

TEXT Prophecy — Fulfillment
Isaiah 9:6,7 — Matthew 1:16
Isaiah 7:14 — Matthew 1:18-25
Micah 5:2 — Matthew 2:1
Prophecy Yet to be Fulfilled — Acts 1:10,11;
1 Corinthians 15:51,52; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 53:1-12

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to list several biblical prophecies which came to pass concerning Jesus' birth. They will recognize that the yet unfulfilled prophecies concerning His second coming will just as surely come to pass.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. — Isaiah 7:14

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. — Luke 2:7

ANSWER TITLE: **Good News!**

SEARCH TITLE: **History in Advance**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Isaiah is one of the major prophets, and most people regard him as the greatest of Old Testament prophets. He is pre-eminently the Prophet of Redemption. Even his name means "salvation of Jehovah." In the Book of Isaiah, which he wrote, he prophesied of the coming Messiah. Isaiah lived in Jerusalem and his prophecies mostly concern Judah and Jerusalem. Many times God's promise of a Redeemer or Messiah shone as a beacon when righteousness was seemingly at a low ebb. Isaiah lived during the time the ten tribes were taken into captivity.

Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah. *Micah* means "God-like." He was the sixth of the minor prophets and was a prophet of Israel and Judah during the reigns of

Jotham, Hezekiah, and Ahaz. He prophesied regarding the Messiah and the destruction of Jerusalem and Samaria.

Bethlehem is called the City of David since it is the birthplace of King David. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, as both Mary and Joseph were descendants of David. Bethlehem is about five or six miles south of Jerusalem.

The Hebrew word *Messiah*, used in the Old Testament Book of Daniel, refers to Jesus as the "anointed one"—Israel's Messianic hope. *Christós* (Christ) is the Greek form of the name "Messiah," and is used throughout the New Testament.

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YOUR OPENER

History in Advance

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KEY VERSE: And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger. — Luke 2:7

Throughout the 4000 years of history before the coming of Christ, we can see how God master-minded His plan of salvation which would be fulfilled in Christ. In the Old Testament we find many authors of different ages and places supplying the bits, pieces, types, shadows, and detailed predictions which describe Christ's purpose in coming to this earth, His manner of life, the reason for His death, and His triumph over death through the Resurrection.

The same prophets who gave us advance details of Christ's first coming speak expressly of a coming day when righteousness will triumph over evil. As surely as the details predicted were fulfilled in Christ's first coming, just so surely shall this earth experience the Rapture of the saints, and then the coming of Christ with His saints for 1000 years of peace, good will toward men!

1. What is prophecy? (Consult Webster or a Bible dictionary.)

2. What is the mark of a true prophet? See Jeremiah 28:9.

3. Who received this promise, ". . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed"? See Genesis 12:3. Explain in your own words what this promise might mean.

4. Isaiah wrote over 700 years before Christ was born. Compare Isaiah 7:14 with Matthew 1:18-25 and comment on how we benefit by studying prophecy and its fulfillment. See also 2 Peter 1:21.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

RESPONSES

1. Webster defines *prophecy* as "the function or vocation of a prophet; specifically, the inspired declaration of divine will and purpose," or "the prediction of something to come." While the prophets did not confine their message to foretelling the future, the predictive element was a frequent part of the prophet's message. For this study, the students should concentrate on the nature and accuracy of these prophetic predictions as they relate to the first coming of the Messiah.

2. A true prophet is one who conveys God's will and purposes to the people, including the divine revelation of future events. The mark of a true prophet is that one hundred percent of what he says by the Word of the Lord will come to pass.

3. God gave that promise to Abram. This Scripture is generally recognized as a Messianic prophecy. As your students give their explanations, direct their thoughts toward how Christ's coming has blessed the nations with salvation.

4. As the students compare these Scriptures, their discussion should bring out that faith is generated as they study the detailed fulfillment of prophecy.

5. The virgin birth is the fulfillment of God's promise of a Savior for the salvation of the world. The class should understand that without the virgin birth, Christ would have been just a man. The Bible declares that He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and that He is in fact the Son of God.

5. Why is the virgin birth of Christ important? See Luke 1:26,27,35.

6. Who is the prophet referred to in Matthew 2:5,6? And how do we know that the Jewish scribes of King Herod's time knew about this prophecy and understood it?

7. Memorize the five beautifully descriptive terms used in Isaiah 9:6 to denote Christ's names. Place the name which you think best applies opposite the New Testament Scriptures given below:

Matthew 21:15; Acts 2:11

Matthew 28:20

John 14:27

John 3:1,2

John 10:29,30

8. Describe in your own words the future event pictured in 1 Corinthians 15:51,52 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18.

9. Summarize the event prophesied by the angels in Acts 1:11 which has not yet happened. See Zechariah 13:1,2,6,9; 14:3-11 and Revelation 20:4. How are we certain that this event will take place?

10. In Matthew 24, Jesus gave us signs which were to immediately precede His return to earth. These included the appearance of false Christs, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes, persecution of Christians, apostasy of previous believers, worldwide preaching of the Gospel, and the re-emergence of Israel as a nation. Seeing these signs around us, we cannot help but conclude that we are living in the time of the soon coming of our Lord. Among the living, who will be caught up to join the Lord in the air when the Trumpet of the Lord sounds for the Rapture of the saints? See John 8:31; 1 John 1:7 and Revelation 2:3.

6. The prophet was Micah. He, like Isaiah, prophesied about 700 years before Christ came. When King Herod demanded of the chief priests and scribes where Christ was to be born, they were able to answer, "In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet . . ." referring to Micah 5:2.

7. Wonderful, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Counsellor, Mighty God. These New Testament verses help to reinforce the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sonship and deity of Christ. Ask your students if they can give other New Testament verses which describe Jesus.

8. These verses describe the Rapture of the saints, which takes place in the azure above. This event takes place prior to Christ's return to rule on the earth in the last days of the Gentile age, but before the climax of the Great Tribulation. See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-8. Jesus himself warned that no man, not even the angels in Heaven, know the hour or the day for this appearing—a time known only to God the Father (Matthew 24:36,42). He further exhorted His disciples to be ready for "in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh" (verse 44). The objective here is to present this event, not as a story or as an ethereal hypothesis, but as a future fact—as sure as if it already had happened! Your students need to sense the urgency for preparation for this great event.

9. The event is the coming of Christ to rule this earth in peace for 1000 years—the Millennial Reign of Christ. Your students should understand that they can be assured of this event because of the unerring history of prophecy fulfilled to date, and because of the witness of the Holy Spirit, through His personal work in their lives.

10. This question can serve as a wrap-up in which the class investigates, through Scripture, who will be given a new body and caught up to meet the Lord in the air when He comes to catch away His bride—the Church. A close examination of the seven churches (Revelation 2 and 3) will show us that Jesus' followers must . . .

- A. be presently experiencing their first love for Christ. (Ephesus)
- B. be faithful in persecution and trial even when their lives are threatened. (Smyrna)
- C. be kept from all sin and uncleanness. (Pergamos and Thyatira)
- D. be actively living and testifying for Jesus Christ. (Sardis)
- E. walk in complete obedience to God's Word and in all the light they have. (Philadelphia)
- F. not let material things cleverly steal first place in their lives, but even in material prosperity, maintain their zeal and ardor for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. (Laodicea)

YOUR WRAP-UP

Reference Information (continued from page 7)

The Wise Men who came from the East seeking the "King of the Jews" were, in fact, searching for the promised Messiah. It is supposed that these men were Medes and had a priestly function in the Persian Empire. Their rejoicing, shown through worship and gifts, at finding the Christ Child, was quite a contrast to King Herod's troubled state.

Herod, known as Herod the Great, ruled Judea from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. He died during the time Joseph, Mary, and the young child Jesus were hiding in Egypt.

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What does the word *prophecy* mean?

What is the importance of biblical prophecies?

Why did Jesus come to earth as a baby and not as an adult?

How and why does Jesus' coming affect you? Does it affect anyone else?

The biblical prophecies concerning Jesus' birth were fulfilled. What are some biblical prophecies concerning Jesus' return to earth?

Name some prophecies being fulfilled in our day.

Can you name some other men of God who prophesied in Bible times and whose prophecies came to pass?

In the ANSWER story, what prophecy did Jim's father say was one of the best known? Who was it about?

THINGS TO DO

Teach the lesson from a scroll you have made, writing only main verses of this lesson. To make an "old" manuscript-looking scroll: Crumple a sheet of 8-1/2 x 11" paper, soak the paper overnight in a solution of coffee or tea. Lay the paper out to dry on newspaper, then iron it. This will make the paper creased and yellowed. You will then need two 10-inch dowels on which to roll the paper.

Use a tiny earphone or headset and microphone to illustrate God giving His message into a prophet's ear in spite of the noises of the world. Show your students a daily weather forecast; a circular about an upcom-

ing election; a news clipping about a coming event; an advertisement for an upcoming sale; etc. Explain that these are "prophecies" of a sort which we see every day. We accept the fact that these events will happen. Then show the Bible—God's forecast of what will be occurring in our future.

Hammer sixteen nails into a large board. Prepare sixteen cards with Bible verses written on them—eight prophecies and eight fulfillments of those prophecies. Mix up the cards and hang one on each of the sixteen nails (verse side facing board). Number the blank sides from 1-16. Divide your class into two teams. Teams take turns having one person choose two cards. If the cards are a set (a prophecy and its fulfillment) that team takes those cards and tries to match another set. If the chosen cards are not a set, the cards are returned to their places on the board and the other team takes a turn. The game continues until no cards remain on the board. The team with the most sets wins.

Answers for ANSWER

Promises True

Before Jesus left this world He made a promise to His disciples. The promise also applies to His followers today. Do you believe His promise is true and for you? Use the code to find out what the promise is.

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | B | C | J | K | L | S | W |
| D | E | F | M | N | O | T | X |
| G | H | I | P | Q | R | U | Y |
| | | | | | | V | Z |

IN MY FATHER'S HOUSE ARE
MANY MANSIONS: IF IT WERE
NOT SO, I WOULD HAVE TOLD
YOU. I GO TO PREPARE A
PLACE FOR YOU. JOHN 14:2

