign that would not come for over 700 years. This message confirmed to everyone that the Lord would do what He said. "Therefore, the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). The Lord kept His promise. Pekah and Rezin did remain in Ephraim. Eventually, both of their nations were overthrown by Assyria.

But the sign still was significant. It promised that God would come and dwell with the people. There would be no greater protection than to have God come to live with men. Furthermore, this would be an amazing miracle. About 700 years later, Jesus was born. God did fulfill His promise and gave the people a great sign. This was the first and last time that a woman became pregnant while still a virgin. The child was not an ordinary child. He was God and man. Jesus came to earth as a baby. The promise given a long time before was fulfilled.

Micah 5:2: The King Born in a Small Town

Nebuchadnezzar was now the king of Judah. He had already conquered Judah and had appointed Zedekiah as the local ruler of Judah. The people of Israel should have repented after the first conquest. The Lord had warned them through many prophets over a period of 350 years, but they would not listen. The Lord had sent many into captivity already. Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, hoping to gain independence. However, the Lord was not finished chastening His people, and Nebuchadnezzar came back to destroy Jerusalem and its temple. He laid siege against the city. Micah prophesied that the Lord would continue to judge the nation.

The Lord did not give up on His people, even though they were rebellious. He promised that one day a king would arise in Judah and take the throne. This king would be born in the same city where king David had been born, the city of Bethlehem. It was considered a small and unimportant village. There was no palace or fortified wall. It was not a place where one would expect a king to be born. This is what made the prophecy miraculous. God would send His Son to a small and insignificant place. The Jews waited for the day when a king from the line of David would come and take the throne. They waited for the day when they would again be a country and have God's blessing on their land. The great king of the universe would be born in a little farming village.

For hundreds of years, the Jews watched the little city, waiting for the king to come. At last, 700 years after Isaiah's prophecy, Jesus, the Messiah, was born in Bethlehem. God was again faithful to His promise. He did just what He said He would do.

God Was and Is Faithful

Matthew demonstrates in two clear and powerful ways that Jesus' birth was the fulfillment of ancient promises. Jesus was born from a virgin as the God-man, fulfilling Isaiah's message. He was born in Bethlehem as the Messiah (Matt. 2:1–12). God knows the end from the beginning. He is powerful enough to make whatever He says happen. This kind of power and knowledge should move us to worship and practice unquestioning obedience. It should cement in our minds that Jesus is indeed the Son of God and Lord over all.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

*“Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth”
(Psalm 78:1).*

This section includes questions to review last week’s lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week’s lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

Is Christmas just a celebration of the birth of a baby?
No; we celebrate the coming of the Messiah, the promised King.

Does the book of Genesis have anything to do with Christmas?
Yes.

What was the promise to Satan in the garden of Eden?
One of Eve’s descendants would destroy him.

Who is that descendant?
Jesus.

What was the promise given to Abraham?
One of his descendants would bless the earth.

What would that blessing be?
Anyone who believes in Jesus would have eternal life.

What promise was given to Judah?
One of his descendants would rule the earth.

Who fulfilled that promise?
Jesus.

What should you do?
Humbly obey Him and worship Him as Savior and Lord.



I Will Keep My Promise

Ask the students whether they have ever made a promise to anyone. Then ask if they broke their promises or kept them. What happens when a promise is broken? How do you feel when someone breaks a promise to you? God is always faithful to keep His promises. Today we will talk about a promise that God made 700 years before He fulfilled it.



Where in the World Is Bethlehem? Part One

Set a globe on a table in the center of the classroom, and place small star stickers next to it. As students come into class, encourage them to write their initials on a star sticker and then place the sticker where they believe Bethlehem is located on the globe.



Where in the World Is Bethlehem? Part Two

Look up information about and photographs of Bethlehem, using an encyclopedia, an atlas, a library book, or the Internet. Share the information with the



students. Tell them that it was prophesied in the Old Testament that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

Palaces for Princes

Ask students where they were born. Many will know the name of the hospital and the state in which they were born. There may even be one or two students who were born at home. Explain to the students that in Jesus' time, everyone was born at home. There were no hospitals. Ask the students what kind of house a king lives in. They will likely answer that a king lives in a castle or palace. Tell them that palaces are built in big and important cities. Tell the students that Jesus is King of the universe. Ask them what kind of house and what kind of city Jesus should have been born into. Tell them that in today's lesson, we will find out that Jesus was not to be born in a palace or in a big city. He was to be born in Bethlehem, a small village. In today's lesson, the students will find out why.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18–25; 2:1–12; and Micah 5:2.

Introduction

What if I could tell you about something that will happen in the future? That would be amazing, wouldn't it? What if what I said about the future was never wrong? In the Old Testament, there are many things written about the future, and all these things have come true or will come true one day. Today, we will learn about two things that were foretold (told before) that are especially important to Christians because they are about Jesus Christ. Long before Jesus ever lived, God told some men to write down things about Him so that when Jesus came and was born into the world, people would know that He was special—from God.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: What are the names of some prophets in the Bible?

Answer: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel (the Major Prophets); Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi (the Minor Prophets); as well as Moses, Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha.

LOQ: What did it mean for someone to be a prophet? What did he do?

Answer: A prophet was someone God used and enabled to communicate God's will to people and tell them the future. For example, Jonah told the people of Nineveh that God was going to destroy them all in 40 days. When the people of Nineveh heard what God was saying to them through Jonah, they repented, and God had mercy. Jonah was a prophet because he gave the people of Nineveh God's message.

An example of a prophet telling the future is when Elijah predicted that there would be no rain until he said it would come again (1 Kings 17:1). And what Elijah said happened.

LOQ: How do we know who is a true prophet?

Answer: A true prophet never says anything against God, and whatever he says always comes to pass; it always happens.

LOQ: After our discussion, what do you think prophecy is?

Answer: Prophecy is any message from God spoken or written by a prophet. This can be a regular message from God (for example, what is right and wrong), or it can be a message from God about the future. True prophecy always comes from God. In Isaiah 7, God gave a message to the king of Judah, whose name was Ahaz. Who does Isaiah 7:10 say was speaking to King Ahaz? Isaiah 7:10 says that "the LORD spoke again to Ahaz."

LOQ: Although the Lord did speak to some people directly, most of the time He used His prophets to speak for Him. According to Isaiah 7:3–4, whom was the Lord using to speak to King Ahaz?

Answer: Isaiah 7:3–4 says, "Then the LORD said to Isaiah, 'Go out now to meet Ahaz...and say to him.'" This tells us that the Lord spoke to Ahaz through the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah 7:14 is a prophecy about a sign that would appear in the future.

LOQ: What was the sign that Isaiah prophesied?

Answer: The sign that Isaiah prophesied had three parts: a virgin (a woman who was not married and had no children) would be with child; she would bear a son; she would call His name Immanuel.

LOQ: From Matthew 1:18–25, what verse reminds you of Isaiah's prophecy that we just read about?

Answer: Verse 23.

LOQ: What does Matthew 1:22 tell us about Isaiah's prophecy?

Answer: Matthew 1:22 says, "So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the LORD through the prophet." What the Lord had spoken through Isaiah hundreds of years before had come to pass. Isaiah had given a prophecy about the future, and it came true when Mary was carrying Jesus. We should understand that God had planned a long time ago for His Son to come to earth and be born as a human who was given the name Jesus.

LOQ: [After reading Matthew 2:1–12.] The Bible tells us that Jesus was the Messiah (Hebrew), or the Christ (Greek). The magi came to worship the Messiah,

the King of the Jews, and asked where they could find Him (Matt. 2:1–2). When King Herod heard about this, he asked the Jewish leaders where the Christ was to be born (Matt. 2:3–4). What was their answer, and where did they find it?

Answer: Matthew 2:5 says that the Jewish leaders told King Herod, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet.” The Jewish leaders looked into the Old Testament and saw that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem.

LOQ: What verse in Matthew 2 tells us what the prophet had written?

Answer: Matthew 2:6 contains the words that the Jewish leaders believed the prophet had written about the Messiah being born in Bethlehem.

LOQ: The Jews believed that the Messiah would one day be their king. In Micah 5:2, what words make you think about a king ruling over a country?

Answer: Another word that one can use to talk about a king is *ruler*. In verse 2, the Jewish leaders understood that the “Ruler in Israel” was the same as the “King of the Jews” (the Messiah) who would come. So in the same verse that spoke about a “Ruler in Israel” whom God would send, we also see that that Ruler would come from “Bethlehem Ephrathah.” Ephrathah was the old name of Bethlehem, and that is why the prophet Micah called it “Bethlehem Ephrathah.” By the time Jesus was born, they just called the city Bethlehem.

Summary

A prophet tells people about God’s will and sometimes about the future. There were many prophets in the Old Testament, such as Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, and Micah. Every true prophet who said something was from God was always right; otherwise, he was not from God and was not a true prophet.

Long before Jesus was born, Isaiah the prophet (who wrote the book of Isaiah) spoke of a sign from God that would happen in the future: a virgin woman would one day have a son and would call His name Immanuel. In the book of Matthew, it is written that this happened exactly as Isaiah had said when Mary gave birth to Jesus.

Later in the book of Matthew, it says that when the magi came to look for the “King of the Jews,” Herod the king asked the Jewish leaders where the Messiah would be born. And where did they look? They looked into the Old Testament to find their answer about the coming Messiah. They found that a prophet named Micah, from the Old Testament, said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

Application

Understanding prophecy is not easy. It takes a lot of time and hard work to see how everything fits together in God’s plan. But Matthew gives us a lot of help. Matthew tells us that the birth of the Messiah was prophesied in the Old Testament hundreds of years before it ever happened. We saw that Jesus’ birth by Mary was a prophecy from Isaiah and that the place where Jesus was born was a prophecy from Micah. Whom do you know who can predict the future before it happens? We know that only God can tell the future.

We can be sure that Jesus is the Messiah whom God promised because everything the Old Testament said about Him happened just as the prophets said (for example, in the passages that we studied in Isaiah and Micah). And remember, the prophets spoke for God. If anyone asks you during Christmas time why Jesus is special and why you celebrate His birth, you can tell them that God’s prophets, Isaiah and Micah, predicted His birth, and it happened just as they said when Jesus was born.



Presentation Ideas

A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present with the lesson.



Classroom Promise Board, Week Two

This activity is continued from last week. This week, write the following on separate pieces of 4¼ x 5½-inch cardstock and then place Velcro on the backs: Micah 5:2 and Isaiah 7:14. During class, place these in the Passage section. Using the same size cardstock, write “Born in Bethlehem” and “God with us.” During class, place these in the Promise section. Again, using the same size pieces of cardstock, write “Ahaz” and “Israel.” During class, place these in the Person section. Use this board to teach each week and to review past lessons.



Visit from Isaiah

After explaining that Jesus came to earth as a human at a specific time in history, inform the students that your class will have a special visitor—Isaiah. Have a man dress in a historical costume and visit the class. He could tell about the problem Ahaz had, how scared Ahaz was, and what kind of promise God made to Ahaz. He could tell about a friend named Micah, who told about Jesus being born in Bethlehem. He could bring in pictures of Jerusalem and of Bethlehem, and perhaps teach the lesson or part of it. The students could talk to him and touch him while being reminded that Jesus had a physical body like ours when He was here on earth.

Praise and Worship

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

Joy to the World!

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Silent Night

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Name That Prophetic Book

Divide the class into groups of no more than 17 students. Instruct each group to arrange their chairs in a circle, facing inward. Label each seat with the name of a prophetic book, moving counterclockwise and following this order: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah,

Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. For groups of less than 17, simply remove some prophets from the middle of the list. Establish Isaiah's seat as first and the seat to its left, Malachi, as last. Explain to the students that their goal is to get to Isaiah's seat. Teach them this simple hand jive: slap-slap, clap-clap, snap-snap. Practice this several times until all students are on rhythm. Then the student sitting in Isaiah's seat may begin the game. The students perform the hand jive three times. On the fourth time, the student in Isaiah's seat must say his name—"Isaiah"—on the "snap-snap" part. The hand jive continues, and on the next "snap-snap," this same student must recite another prophet's name (for example, Jonah). Now it is Jonah's turn to play. On the very next "snap-snap," he must recite another prophet's name. Play continues in this manner until a player makes a mistake. When this occurs, the player must get up and move to the Malachi seat. The players to his left shift over in a clockwise direction. These players now have new identities for the next round of the game. Again, the goal is to reach Isaiah's seat by not making any mistakes. The purpose of this game is to help the students learn the Major and Minor Prophets in the order of their location in the Old Testament.



Key Prophecies Fulfilled at Christmas

Pass out the chart to the students. As a review of the lesson, lead the group to take notes on the two prophecies taught in class. Divide the additional prophecies among the group. In larger groups, you may need to pair up students to work together. Direct the students to read the Old Testament prophecy and summarize what God told us would happen in the future. Then students should read the fulfillment of the prophecy in the New Testament and note how it came to pass just as God had predicted.



"God Promises to Send a Messiah, Part Two"

Use this work sheet to review the lesson with the students. It is located at the back of this lesson.



Journal Page: "God Is Faithful to His Word"

Give the students a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. They can work on the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of this lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

Use this verse for this week and for the next two weeks.

"Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us'" (Matthew 1:23).

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

Fulfilled at Christmas

Teacher's Notes

| PROPHECY | NOTES | FULFILLMENT | NOTES |
|----------------------|--|-------------------------|-------|
| Isaiah 7:14 | A virgin will conceive and bear a Son and call His name Immanuel. | Matthew 1:18–25 | |
| Micah 5:2 | Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. | Matthew 2:1–12 | |
| Numbers 24:17 | A Star and a Scepter will come out of Israel. | Matthew 2:1–2 | |
| Isaiah 11:1–3 | Messiah will descend from Jesse, and the Spirit of the Lord rest upon Him. | Matthew 1:1–17; 3:16 | |
| Deuteronomy 18:15–19 | The Lord will raise up a great Prophet. | John 7:40 | |

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES

Fulfilled at Christmas

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|-------------------------|-------|-------------------------|-------|
| Isaiah 7:14 | | Matthew 1:18–25 | |
| Micah 5:2 | | Matthew 2:1–12 | |
| Numbers 24:17 | | Matthew 2:1–2 | |
| Isaiah 11:1–3 | | Matthew 1:1–17; 3:16 | |
| Deuteronomy 18:15–19 | | John 7:40 | |

God Promises to Send a Messiah, Part Two



Isaiah 7:14; Micah 5:2;
Matthew 1:1-18; 2:1-12

Name _____

1. Circle the two correct statements about prophets.

Prophets are used by God to tell people the future.

Prophets rule countries, as a king does.

Prophets are used by God to tell people God's will (truth, commands).

2. In what verse in Matthew 1:18-25 can Isaiah's prophecy be found? _____

3. Where would you look in the Old Testament to find Isaiah's prophecy? _____

4. Who is the Messiah? _____

5. Micah 5:2 tells us where the Messiah would be born.

Read the verse and write the name of the place. _____

6. We know that Jesus is the Messiah because He f _____

the prophecies about Him. (Hint: Look in Matthew 1:22.)

7. There are many prophecies in the Old Testament about the Messiah. In this lesson,

we learned two prophecies about the Messiah's b _____.

God Is Faithful to His Word

Hundreds of years before the birth of the Messiah, God used prophets to reveal where the Messiah would be born and what His name would be. Answer the questions below, and then read the verses given. In the Promise section, write the promise God made. In the Fulfillment section, write how the prophecy has been fulfilled.

What is prophecy? _____

How were prophets used by God? _____

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| Place of Birth: Read Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1. | |
| Prophecy | Fulfillment |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| Name: Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23. | |
| Prophecy | Fulfillment |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

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| Prophecy | Fulfillment |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| Name: Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23. | |
| Prophecy | Fulfillment |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

Why did God promise to send the Messiah? _____

The name *Immanuel* means "God with us." This is important because _____

After learning about prophecy, I can praise God for _____

During this Christmas season, I will thank God for _____

After reading some of God's prophecies, I know that God is

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**Isaiah said to unbelieving Ahaz, "Therefore the LORD Himself will give you a sign:
Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son" (Isaiah 7:14).**



“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting” (Micah 5:2).

