

SECTION 2.3

Books of Prophecy



Introduction Activity (5 Minutes)

Option 1: Predictions

What You'll Need: Nothing

STEP 1: Read each of the following predictions. Have kids stand if they think the predictions will come true.

- You will have a flying car by the time you are 30.
- People can live on Mars by the year 2218.
- Someone in this room will grow up and become a doctor.
- Someone in this room will one day be a parent.

STEP 2: Discuss the following questions:

- Why do you think some of these predictions might come true?
- Why do you think some of these predictions won't come true?
- What is the difference between a prediction and a prophecy?

STEP 3: Share these key concepts:

- We have the whole Bible (Genesis to Revelation), but people in the Old Testament had to rely on men to whom God spoke in order for them to hear God's Word.
- These men of God, called prophets, had to give the people the very words God spoke to them.
- The people knew these prophets were from God because they spoke in God's name and what they said came true.

STEP 4: Transition into the main lesson by opening in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you and your kids understand the importance of studying and understanding the Books of Prophecy.

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Introduction Activity (5 Minutes)

Option 2: Prophets in Order

What You'll Need: Sticky notes

PREP: Prepare the sticky notes by writing the name of one book of the prophets on each note.

STEP 1: Divide kids into groups of three or four. Give a Books of Prophecy set to each group.

STEP 2: Give groups one minute to put the titles of the Books of Prophecy in order. Have leaders help groups as needed.

STEP 3: Share these key concepts:

We have the whole Bible (Genesis to Revelation), but people in the Old Testament had to rely on men to whom God spoke.

These men of God, prophets, had to give the people the very words God spoke to them.

The people knew these prophets were from God because they spoke in God's name and what they said came true.

STEP 4: Transition into the main lesson by opening in prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to help you and your kids understand the importance of studying and understanding the Books of Prophecy.

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Main Lesson Activity (10 Minutes)

Option 1: Prophecies Fulfilled

What You'll Need: Bible bookmarked to the verses in the lesson activity, three pieces of poster board (or blank paper), a marker (preferably red)

PREP: Draw a large box in the middle of each of the three pieces of poster board. At the top of the first one, write Isaiah 9:6 and at the bottom, write Luke 1:31. At the top of the second one, write Micah 5:2 and at the bottom, write Matthew 2:6. At the top of the third one, write Isaiah 53:5 and at the bottom, write 1 Peter 2:24.

STEP 1: Ask for kids to raise their hands if they have seen a checklist before. Elaborate that a checklist has boxes that only get checked when something is done. Tell them that sometimes when someone is checking off a box on a checklist, they may even yell the word, "Check!" If you think it would work with your group, let them try yelling, "Check!" Explain to the kids that today we are going to be checking off some boxes that have to do with prophecies given in the Old Testament that the New Testament shows us are about Jesus.

STEP 2: Ask for volunteers to read the verses on the poster board. Have a volunteer read Isaiah 9:6. Share with kids that this prophecy was about the birth of Jesus, the Messiah. Have a volunteer read Luke 1:31, and then help kids recognize how the passage in Luke tells us that Jesus would fulfill the prophecy in Isaiah. After the volunteer finishes reading, ask the group, "Did we hear that Jesus would fulfill that prophecy?" Have everyone together yell "Check!" as you use the marker to write a big check mark in the box.

Continue with the rest of the prophecies and help the kids recognize how God used the prophets to share what would come to pass. See the reference list to check your answers.

Below are listed the verses:

Isaiah 9:6 (prophecy)

Luke 1:31 (Jesus to fulfill)

Micah 5:2 (prophecy)

Matthew 2:6 (Jesus to fulfill)

Isaiah 53:5 (prophecy)

1 Peter 2:24 (Jesus to fulfill)

STEP 3: Share these key concepts. Allow time for kids to ask questions or give responses to your teaching.

- The last 17 books of the Old Testament are known as the Books of Prophecy.
- Prophets were men called by God to warn people about their sin and tell them God's messages, which were called revelations.
- Prophets would often tell about events that would happen in the future. However, sometimes their jobs would be to tell about and explain events that were currently happening to the people.
- Some prophets had specific messages to the Israelites. Jeremiah was to warn the Israelites that they would be punished if they did not stop sinning and start obeying God. His prophecies were fulfilled when Babylon took over Israel.
- Several of the prophets told about the coming Messiah. They shared truths about His birth, life, death, and resurrection. These prophecies were fulfilled and recorded in the New Testament.
- When we study prophecies and their fulfillments, we can see that God and His Word can always be trusted as truth. God ALWAYS keeps His Word.

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Books of Prophecy



Main Lesson Activity (10 Minutes)

Option 2: Prophet Personalities

What You'll Need: Computer, printer, Prophet Personalities Handout, scissors

PREP: Print out a copy of the Prophet Personalities Handout and cut apart the sections.

STEP 1: Ask for three volunteer readers, and give each volunteer a section from the Prophets Personalities Handout.

STEP 2: Have the volunteers read their prophet's overviews. Then share these key concepts:

- The last 17 books of the Old Testament are known as the Books of Prophecy.
- Prophets were men and women called by God to warn people about their sin and tell them God's messages, which were called revelations.
- Prophets would often tell about events that would happen in the future. However, sometimes their jobs would be to tell about and explain events that were currently happening to the people.
- Some prophets had specific messages to the Israelites. For example, Jeremiah was to warn the Israelites that they would be punished if they did not stop sinning and start obeying God. Ezekiel prophesied about Israel's exile and about heaven. Daniel prophesied about future events.
- When we study prophecies and their fulfillments, we can see that God and His Word can always be trusted as truth. God ALWAYS keeps His Word.

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Prophet Personalities Handout

Daniel

Hi! I'm Daniel. You may remember some of the famous stories about me, like the time I was thrown into the lion's den? Many people think that's the only thing I did to show others I believed in and trusted God. But that's not true.

Did you know that God also used me as a prophet? He gave me many different messages to tell the people. In one, God revealed a message to the ungodly King Belthazaar in a strange way. See, King Belthazaar was having this party, and they were REALLY partying. All of a sudden, the people at the party saw a hand writing on the wall! No body, no anything, just a hand!

I was called to the scene, and God gave me the words of the message to share with the king.

There were many other prophecies that God gave me about things that still haven't happened. Even though it may be hard to think about, but the things that I wrote thousands of years ago will still come true. These weren't my words; they were God's Words. I just wrote them down for Him. And because God always keeps His promises, you can know for sure that the prophecies I wrote about the future will come true.

Ezekiel

My name is Ezekiel. I was supposed to work as a priest, but God had another job for me. He gave me many messages to tell His people who had been captured and taken away from their homes. God's messages to me were very different. He often had me do some pretty unusual things to share His messages to His people. One time, I had to build a small model of the city of Jerusalem. Another time I had to cut part of my hair and throw it up into the wind. And then there was the time that I had to bake bread — on poo! Yeah, some of those things were pretty weird and gross, but near the end of my book, I got to share some pretty cool prophecies about heaven. Guys, it's going to be so beautiful there.

Every time God asked me to do something, I always obeyed. God used these unusual examples to show His people how they had sinned against Him, a holy righteous God. I began to understand just how much God hates sin. And I hope that those who read and study my book understand that too.



Prophet Personalities Handout

Jeremiah

I'm Jeremiah. One of my nicknames is The Weeping Prophet. God called me before I was even born to be His prophet, but it was not easy. God wanted me to tell His people, the Israelites, that they had not obeyed. God gave them so many opportunities to turn from their sin, but they didn't. They kept on sinning and disobeying what He commanded them to do. My message to the people was that God was going to punish Israel for their sin. There was going to be another country who would come in and take over the people. This message came true when Israel's enemy, Babylon, defeated Israel. Many of the people were taken from their homes and forced to move far away.

Even though God's people deserved to be punished, He still loved them. In fact, He told me to tell them that He had good plans for them. If they began to seek Him with all their hearts, then He would bring them back. God never gave up on His people, and He will never give up on us either. We can trust in God, because He has a plan and a future for all of us, as long as we seek Him with all of our hearts.