

Prophets Foretell Jesus' Coming

Jeremiah 33:14-16



Worship Theme:



God promised to send a Savior.

Weaving Faith Into Life:



Kids will thank God for keeping his promise to send a Savior.

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
<p>1 Let's Praise God! (up to 25 minutes)</p>	<p>Sing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" • "He Is the Light" • "Into the Bible" • "All Creatures of Our God and King" • "God With Us" • "His Great Love" (Romans 5:8) 	<p>KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i></p> <p>Classroom Supplies: Video equipment, copy of Isaiah's script (see activity), costume</p>

Preschool

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
<p>2 Let's Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes)</p>	<p>The Promised Savior Play a game about God's promise to send a Savior.</p>	<p>Classroom Supplies: CD player, CD of praise music</p>
	<p>Christmas Trees Plant "Christmas trees," and talk about Jesus' family tree.</p>	<p>Classroom Supplies: Paper cups, potting soil, evergreen sprigs, curling ribbon, scissors, pens</p>
	<p>God's Promises Came True Tell good things about Jesus, and sing a song about God's promises.</p>	

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
2 Let's Learn the Point! <i>(up to 25 minutes)</i>	* Tales of the Future Watch a video segment about prophecy.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment
	* The Righteous Branch Look at prophecies about Jesus and put together a Christmas tree.	Classroom Supplies: Artificial Christmas tree, Bibles, paper, pencils
	* A Great Light Discuss prophecies about Jesus, and hang Christmas lights on the Christmas tree.	Classroom Supplies: Bible, Christmas lights, paper, markers, scissors

Session Sequence	What Children Will Do	Supplies
3 Let's Pray! <i>(up to 10 minutes)</i>	The Offering Give their offerings and thank God for sending a Savior.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Offering bowls, Video equipment
	Praise Cheer Praise God for keeping his promise to send a Savior.	
	Come, Let Us Worship Sing a song as a closing prayer.	KidsOwn Worship Kit: <i>KidsOwn Worship DVD</i> Classroom Supplies: Video equipment

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together. Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Section 2. Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

Prophets Foretell Jesus' Coming

Jeremiah 33:14-16

This passage was written nearly 600 years before Jesus was born. The northern kingdom of Israel had fallen to the Assyrians, who had in turn fallen to the Babylonians. Jeremiah also saw the fall of the southern kingdom of Judah to the Babylonians, concluding with the destruction of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.

Despite all that was going on around him, Jeremiah's message in this passage is one of hope. Repeating nearly word-for-word the message he had given in Jeremiah 23:5-6, Jeremiah utters here his most important message about the coming Messiah. This ideal King would be a descendant of David but would rule with more wisdom, justice, and righteousness than any other king had ever done.

This coming Messiah would not only rescue his people from their oppressors, but he would also reunite the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, which had been divided since the death of Solomon more than 300 years earlier. The people would be restored both physically and spiritually and would look to God as their righteousness (Jeremiah 33:16).

After reading this passage, it's easy to understand why people of Jesus' day expected a Messiah who would lead them in throwing off Roman rule and restoring the united kingdom of Israel. From our standpoint in history, we know that Jesus came first as the suffering servant (see Isaiah 53), drawing people to himself through his perfect life and his

message of repentance. One day, however, Jesus will return to complete his fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies and rule as king over all heaven and earth. As we look forward to our celebration of Jesus' birth, we can also look forward to the day that Jesus will return to take those who believe in him to live with him in heaven. That's God's message of hope for Christians in today's broken world!

Devotion for Leaders

Your relationship with Jesus is an amazing gift. And God planned long ago to give you that gift. Thank him for this life-giving blessing!

Weaving Faith Into Your Life: Long ago, God chose to prepare the hearts of his people with the news that a Savior would come. As you prepare for Christmas, take some time to allow God's message of hope and salvation to sink in for you. Choose to believe God's promises—and allow the wonder of Jesus' incarnation to overwhelm you. Spend a few minutes in quiet today, rejoicing in the world-changing miracle of Jesus' birth.

Why We Worship for Leaders

For thousands of years, God reassured people with his promise to send a Savior. The Old Testament is full of prophecies about the promised Savior. God promised that the Savior would bring healing and comfort. God promised that the Savior would be a king from David's family and that he would bring a kingdom of peace and justice. During Advent, we prepare for the coming of the Christ child, and we celebrate the Old Testament prophecies, knowing that each one of them is fulfilled in Jesus. "O come, O come Immanuel, and ransom captive Israel... Rejoice! Rejoice! Immanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!"

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let's Praise God!—Make sure your video equipment is ready. Recruit someone from your congregation to play the part of Isaiah. Photocopy the script in the activity, and give it to your volunteer. Ask the volunteer to rehearse the script several times. Provide a costume for your volunteer—a typical Bible-times robe and beard, for example—and explain when he needs to arrive and how long he'll need to stay.

"Tales of the Future"—Watch "Tales of the Future" at least once before the worship session so you'll be familiar with it.

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

1 Let's Praise God!

Play music videos from the *KidsOwn Worship DVD* as children arrive. Designate greeters to welcome children at the entrance, and ask your greeters to shake hands with the children and welcome them by name.

When all the children have arrived,

Say **Welcome, everyone! Let's take a moment to greet each other. Today we're going to talk about a very important promise, so as we're greeting each other, let's talk about promises. Turn to a friend and say, "Hello." Then tell your friend about a promise you made and about a promise that has been made to you.**

Give the children a moment to greet each other and talk about promises.

Ask • **Why are promises so important?** (Because they make other people happy; because God makes promises to us.)


• **How do we feel when people keep their promises to us?**
(We feel loved; we're happy because someone cares about us.)

Say **A kept promise makes us happy—it gives us joy. Today we're going to talk about a promise that God made and kept. It was a promise that brought a lot of joy to the whole world. Thousands of years ago God promised to send a Savior to the world. And**

he did! God kept his promise by sending his Son, Jesus. Let's sing about the joy of that promise.

 Sing "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee."

Say ▶ **The Old Testament is the part of the Bible that was written before Jesus was born. Many books in the Old Testament tell us about God's promise to send a Savior. The Old Testament told people what Jesus would be called, where he would be born, and what he would do. Let's sing "He Is the Light" to celebrate the fact that the Bible tells us about God's promise to send a Savior to be the light of the world.**

 Sing "He Is the Light."

Ask ▶ **• Why do you think all of God's promises about Jesus are in the Bible?** (So that we could know that God kept the promises; people needed something to look forward to before Jesus came.)

Say ▶ **God really wants us to believe in Jesus. God knows that we need to believe and trust in Jesus to be saved. There's a verse at the end of the book of John that tells us that all the things in that book were written so that we might believe in Jesus. I think that's why all the promises about Jesus were written in the Old Testament. God wanted people to look forward to the Savior, and he wanted to give people ways to know that Jesus was really the Savior. Let's sing!**

 Sing "Into the Bible."

Ask ▶ **• Why was it important for God to send us a Savior?** (Because we make bad choices; because we can't go to heaven without a Savior.)

• Why is it so important for us to believe in Jesus? (We need Jesus to forgive our sins; he is our way to heaven.)

Say ▶ **Let's praise God for promising to send a Savior to us.**

 Sing "All Creatures of Our God and King."

Say ▶ **Now let's listen to what God said about the promised Savior hundreds of years before he was born.**

Invite the person you've recruited to be Isaiah to come in and do a dramatic reading of the script.

Isaiah: My name is Isaiah, and I am a prophet of the Lord. This is what the Lord told me would happen.

“Suddenly there will be no more gloom for the land that suffered... Before those people lived in darkness, but now they have seen a great light. They lived in a dark land, but a light has shined on them. God, you have caused the nation to grow and made the people happy...

“A child has been born to us; God has given a son to us. He will be responsible for leading the people. His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Powerful God, Father Who Lives Forever, Prince of Peace.

“Power and peace will be in his kingdom and will continue to grow forever. He will rule as king on David’s throne and over David’s kingdom. He will make it strong by ruling with justice and goodness from now on and forever. The Lord All-Powerful will do this because of his strong love for his people.” (Isaiah 9:1a, 2-3a, 6-7; New Century Version)

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Say goodbye to “Isaiah.”

- Ask** ▶ • **What did our Isaiah say about the Savior God promised?** (That he will lead the people; he will rule as king.)
- **If you had heard the real Isaiah speak these words hundreds of years before Jesus was born, what would you have thought about the promised Savior?** (He would be powerful; he would rule over everyone; he would bring peace.)

Say ▶ **Let’s celebrate the promised Savior, Jesus!**

▶ Sing “God With Us.”

Say ▶ **God promised to send a Savior to us because he loves us so much. Let’s sing about God’s great love.**

▶ Sing “His Great Love” (Romans 5:8).

Pray ▶ **God, your love really is deeper and higher than anything in this world. You loved us so much you promised to send a Savior to save us from our sins. And you kept your promise. Thank you, God. In Jesus’ name, amen.**

2

Let's Learn the Point!

Preschool Activities, pages 13-14

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let's Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

Elementary Activities

** Tales of the Future*



Play the "Tales of the Future" video. The video shows various prophecies about the future and that only the prophecies in the Bible can be counted on.

Have children form groups of two or three to discuss these questions.



- **Why do you think people are so curious about what the future will be like?** (People want to know what their lives will be later; people are excited about the future; people are nervous about what is going to happen.)
- **Why do you think people keep trying to predict the future when they hardly ever predict it accurately?** (It's fun to think about what the future might be like; people try to make the future into what they want it to be.)
- **What do you think the people thought when God promised to send a Savior?** (They were excited; they didn't believe him.)
- **It took hundreds of years for God's promises about Jesus to come true. Do you think people started to wonder whether God would keep his promise? Why or why not?** (Yes, because they were afraid God had forgotten; no, because they knew God would keep his promise.)
- **If God made you a promise, would you believe it? Why or why not?** (Yes, because God always keeps his promises; yes, because the Bible says God doesn't lie.)



God knew that people needed a Savior. And right from the very beginning, God promised the people that a Savior was coming. That Savior is Jesus. Let's learn more about God's promises about Jesus.

(continued on page 15)

Prophets Foretell Jesus' Coming

Jeremiah 33:14-16

Worship Theme:



God promised to send a Savior.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Christmas Trees—Gather paper cups and potting soil, as well as enough sprigs from an evergreen tree or bush to have one for each child. The sprigs should be 6 to 8 inches long and should be from a soft, non-prickly evergreen. You'll also need curling ribbon in Christmas colors. Curl the ribbon before you cut it into 2- to 3-inch sections.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

- Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
- Have Theo pretend to be God during "The Promised Savior" activity.
- See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today's worship session.



The Promised Savior

You'll need a CD player and a CD of praise music.

Say Today we're talking about how God promised to send a Savior to the people. Let's play a game about God's promise.

Choose one child to pretend to be the Savior. Choose another child to pretend to be God. Ask the "Savior" to hide. Ask "God" to help you with the CD player.

Explain to the children that they should walk around the room while the music plays. When the music stops, everyone should freeze. Have "God" stop the music—or tell you when to stop the music—and say, "Do not worry! Do not fear! The promised Savior will soon be here!" Then have the "Savior" come out of hiding and tap each frozen child on the head so he or she can move again. Have all the children clap and cheer for the "Savior."

Choose different children to pretend to be the Savior and God, and play the game again.

After you've played several rounds of the game, gather the children together.

Say The real God promised many people that he would send a Savior to them. Jesus is the Savior God sent. God kept his promise to send a Savior.

Ask • Do you think the people were happy when Jesus came? Why?

Say God kept his promise to send Jesus. God always keeps his promises. Let's learn more about Jesus, the promised Savior.

Christmas Trees

Help the children write their initials on the bottoms of the paper cups. Then have the children use their hands to scoop potting soil into the paper cups and “plant” the evergreen sprigs so they look like Christmas trees. When the children are finished, have them brush off their hands, or provide wet wipes and have them wipe their hands.

Ask • Do you know what a family tree is?

Say We use a word picture called a “family tree” to show that a group of people all belong to the same family.

Ask • Who’s in your family?

Say All the people in your family—your sisters, your brothers, your aunts, your uncles, your cousins, and your grandparents—all belong on the same family tree.

The Bible tells us that God promised to send a special person to the world—God promised to send Jesus to us. The Bible says that Jesus was part of a very special family tree. The Bible says that Jesus belongs to King David’s family tree.

That means that Jesus is a king like David was a king. Before Jesus was born, the Bible promised that Jesus would be a very good king who would always be fair and do the right thing.

Ask • Do you think the promises about Jesus came true?

Say Let’s decorate our trees to show they’re special family trees.

Have the children decorate the sprigs by placing bits of curling ribbon between the tiny “branches.” Older children will be able to wind the ribbon around the branches.

Say You can take your little trees home to help you remember that Jesus is from a special family tree. Whenever you see a Christmas tree, remember that God promised that he would send a Savior to the world and that the Savior would be a part of King David’s special family tree.

God’s Promises Came True

Say Let’s pretend that you’re God and you want to tell all the people that Jesus is coming. You want them to know that Jesus is really, really special. Let’s think about what we’d say about Jesus if we were God.

Discuss what the children would say about Jesus if they were God. Then play this game. Have the entire group chant, “Hear ye! Hear ye! The Savior is coming. This is what he’ll be like.” Then have one of the children stand up and say something about Jesus, such as “Jesus will love children” or “Jesus will be kind.”

Say God told the people all those things. God told the people that Jesus was kind and gentle and loving. God told them that Jesus would forgive their sins and would help them. The people were excited, and they were impatient while they waited for Jesus. It was just as hard for them to wait for Jesus as it is for us to wait for Christmas. But finally, Jesus was born. All God’s promises came true! Let’s sing a song about God’s promises coming true.

Sing the following words to the tune of “Oh, Christmas Tree.”

At Christmastime, at Christmastime,
God’s promises came true.
At Christmastime, at Christmastime,
God’s promises came true.
A promised Savior was to come
From good King David’s family tree.
At Christmastime, at Christmastime,
God’s promises came true.

(continued from page 12)

* *The Righteous Branch*

You'll need an artificial Christmas tree that comes in numerous pieces.

Ask • **Who can tell me what a family tree is?** (A tree with the names of your family on it; a history of your family.)

Say **The Old Testament tells us about the promised Savior's family tree. Listen to these words from the Old Testament, and listen for the clue about Jesus' family tree.**

"The Lord says, 'The time is coming when I will do the good thing I promised to the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time, I will make a good branch sprout from David's family. He will do what is fair and right in the land'" (Jeremiah 33:14-15, NCV).

Ask • **What does this verse tell us about Jesus' family tree?** (He came from David's family; he was related to King David.)

• **What else does this verse tell us about Jesus?** (Jesus would be fair; he would make things right in the land.)

Show the children the Christmas tree pieces.

Say **Today we're going to set up a Christmas tree in our worship area that will remind us about the promised Savior, the righteous branch from King David's family.**

Hand out Bibles if the children haven't brought their own. Also hand out paper and pencils. Have the children work in groups of three. If you have adult helpers to work with each group, the groups can be a little bigger—up to five children. If preschoolers are present for this activity, make sure that the younger children are paired with older children who can read and write for them. Have the groups each look up Isaiah 11:1-5 and list their discoveries about what the Savior would be like. If you have more than 10 groups of children, you may want to have some of the groups look up Isaiah 9:6-7.

Give the children three or four minutes to work and discuss. Then give each group a branch, and have groups bring their branches to the tree and attach them. As each group adds its branch to the tree, have those children tell the entire group one characteristic of the promised Savior they discovered in Isaiah 11:1-5. Continue until the Christmas tree is completely assembled.

Ask • **Which promises made about Jesus came true?** (All of them; all the promises in the Old Testament.)

• **Why do you think God made so many promises about Jesus?** (To show people what he would be like; to show that he could keep his promises.)

• **How does knowing that Jesus is everything God promised he would be make you feel?** (It makes me feel safe; it makes me feel happy; I know that God keeps his promises to me.)

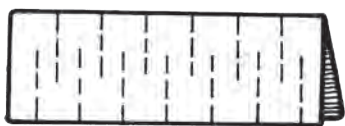
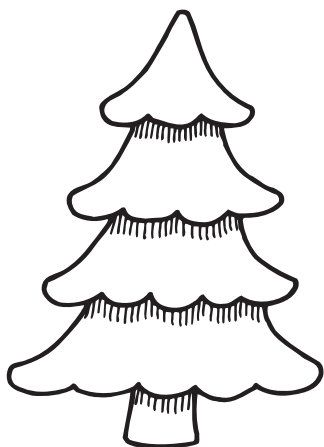


Worship Leader Tip

If preschoolers are present for "The Righteous Branch," be sure to team them up with older children who know how to write.

Worship Leader Tip

The Christmas tree you'll set up today will be used each Sunday between now and Christmas. If possible, use a 5- to 6-foot artificial Christmas tree. If that's not possible, you can make a tree to hang on the wall. Use the illustration in the margin as a guide.



* A Great Light

Say The Old Testament has another prophecy about Jesus. We're going to use this prophecy as we add the first decorations to this tree. Listen while I read from the Old Testament. See if you can discover what decorations we'll add to the tree first.

Read Isaiah 9:2 from an easy-to-understand version of the Bible. Be sure to emphasize the word *light*.

Ask

- **What do you think we'll put on the tree first?** (Lights; light bulbs.)
- **In what way is Jesus a light in the darkness?** (Jesus shows us the right path; Jesus shows us the way to go; he makes sure everyone can see him.)

Say The New Testament says that Jesus is the light of the world. Jesus is the promised Savior the Old Testament was talking about. Let's decorate our tree with lights.

Recruit two or three older children to put Christmas lights on the tree.

Give the other children paper and markers. Make sure there are scissors available, too.

Say On your piece of paper, write about, or draw a picture of, one of the promises about Jesus that came true.

Once the children have done that, show them how to fold and cut their papers to make paper chains. Follow the examples in the margin.

Say When you unfold your piece of paper, notice how it forms a long chain. These chains will remind us of the connection between the Old Testament and the New Testament. God made promises about the Savior in the Old Testament. The New Testament tells us how those promises came true when Jesus was born. Let's decorate the tree with our "promise chains."

Help the children decorate the Christmas tree with the "promise chains." Then plug in the Christmas tree lights. Keep the paper chains away from the light bulbs. And be sure to unplug the lights when you leave the room at the end of the worship session.

3

Let's Pray!

The Offering

Gather the children around the Christmas tree.

Say God promised to send a Savior to us because he loved us and knew that we needed a Savior to save us from our sins. Let's worship him while we collect the offering.

▶ Sing "Love the Lord" (Deuteronomy 6:4-9).

Pass the offering bowl while you sing.

Praise Cheer

Teach the children this cheer—the cadence of the second line is twice as fast as the first line.

We praise you

'Cause your promises come true!

Then invite children to come to the front one by one to call out one special thing about the promised Savior, Jesus. After each child shares, have the rest of the group call out the cheer as a joyful prayer.

Come, Let Us Worship

Say Let's sing our closing song as a prayer to God.

▶ Sing "Crown Him With Many Crowns."

Dismiss the children quietly.

