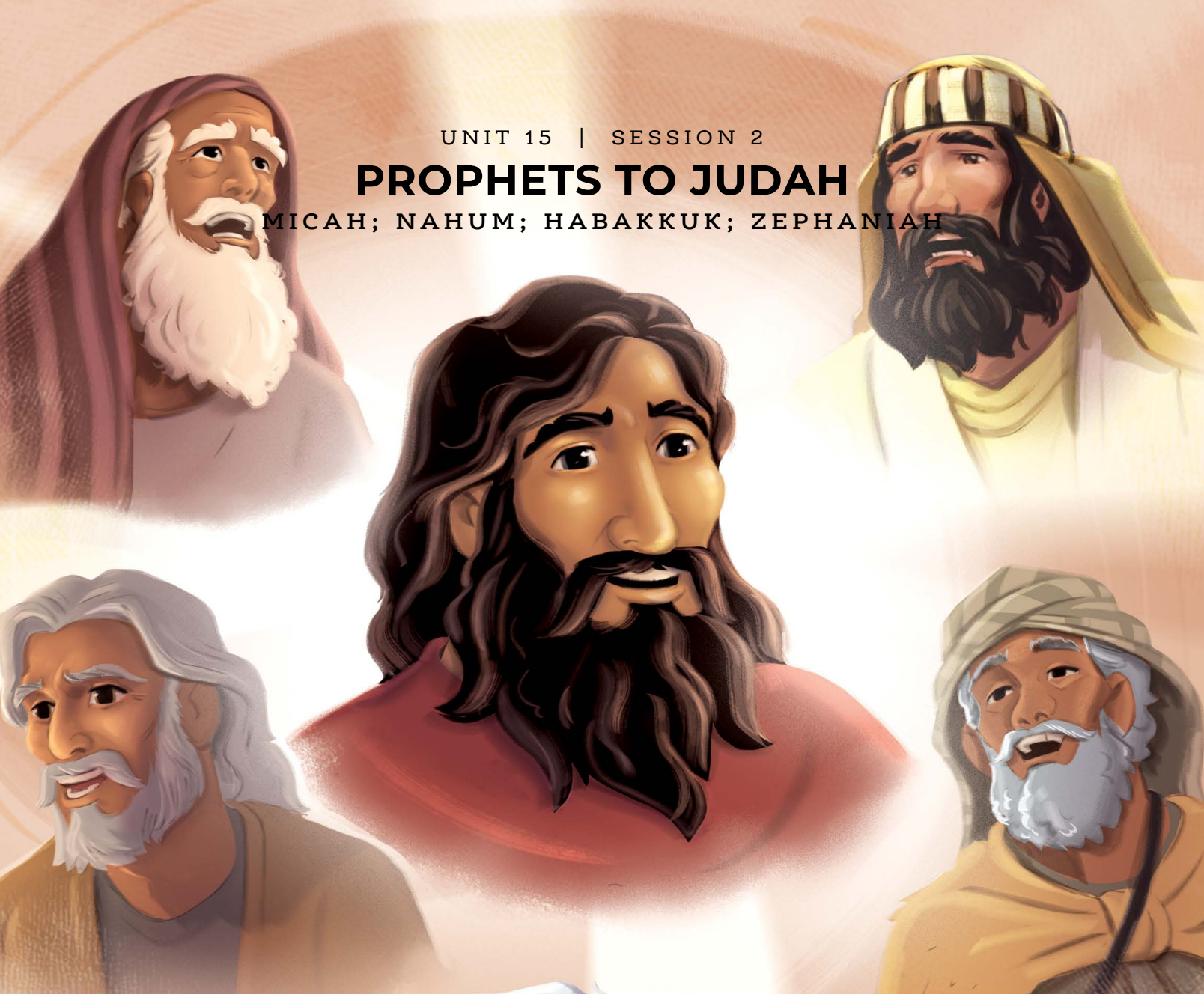


PROPHETS TO JUDAH

MICAH; NAHUM; HABAKKUK; ZEPHANIAH



CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus came to help us know how to turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE: The LORD is good to everyone. Psalm 145:9

BABIES GOSPEL GEMS

- God's people were doing wrong things, and God was not happy.
- God sent special helpers called prophets to talk to His people about doing what was right.
- God promised that everyone who did wrong would be punished.

BIBLE STORY FOR TODDLERS: God's people were doing wrong things, and God was not happy. God sent special helpers called prophets to talk to His people. One helper, Micah, told the leaders to stop taking things that were not theirs. He said one day, a good King would be born in Bethlehem. The prophet Nahum told people that God is strong and patient, but He will punish people who do wrong things. Another prophet, Zephaniah, told people to turn away from idols (pretend gods) and back to God. Habakkuk, the prophet, asked God why He let bad things happen. God promised that people who did wrong would be punished. Habakkuk asked God to be kind; he wanted people to trust in God.



LEARNING Activities

Engage babies in the following activities during the session. In each activity, provide handheld Bibles for babies to handle. Open a Bible to Micah. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you say the gospel gems in a soothing voice. Read the Key Passage Phrase Card. Pray for the babies.

1 SING A HYMN

Sing to the tune of “Amazing Grace”:

“The LORD is good to everyone.
The LORD is good to all.
The LORD is good to everyone.
The LORD is good to all.”

SAY “Is God good to everyone? Yes, Jesus came to help us know how to turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again.”

2 MAKE FACES

Sit babies in leaders’ laps or in horseshoe-shaped pillows. Help babies hold non-breakable mirrors to their faces. Instruct leaders to smile with the babies, and point out the happy faces. Then make sad faces, and point out the not-happy faces.

SAY “God’s people were doing wrong things. Was God happy? No, God was not happy.”

3 TURN BACK

Carry babies in leaders’ arms or safely secure babies in strollers. Take babies on a walk either around the room or in the designated area of the church, repeating the gospel gems and Christ Connection as you walk. When you say, “turn back to God,” turn around and walk the other direction. Support babies as you move, allowing them to feel the difference as you turn. If babies are enjoying the time, add in a question such as, “Can we turn back (turn) to God? Yes! We can turn back (turn) to God!” turning each time you say, “turn.” Consult your church’s safety procedures before removing a child from any room.

SAY “God promised that everyone who did wrong would be punished. Does God want to help us? Yes, Jesus came to help us know how to turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again.”

Check diapers, serve bottles if needed, and release babies to parents according to your church’s security guidelines. Give parents today’s Big Picture Card. Repeat the Christ Connection, gospel gems, and Bible-learning activities for babies who stay a second hour.



LEARNING Activities

Engage toddlers in the following activities. In each activity, show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you review the Bible story. Provide small Bibles for toddlers to handle.

1 CIRCLE TIME

Open your Bible to Micah. Show the Bible Story Picture Poster as you tell the provided toddlers' Bible story. Read the Key Passage Phrase Card, and guide toddlers to say it. Pray for the toddlers.

2 PAINT THE PROPHETS

Draw four stick figures on pieces of paper (one paper per toddler). Underneath each figure, write the name of one of the prophets from today's story (Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah). Give toddlers dot markers, and lead them to paint one of the prophets. Remind toddlers of that prophet's names and what we know about him from today's story.

SAY “ Why did God send special helpers called prophets to talk to His people? That's right, God's people were doing wrong things, and God was not happy. Jesus came to help us know how to turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again. ”

3 SHAKE EGGS

Explain that God sent special helpers called prophets to talk to His people. Give each toddler an egg shaker. Encourage the toddlers to shake the eggs as you tell about Micah; then give another toddler an egg shaker to shake while you tell about Nahum (allow the toddlers to keep shaking as you add eggs). After you tell about each prophet, comment that there are a lot of eggs shaking. God sent His people a lot of prophets!

SAY “ God sent special helpers called prophets to talk to His people about doing what was right. What did God say would happen to everyone who did wrong? Yes, God promised that everyone who did wrong would be punished. ”

4 TURN BACK

Lead toddlers to move across the room in a variety of ways (hopping, crawling, walking, and so forth). When you say, “Turn back!” direct the toddlers to turn around and come back to you. Repeat several times. Say the Christ Connection, reviewing the story as the toddlers play.

SAY “ God sent prophets to help His people know and do what was right. Who came to help us know how to turn back to God? Yes, Jesus! When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again. ”

5 PLAY WITH A NATIVITY SET

Set out a toddler-safe nativity set. Allow toddlers to play with each piece. Observe and ask them questions about each piece. Retell the Bible story as the toddlers play.

SAY “ Did you know Jesus was born in a city called Bethlehem? A long time before Jesus was born, the prophet Micah said a good King would be born in Bethlehem. Do you know who that good King is? Yes, the good King is Jesus! ”

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CHRIST CONNECTION: Jesus came to help us know how to turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again.

KEY PASSAGE PHRASE: The LORD is good to everyone. Psalm 145:9

1 TRANSITION ACTIVITY: JUMP LINES

Lay seven strips of tape in a line along the floor, placing the fourth (or middle) strip sideways. Lead toddlers to step from one taped line to another as they say each word of the key passage phrase. When toddlers reach the sideways line on the word “good,” instruct them to hop on that strip. Continue saying the phrase with other actions, always saving the biggest action to occur as you say “good.” Say the key passage phrase aloud together.

SAY “Who is God good to? Yes, our key passage phrase says, ‘The LORD is good to everyone!’ Jesus came to help us turn back to God. When we trust in Jesus, we can be close to God again.”

2 SING TO A FAMILIAR TUNE

Sing to the tune of “Merrily, We Roll Along.” On the word “everyone,” extend your arms with palms up and fan your hands to show “everyone.” Then on the word “LORD,” point up. “The LORD is good to everyone, everyone, everyone. / The LORD is good to everyone. / Psalm 145 verse 9.”

SAY “Who is God good to? Yes! Our key passage phrase says, ‘The LORD is good to everyone!’”

3 COVER YOUR FACE

Give toddlers sheets of paper with a simple face drawn on it. Allow toddlers to use crayons and color and decorate the faces. Trace toddlers’ hands on another sheet of paper, and cut them out (or use pre-cut paper hands). Remind toddlers that the prophet Zephaniah told the people to turn away from pretend gods and turn back to God. Show toddlers how to put their hands cutouts in front of their paper faces like they are turning away. Assist in gluing or taping the paper hands to the paper faces.

SAY “God’s people were doing wrong things. God was not happy. Did God send special helpers to His people? Yes, Zephaniah told people to turn away from idols (pretend gods) and back to God.”

4 PLAY WITH BABY DOLLS

Set out baby dolls in the home living area, along with toy bottles, blankets, clothing, and so forth. As a toddler cares for a baby doll, help her pretend to teach the baby to do what is right. Remind her that God sent special helpers called prophets to talk to His people. One helper named Micah said a good King would be born in Bethlehem.

SAY “What did Micah tell the people? Yes, Micah said a good King would be born in Bethlehem.”

Check diapers, serve a snack if needed, and release toddlers to parents according to your church’s security procedures. Give parents today’s Big Picture Card to reinforce today’s Bible story, Christ Connection, or gospel gems throughout the week.