Prophecies Fulfilled in Jesus



Scripture Reference: Isaiah 9:6-7

Suggested Theme: God is faithful and keeps His promises. We can trust His words, and mean what we say.

Memory Verse: “It is better not to promise anything than to promise something and not do it.” Ecclesiastes 5:5, ICB

Story Overview:

The birth and birthplace of Jesus were prophesied about hundreds of years before they eventuated. God promised that these things would happen, and they did. God always keeps His word, and we can always depend on God.

Background Study:

Prophecy is a message from God spoken through a person. Prophecy might be in the form of a warning, a proclamation or a statement of future events.

The prophecies in today’s lesson are about the Messiah, Jesus.

Prophecies throughout the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Testament through Jesus Christ.

Consider how little we know about the future and how impossible it is to predict what will happen even tomorrow. Self-proclaimed prophets can sometimes “predict” what will happen in the future, but they are wrong often enough to show that they are only guessing. When we find Old Testament prophecies fulfilled centuries later in Christ, we know that more than human wisdom was used in giving the prophecies.

One of the messages God sent through the prophets of Israel was to send His royal Son (Messiah) to His people, Israel, to rescue them. The Old Testament contains many prophecies of the coming Christ (Messiah). This lesson focuses on a few of those prophecies.

God’s plan to rescue humanity was first revealed in Genesis 3:15 when He told the serpent that an offspring (seed) of the woman would someday crush the serpent’s head. Hundreds of years later, the Lord told Abraham that the “seed” would come through him and his descendants, Israel Genesis 22:15-18.

Galatians 3:15-16 makes it clear that the “seed” spoken of since the book of Genesis was Jesus Christ. That is a long time to keep a promise!

Matthew 1:18 speaks of the fulfilment of the prophecy of the virgin birth. The prophecy can be read about in Isaiah 7:14.

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Bethlehem, as the birthplace of the Messiah, is foretold in Micah 5:2. Read Matthew 2:1 about the fulfilment of this prophecy.

Isaiah lived in Jerusalem in the 8th century before Christ was born. Isaiah 9:6-7 is one of the most poetic announcements of the Messiah. These verses speak of a coming Messiah who will rescue God's people and bring peace and righteousness. Jesus Christ is the fulfilment of this prophetic word.

In Luke 1:31-33, the angel told Mary that the child she was to bear would be the prophesied Messiah, the son of David. She was to give Him the name Jesus, which means "the Lord saves." It must have been awe-inspiring for Mary when she realized she was to bear the prophesied King, the Saviour! The language in Luke 1:33 is very similar to Isaiah's description of the Messiah's Kingdom (see Isaiah 9:7). In both verses, this Kingdom is described as one that would last forever.

The angel, Gabriel, appeared to Mary and told her that she would have a son even though she was a virgin (Luke 1:26-56). Of course, this would have also been shocking news to her fiance, so Gabriel appeared separately to Joseph to explain Mary's pregnancy. Joseph accepted this as God's plan and went on to marry her and raise her child. (Matthew 1:18-25).

Luke 2:1-7 is the most familiar account of Jesus' birth. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, just as Micah had prophesied. God's plan for sending His royal Son, the Messiah, to be Saviour was fulfilled, just as had been foretold through the prophets. God kept His word.

Way to Introduce the Story:

Isn't it fun to plan something exciting–like going on a holiday? At first, perhaps you and your parents will talk about it. You might decide where you will go.

Where would you like to go on holiday?

After you plan where to go, you might look online or find travel brochures about places to visit. Will you go by car or fly? If you drive, which route will you take?

What kind of activities would you like to do on holiday? You might plan to visit a camp to go tramping and horseback riding.

Planning a holiday and thinking about everything you might do can be fun. Sometimes it seems a long time before the day to go arrives! Still, when the holiday comes, you know the wait was worth it.

When we begin reading the New Testament of our Bibles, we learn that God's people were waiting for something very important to happen, too. Their parents and grandparents had told them about a promise God had made long ago. God had promised to send a King and Saviour into the world. After God made the promise, hundreds of years passed, but the King still had not come. Throughout the Old Testament, however, is the message. "He is coming! He is coming!" Do you think God kept His promise?

The Story:

Long ago, God made a wonderful and exciting promise to the world. Someday, He would send His own Son to the earth. His name would be Jesus Christ. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God promised it would happen!

God used a special way to tell the world about his wonderful promise. How do you think he told the world? Over the internet? By television? No, such things hadn't even been invented then. God spoke to people long ago about what He wanted them to know and what He was going to do. Sometimes, God told men to write down what they heard from Him.

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One of these men that God spoke to was Abram (later called Abraham). A very long time ago, God told Abraham that he would become a father and then his son would become a father of many children, and then his children would grow up and have children. This would happen many times so that he would have many descendants. As many descendants as there are stars in the sky!

One of those descendants would be very special. He would bless the whole world. Who do you think that descendant might be? That's right-Jesus!

Sometimes, God gave His messages to prophets. A prophet is someone who has a special message from God. God would tell the prophet things, and the prophet would tell the people. Some prophets also wrote down God's messages, and these writings are part of the Bible. (Hold up your Bible and show the Old Testament.)

Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, God told a prophet named Isaiah that a great ruler would someday come. God even told Isaiah that the ruler would come as a child. He said what kind of mother the child would have.

Who do you think that baby will be? That's right-Jesus! Isn't that amazing? God knew that this would happen hundreds of years ago!

Later on, God spoke to another prophet. His name was Micah. God told Micah the name of the town where the baby would be born. He told Micah that the special person coming would be born in the town of Bethlehem.

Who do you think that the special person would be? That's right-Jesus!

Finally, when the time was very close, God sent an angel to tell a young woman named Mary that she was going to have a baby.

The angel also came to Joseph, Mary's fiancé, while he was sleeping. The angel told Joseph to marry Mary and be a father to her baby.

God sent all of these messages before Jesus was even born. God promised over and over that He would send Jesus. And guess what? God kept every one of His promises.

- Jesus was Abram's great, great, great…..grandson-just as God had promised.
- Jesus was a special child born to a special mother- just as God told Isaiah.
- Jesus was born in the city of Bethlehem- just as God told Micah.
- Mary had a baby and named him Jesus- just as the angel said.
- Joseph married Mary and took care of Jesus- just as the angel told him to.

All of these promises were recorded in the Bible. The messages have been saved for hundreds of years. Now, we can read the messages in our very own Bible. We are thankful that we have God's Word, the Bible, to tell us about Jesus. God always keeps his promises!

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Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using various methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible, but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection or other group participation.

Be selective. Each teacher is unique, so only use the illustrations that best relate to how YOU tell the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing, so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

Click here for visual aids and more storytelling methods.

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Review and Reflection Questions:

Review questions help children remember and know the facts of a story. Reflection questions encourage them to internalise the meaning and implications for their lives. Asking at least one of each type of question can help strengthen a child's spiritual development and help them connect to God. Click here to learn more about review and reflection questions.

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Review:

- Name two Old Testament Prophets who prophesied about Jesus (Isaiah and Micah)
- What is a promise? (Saying something and really meaning it, or saying with certainty that something will happen in the future)
- What is a prophecy? (A message God gives one person to tell others about)
- What was the name of God's promised Son? (Jesus Christ)
- In what city did Micah prophesy that Jesus would be born? (Bethlehem)
- What was the name of the angel who told Joseph and Mary that Mary would have a baby? (Gabriel)
- How long did the Jews have to wait for God's promises about His Son to come true? (hundreds of years or more)
- What do you think Mary and Joseph thought about God's promises coming true through them?
- What did you learn about God from this story?

Reflection:

- What is something you wonder about in this story?
- What questions do you have about this story?
- Why do you think God gave prophecies to people?
- Why do you think God wanted His people to know that He would send His Son, Jesus? Why did He tell them so many years early?
- How do you think Mary felt when she realized she would have the baby prophesied about in Scripture, God's Son?
- Do you think it was easy or difficult for the Jews to trust that God would keep His promises?
- If you were a Jewish person, would you have believed the prophecies God gave to His people would come true?
- What part of this story do you find most interesting?

Prayer:

It is important to guide children in learning how to pray. In prayer, children can connect with God and learn that He hears and answers them. God can become a lifelong friend who is with them every moment of their lives. Try using a variety of prayer methods from time to time so that the children can learn to connect with God in different ways. Note that you can pray at any time throughout your lesson. A variety of prayer methods are found here.

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Song Suggestions:

- J-E-S-U-S Cheer Song
- If You Love Jesus Song
- Oh, How I Love Jesus Song
- Goodbye World Song
- J-E-S-U-S Song
- Standing on the Promises (from church hymn book)
- Refer to the Song Page on this website for more song options.

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Activities and Crafts:

- How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation.
- Visit the activities and songs pages for additional activities and crafts.

Activities:

- Define a promise: “Saying something and really meaning it, or saying with certainty that something will happen in the future.” Using pictures from magazines of children helping others, talk about saying you will do something and then doing it. Example: Explain that the child has promised, “Mum, I will clean my room today,” and then show a picture of a child picking up his or her toys.
- Provide each child with a card on which they write one promise they will keep that week.
- Write promise situations (Example: I will be at your home at 6:00) on separate pieces of paper and allow children to act out two scenes. In one scene, they keep the promise; in another, they do not.
- Provide each child with a “detective notebook” (simply blank pads of paper) and ask them to investigate the prophecies of Christ and jot down clues that led up to the birth of Jesus. Use a Bible encyclopaedia or a commentary for scripture references.
- Use the inductive Bible study method with older children. Encourage them to read Isaiah 9:6-7 and then respond to it. Click here for a printable worksheet.
- Planning ahead for other classes: If you plan on teaching lessons about the Birth of John the Baptist or the Birth of Jesus in the next few weeks, send notes home to parents requesting that they send baby pictures of their children to you. It will be fun to look at those photos when you talk about babies in the Bible.
- Guide older children in looking up Scriptures which prophesied the coming of Jesus:
  - The Messiah will come through the family of Abraham: Genesis 22:17-18
  - Matthew 1:1-17 (Joseph’s ancestry through Abraham) and Luke 3:23-38 (Mary’s ancestry through Abraham)
  - The Messiah will be a child of a virgin: Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:18
  - The child will be born in Bethlehem: Micah 5:2 and Matthew 2:1
  - Gabriel tells Mary she will have a baby. Luke 1:26-56
  - Gabriel tells Joseph that Mary will have a baby. Matthew 1:18-25

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- Use the Inductive Bible Study method to apply a prophetic scripture about Jesus. Here are some printable worksheets you can use:

Invite the children to respond to this story using the adaptable “God’s Story” printable reflection page. Free printables for this story.

Crafts:

- Make a scroll and copy the name “Isaiah” onto it.
- Provide a list of Scriptures that prophecy about Christ and have the children place them on a timeline showing the prophecy and then the later fulfilment. For younger children, you could use pictures instead of Scriptures.

Print and use these free bookmarks, trading cards or timelines. Free printables for this story.

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Other Online Resources:

- Colouring page with text (Ministry Spark)
- Colouring page of Isaiah 9:6 (NIV) (Teacher help)
- Song: The angel’s announcement sung to the tune of the Twelve Days of Christmas. I would suggest singing each verse with “Before the birth of Jesus…” instead of “On the first day of Christmas”(Puppet resources)
- List of Old Testament Prophecies concerning Jesus (West Ark Church of Christ)
- Jesus in the 66 Books of the Bible (West Ark Church of Christ)
- Jesus in Every Book of the Bible- (Jesus plus nothing)

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