



THE GOSPEL PROJECT[®]

FOR PRESCHOOL

—★ **CHRISTMAS EDITION** ★—

Babies, Toddlers, and Preschool Leader Guide



Use Week of:

Christmas • Session 1

Prophets Told About Jesus' Birth

BIBLE PASSAGE:

Isaiah 7; 9; 11; Micah 5

STORY POINT:

Prophets told about the Messiah.

KEY PASSAGE:

Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

Why was Jesus born?

Jesus was born to rescue us.

INTRODUCE THE STORY
(15–20 MINUTES)
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TEACH THE STORY
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EXPERIENCE THE STORY
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Additional resources are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit www.ministrygrid.com/web/thegospelproject.

LEADER Bible Study

When Adam and Eve introduced sin into the world, all of creation fell under a curse. (See Gen. 3:17-19.) We all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. We've inherited the curse of death from Adam. (See Rom. 3:23; 5:12.)

Throughout the Old Testament, the consequences of sin are obvious. God's people were separated from Him; they did not enjoy the intimate relationship with their Creator for which He had created them. God's people were affected by sickness and pain. Corruption spread quickly throughout the earth. The situation seemed hopeless, yet God did not leave His people without hope.

It was into this hopelessness that God spoke. Hundreds of messages came through the prophets concerning a coming Messiah—One who would rescue people from their sins. But when would this Promised One come? How would He come? Would the people recognize Him?

The prophets Isaiah and Micah—who both lived hundreds of years before Jesus was born—spoke specifically of the Messiah's birth. Isaiah told King Ahaz what the Lord would do. "The virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). He described the birth of a Prince of Peace—a Son of David who will reign forever. (Isa. 9:6-7) Isaiah said that He would be a King! (Isa. 11:1-5) The prophet Micah named the specific town—Bethlehem—in which Jesus would be born. (Mic. 5:2)

As you teach preschoolers about the prophecies concerning Jesus' birth, help them understand that everything God said about Jesus' birth came true. Hundreds of years later, Jesus was born into the world. God's plan to rescue people from sin was not a secret plan. God gave His people hope: A Savior is coming. Though death came through Adam, life comes through Christ. (1 Cor. 15:22) Through His death on the cross, Jesus finished the work for our salvation. In Him lies our hope of forgiveness and eternal life. Jesus reconciles to God those who trust in Him.

The BIBLE Story

Prophets Told About Jesus' Birth

Isaiah 7; 9; 11; Micah 5

Long ago, before Jesus was born, God gave messages to some men. These men were prophets; they told God's messages to people. The messages were about things that God was going to do. The prophets wrote down God's messages in the Bible. Two of the prophets were named Isaiah and Micah. They wrote down messages from God. **God said that one day Jesus would come.**

Isaiah the prophet lived hundreds of years before Jesus was born on earth. **Isaiah wrote down God's message about Jesus. Isaiah wrote that** God would choose a woman to be Jesus' mother. Jesus' mother would not be married yet. Isaiah also said that **when Jesus was born, one of Jesus' names would be Immanuel. Immanuel means "God with us."**

Later, Isaiah talked about **Jesus again**, and he wrote these words in the Bible. **Isaiah said,** "A child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on His shoulders." That meant **that Jesus was coming, and He would be a King.**

Isaiah also said, "He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." Even more names for Jesus! All of Jesus' names tell us **who Jesus is and what great things He would**



do. Jesus was going to come to earth to help people and keep them safe. He would be a loving king, and He would bring peace to the whole world.

Isaiah had a third message about Jesus. This time, Isaiah talked about Jesus' family. Isaiah wrote these words in the Bible too. **Isaiah said that Jesus would be part of Jesse's family. Jesse was King David's father. Then Isaiah said that God would be with Jesus, and Jesus would be wise and strong. He would do the right thing and be fair.**

Finally, Micah the prophet told a message about Jesus. These words are **in the Bible too. Micah said that Jesus was going to be born in a town called Bethlehem. He said that Jesus was going to be a ruler. Hundreds of years later, everything that God told Isaiah and Micah came true.**

Bible Storytelling Tips

Use scrolls: Make two scrolls. Open one scroll and pretend to read as you tell what Isaiah wrote about the Messiah. Open the other scroll and pretend to read as you tell what Micah wrote about the Messiah. Consider printing the Bible story script and placing it in the scrolls.

Read the Scripture: Enlist adult leaders to read Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; 11:1-5; and Micah 5:2 at the appropriate moments in the Bible story.

Christ Connection: God had a great plan to rescue people from sin. God's plan was not a secret plan. The prophets told people about God's plan. They said God would send a Messiah: Jesus! Jesus would be born into the world as a baby. Jesus would live a perfect life and die on the cross to rescue people from sin.

INTRODUCE the Story



SESSION TITLE: Prophets Told About Jesus' Birth

BIBLE PASSAGE: Isaiah 7; 9; 11; Micah 5

STORY POINT: Prophets told about the Messiah.

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

Welcome time

- offering basket
- Allergy Alert download
- favorite toys related to the Bible story theme

Play Christmas music in the background as you greet preschoolers and follow your church's security procedures. Set an offering basket near the door to collect at an appropriate time. Post an allergy alert, if necessary. Set out a few favorite theme-related toys, such as puzzles and blocks.

Activity page

- "Name Above All Names" activity page, 1 per child
- crayons or markers

Invite preschoolers to draw a line connecting the letter beside the quill to the matching letter on the scroll.

SAY • Today we will hear what two prophets, Isaiah and Micah, wrote about Jesus long before He was born. Prophets were people who listened to God and told the people what He said. God told the prophets a lot about Jesus.

LOW PREP

Describe a friend

Gather all the children together. Tell them you are going to give clues about someone in the room. Then as you give more and more details (hair color, shirt color, shoe type, and so forth), ask the children to raise their hands and guess whom you described. When someone guesses correctly, repeat the game with another child to guess.

SAY • Before Jesus came, God told the prophets about Him.

They did not give clues about Jesus in the same way I gave clues about you, but they wrote down special things about Jesus so that when He came, people would know He is the Messiah!

Proclaim “Jesus is coming!”

Place different objects around the room for the preschoolers to speak into, such as bowls, paper towel tubes, cups, and so forth. Invite children to experiment by saying “Jesus is coming!” into each of the objects and listening to how it changes the sound of their voices.

• objects to speak into (bowls, paper towel tubes, cups, and so forth)

You may also choose to either take predictions (by asking children if an object will make their voices louder or softer) or a brief survey (by asking them to raise their hands to show which items worked better).

SAY • Today we are going to learn about two prophets.

Prophets were people who listened to God and told the people what He said. God told the prophets that Jesus was coming. Many prophets from different times and places told about Jesus.

Transition to tell the story

To gain the attention of all the preschoolers to move them to Bible study, show the countdown video, flip off the lights, or clap a simple rhythm for the children to copy. Play “The Prophet Says” (like “Simon Says”) to line up the children before they move to Bible study.

• countdown video (optional)

TEACH the Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

Introduce the Bible story

- Bible
- bookmark

Place a bookmark at Isaiah 7 in your Bible. Invite a preschooler to open it. Reverently display the open Bible.

SAY • Our story comes from the Bible. The Bible is the most important book. The Bible has God's words in it, and all God's words are true. Today's story is found in the Old Testament Books of Isaiah and Micah. Isaiah and Micah were prophets.

Explain to children that all the stories in the Bible fit together to tell an even bigger story. The Bible tells us the big story of how God rescues sinners through His Son, Jesus.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Story Point Poster
- "Prophets Told About Jesus" video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster

Show the video or tell the Bible story using the provided storytelling tips. Use the bolded version of the Bible story for young preschoolers.

SAY • God had a great plan to rescue people from sin.

God's plan was not a secret plan. The prophets told people about God's plan. They said God would send a Messiah: Jesus! Jesus would be born into the world as a baby. Jesus would live a perfect life and die on the cross to rescue people from sin. **Prophets told about the Messiah.**

Practice the key passage

Cut out the key passage marker and place it at Galatians 4:4-5. Invite a volunteer to open your Bible to the key passage. Read the key passage aloud. Create motions for preschoolers to use as they say the key passage.

SAY • We celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas by remembering that God told the prophets He would send a Savior. At the right time, God sent Jesus to rescue us from sin!

Lead preschoolers in singing familiar Christmas songs that worship Jesus.

- Key Passage Marker
- Key Passage Poster
- Christmas music

Learn the big picture question

SAY • Today we are going to learn a new big picture question: *Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.* God sent Jesus to earth from heaven to rescue people from sin. Rescuing people from sin is a job only God's Son could do.

- Big Picture Question Poster



Missions moment

SAY • Do you have a manger scene at your house?

Manger scenes are also called *nativity sets*. Nativity sets show what happened when Jesus was born.

Show the "Nativity Sets Lead to Ministry" video.

SAY • People in many countries around the world have seen nativity sets, maybe even made them, but they do not know what they mean. They do not know that the baby in a nativity set represents Jesus. Let's pray that missionaries will use these nativity sets to teach others the good news about Jesus.

- "Nativity Sets Lead to Ministry" video

Pray and transition to experience the story

EXPERIENCE The Story



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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

LOW PREP

- Bibles
- children's books
- paper strips or ribbons

Learn about the Bible

Provide several Bibles and several children's books in various colors and sizes. Mark the key passage in the Bibles with strips of paper or ribbons. Place the books and Bibles around the classroom, and give the children time to find them all. Help the preschoolers sort the Bibles from the other books. Explain that all these books are good, but the Bible is a special book because it contains God's message to us about Jesus. Read the key passage aloud to them.

SAY • The Bible is a special book because it is God's words to us. All of the words in the Bible are true! Did you know the whole Bible tells us about God's plan to send Jesus? How did people know Jesus was coming?
Prophets told about the Messiah.

Trace JESUS

- "Trace JESUS" printable, 1 per child
- crayons
- glue
- construction paper or tissue paper

Give a printed "Trace JESUS" printable to each child. Children may decorate the name *JESUS* with crayons if they choose. Help the children trace the outline of the letters with glue. Provide small pieces of colorful construction paper or tissue paper for the children to glue to the name *JESUS*. Talk about God's plan to rescue us from sin by sending Jesus to earth as a baby.

SAY • Long ago, God told the prophets about Jesus. Jesus'

name is on your paper. Do you remember some of the other names the prophet Isaiah called Jesus? (*Immanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace*) **Prophets told about the Messiah.**

Experiment with sound waves

Provide a wide ceramic or glass bowl. On the bowl, place plastic wrap tightly around the opening and drop 30 to 40 grains of dry rice on the plastic wrap. Demonstrate how to put your mouth above the plastic wrap and say “ahhh” very loudly. This should make the plastic wrap vibrate and the rice dance. Give the preschoolers a chance to try this too. You may want to hold the bowl over a plastic tub to catch any rice that dances off the plastic.

- wide glass or ceramic bowl
- dry rice
- plastic wrap
- plastic tub

SAY • God gave us voices so we can talk with one another. When we use our voices, it makes sound waves in the air. The sound waves made the plastic vibrate and bounce the rice. The prophets used their voices to tell the people God’s messages about Jesus. They also wrote these messages down so we could read them in the Bible. **Prophets told about the Messiah.**

Make play dough letters

Write each preschooler’s name on an index card. Provide play dough and letter-shaped cookie cutters. Help preschoolers choose the correct letter-shaped cookie cutters to form their names from play dough. If not enough letter-shaped cookie cutters are available, give the preschoolers craft sticks. Demonstrate to the preschoolers how to flatten the play dough into a “writing tablet.” Help preschoolers print their names on the tablet. Focus more on the process

- index cards
- marker
- play dough
- letter-shaped cookie cutters
- craft sticks (optional)

than the end result.

SAY • All of you have such beautiful names! Today we learned that the prophet Isaiah told us Jesus would have many names. Jesus is called “Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, and Prince of Peace.” These names tell us that Jesus came to help people, rule as a loving King, and bring peace between God and people. **Prophets told about the Messiah.**



child-safe manger
scene

Tell the Christmas story

Set out a child-safe manger scene. Review the story of Jesus’ birth, explaining whom each piece in the set represents. Invite preschoolers to play out the story of Jesus’ birth and practice telling it to others.

SAY • Telling people about Jesus can be as simple as telling a story. The story of Jesus’ birth is a great way to share the gospel. God had a great plan to rescue people from sin. God’s plan was not a secret plan. **Prophets told about the Messiah.** Jesus is the Messiah! Jesus was born into the world as a baby. Jesus lived a perfect life and died on the cross to rescue people from sin.

Snack and review

Play the countdown video to signal the end of activities. Wash hands and gather preschoolers for snack time. Pray, thanking God for the snack.

Serve Christmas cookies for snack. Remind preschoolers that God planned to rescue people from sin by sending the Messiah—His own Son, Jesus. **Prophets told about the Messiah.** Jesus would be born into the world as a baby. Jesus would live a perfect life and die on the cross to rescue people from sin. ***Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.***

Show the Bible story picture as you ask the following questions. Retell parts of the Bible story as needed.

1. What did prophets do? (**Prophets told about the Messiah.**)
2. What does the name *Immanuel* mean? (Immanuel means “God with us.”)
3. What did all of Jesus’ names tell us about Him? (*They told us who Jesus is and what great things He would do.*)
4. Where did the prophet Micah say Jesus would be born? (*in Bethlehem*)
5. ***Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.***

Transition

When preschoolers finish their snack, they may color the Bible story coloring page or play a simple game to practice the key passage or big picture question.

If parents are picking up their children at this time, tell them something that their child enjoyed doing or did well during the session. Distribute the preschool big picture cards for families.

- countdown video (optional)
- Allergy Alert download
- paper cups and napkins
- snack food
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Christmas cookies (optional)

- Bible Story Coloring Page
- crayons
- Key Passage Poster
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Big Picture Cards for Families: Babies, Toddlers, and Preschoolers