

General Church Education



Prophecies of the Lord's Birth

Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7; Micah 5:2

Lesson 27

Jacob's Ladder Religion Lessons

Level 3: The Lord Is Our Lawgiver

For ages 8-9 years

Prophecies of the Lord's Birth

Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7; Micah 5:2

For Parents and Teachers

A testament is a covenant or a solemn agreement between God and people. The Old and New Testaments in the Word tell about the covenants the Lord made with people on earth. In the Old Testament the Lord made covenants with the first people, with Noah and with the patriarchs of the ancient Hebrews. The Lord promised that He would take care of the people and protect them if they would abide by His laws. Over and over again people broke their covenant with the Lord. Through Moses and the prophets of the Old Testament the Lord continued to show people their waywardness and encouraged them to change.

By the time the Lord was born on earth, the power of the hells had grown so strong that every spark of Divine truth had been perverted. The Jewish leaders, the priests, scribes and Pharisees no longer led people in obedience to Jehovah but to themselves. They had added regulations to religious practices to make themselves more powerful and wealthy. Through these dark and desperate times of the Old Testament the Lord gave prophecies of His coming to keep hope alive. For many generations a few good people looked for the Lord and hoped that He would come during their lifetime.

Ideas for Children

- The Lord came on earth as a human baby with a Divine soul.
- The Lord gave prophecies in the Old Testament to prepare for His birth.
- The prophecies were fulfilled in the New Testament.

From the Writings

By genuine visions are meant visions or sights of those things which have real existence in the next life, and which are nothing else than real things that may be seen with the eyes of the spirit but not with those of the body. They are visible to a person when his interior sight is opened by the Lord, that is, the sight of his spirit, for a person is a spirit clothed with a body. Such were the visions of the prophets. When this sight is opened the things which have actual existence among spirits are seen in light brighter than midday light of the world.
Arcana Coelestia 1970

Prophecies of the Lord's Birth

Genesis 49:10; Numbers 24:17; Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7; Micah 5:2

Words to Understand

prophecy—a promise made by the Lord that a future event will take place

virgin—a woman who has never given herself to a man

conceive—to become pregnant

zeal—deep love of something

scepter—a king's staff or rod that has jewels or decorations

scripture—the sacred writings of the Word of God

scribe—a person who knows the Jewish law and makes handwritten copies of it

Pharisee—a Jewish religious leader at the time of the Lord's coming

Prophecies from the Old Testament

We start to prepare for celebrating Christmas with this lesson. It is about some of the prophecies of the Lord's coming and about how the prophecies came true. A prophet is someone who speaks for the Lord. The prophets all spoke the words that the Lord gave them to speak. At the time the Old Testament was written, there were prophets who told people that the Lord would be born into the world. They foretold that He would live among people as their savior, to save them from the hells. These prophecies were written down and kept. People told them to their children and their chil-



dren's children. They kept them and remembered them. No one knew when the Lord would be born, but they knew to look for certain signs.

These prophecies spread far and wide. Even foreign people who did not have the written Word of the Old Testament knew of the early prophecies. So good people everywhere waited for the Lord to be born on earth. These were messages of encouragement and hope for all good people who wanted to love and obey the Lord. Those who remained faithful would be prepared for His coming and would joyfully receive Him.

The Lord Would Come to Earth

You know that the Lord always was. Before

the sun, stars, the world or anything else was made, the Lord was. He created the universe. He made the earth with all the plants, animals and people. The Lord made a beautiful place for us to live. However, it did not take long for people to begin making poor choices. They listened to the evil spirits who wanted them to do bad things. Even the leaders of the Jewish nation, the scribes and Pharisees, made it difficult for people to find the Scriptures that would lead them to the Lord. These leaders added traditions of their own to the Word of God. They were more interested in increasing their own reputation, honors and money than they were in teaching the people the truth. Remember that at this time most people could not read and learn the truth for themselves. When the time came when most people had trouble knowing right from wrong, the Lord had to come directly on this earth. He had to show Himself to people so they would believe in Him and learn again the way to go to heaven and to become angels.



A Prophecy from the Book of Genesis

Let’s look at the first prophecy from ancient times and see what clues are found there about the Lord’s coming. **Read Genesis 49:10.**

Did you notice the clue, “The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh comes”? Judah is one of the twelve tribes of Israel. Since the scepter is a sign of a king’s power, this prophecy is telling that one day a king will come from the tribe of Judah. He would be a special king and lawgiver! It would be the Lord Himself. “Shiloh” means peace. This is also one of the Lord’s names. He is sometimes called the Prince of Peace because all peace comes from Him. So “until Shiloh comes” means until the Lord who is the Prince of Peace comes.

Balaam’s Prophecy

After the children of Israel left Egypt and were traveling in the wilderness, the prophet Balaam announced a prophecy. He meant to curse Israel, but the Lord would only let him speak about the future. **Read Numbers 24:17.**

What clues do you find here? Would the Lord be coming soon? This prophecy told the people that the Lord would not come for a long time because he said, “but not now,” and “but not near.” He is called a Star because He would bring light or understanding to people in the world.

Once again a scepter is mentioned because the Lord would be a King. Moab and Sheth were enemies of Israel. When this prophecy mentions destroying these enemies, the meaning is that the Lord would fight evil and destroy false ideas about Himself.

Prophecies in the Book of Isaiah

Later in the history of Israel, after they had settled in the Holy Land and become a strong nation, the Lord sent a great prophet named Isaiah to them. Among Isaiah's prophecies are found some very beautiful ones concerning the Lord's coming into the world. These foretellings added more clues to help recognize the Lord for those who looked for His coming.

Read Isaiah 7:14; 9:6, 7.

These prophecies give specific information about the coming of the Lord. A virgin would have a Son and call His name Immanuel. "Immanuel" means God-with-us. The names in the next verses give the idea that this Son will be like no other. He will be a strong governor or ruler. He will be mighty and bring peace to eternity. As a counselor He will help us when we are in trouble and give us wise leadership as only the Lord can do.



A Prophecy from the Book of Micah

The last prophecy that we will look at in this lesson is one from Micah. His book is a short one in the Old Testament but it contains hopeful messages. In this one we find another clue about where the Lord would be born. **Read Micah 5:2.**

In what town would the Lord be born? (Bethlehem.) For those who looked for the Lord to come, there were now many clues in the Scripture of the Old Testament. These prophecies kept hope alive through many dark years. They were dark times because people looked for a good and wise leader and none appeared. In the next three lessons we will see how these and other prophecies came true.

Discussion Ideas

- People can serve a variety of roles at the same time—such as father, husband, brother, uncle. Although not quite the same, a comparison might be made with the Divine, who remained “in charge of the universe” while living on earth.
- Why don't we know what will happen in future? We can learn from the past, but not knowing the future protects our freedom.

Activity Overview | Prophecies of the Lord's Birth

Recitation

Learn the recitation by heart.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him."

When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel. Matthew 2:1-6

Songs

City of David Bethlehem

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-city-of-david-bethlehem/>

From the Eastern Mountains

Listen or download at <https://www.newchurchvineyard.org/resource/song-from-the-eastern-mountains/>

Projects

Choose one or two activities.

- Activity 1 | Advent Calendar Jar
- Activity 2 | Prophecy Christmas Tree Ornaments
- Picture to Color—Balaam's Prophecy (Numbers 24:17)

Additional Activity Ideas

- A prophecy foretells something about the future. What would it be like to know the future? Do you think it would be a good or a bad thing?
- When the prophets foretold the Lord's coming, some people ignored them, others wondered what they meant and others began to think about how they might receive the Lord. What kind of person might you have been? Why?
- Make a list of things you hope for in the future.

Activity 1 | Advent Calendar Jar

Decorate a jar and fill it with 24 Christmas quotes from the Word. Pull out one quote each day and read it aloud.

Materials Needed

glass jar large enough for a child to put a hand in and reach a slip of paper, *or* a large clear disposable cup

star stickers, old Christmas cards, and silver or gold permanent markers to decorate the outside of the jar

Advent Jar Christmas Quotations

scissors

crayons or markers

Directions

1. Decorate a jar or plastic cup with star stickers and numbers from one to twenty-four using silver or gold permanent markers. Write “Merry Christmas” or “Happy Christmas” on the jar.
2. Decorate the 24 Christmas quotes provided on the *Advent Calendar Jar Christmas Quotations* page.
3. Cut the quotes apart.
4. Fold each quote in half so the text cannot be seen.
5. Put the folded quotes into the jar.
6. Keep the jar in a place where it is often passed or easily seen, such as the dining table. Each day, pull one quote out of the jar and read aloud.

Activity 1 | Advent Calendar Jar Christmas Quotations

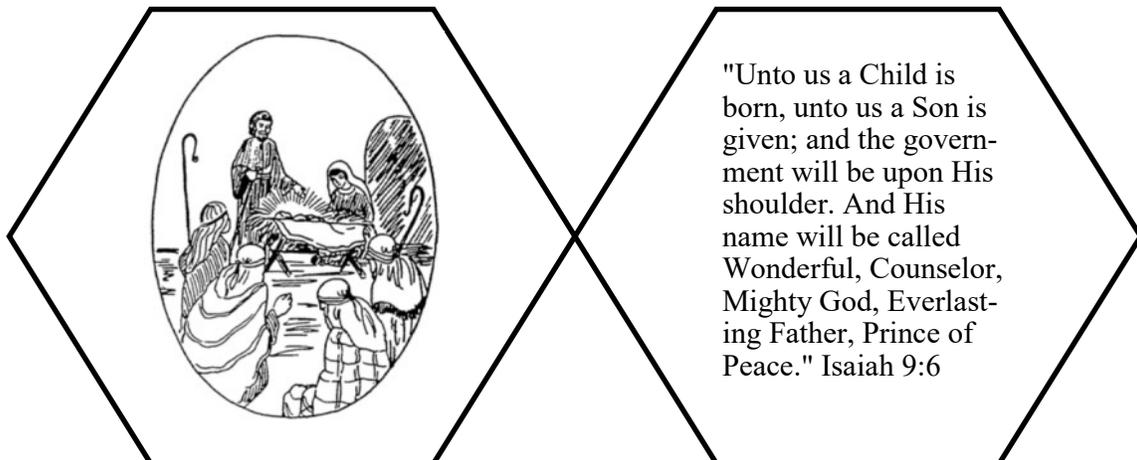
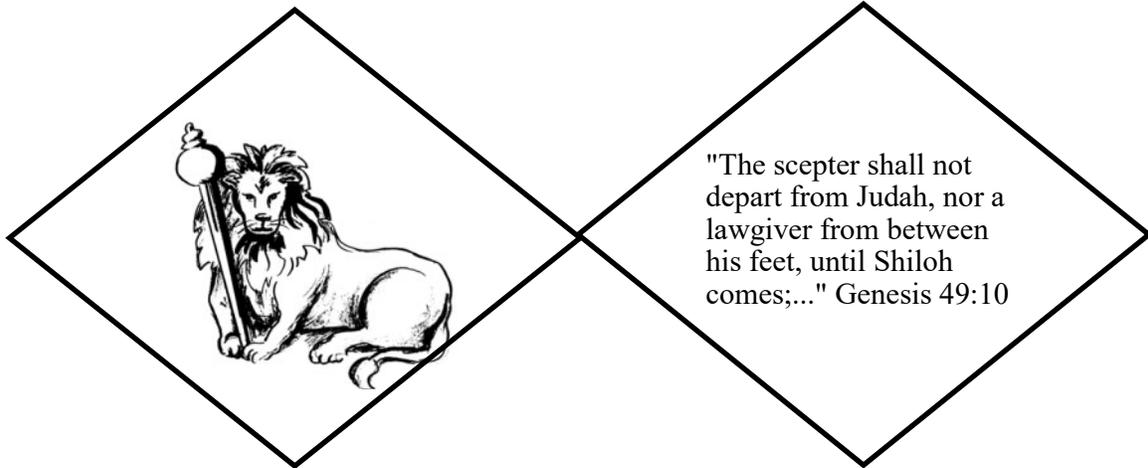
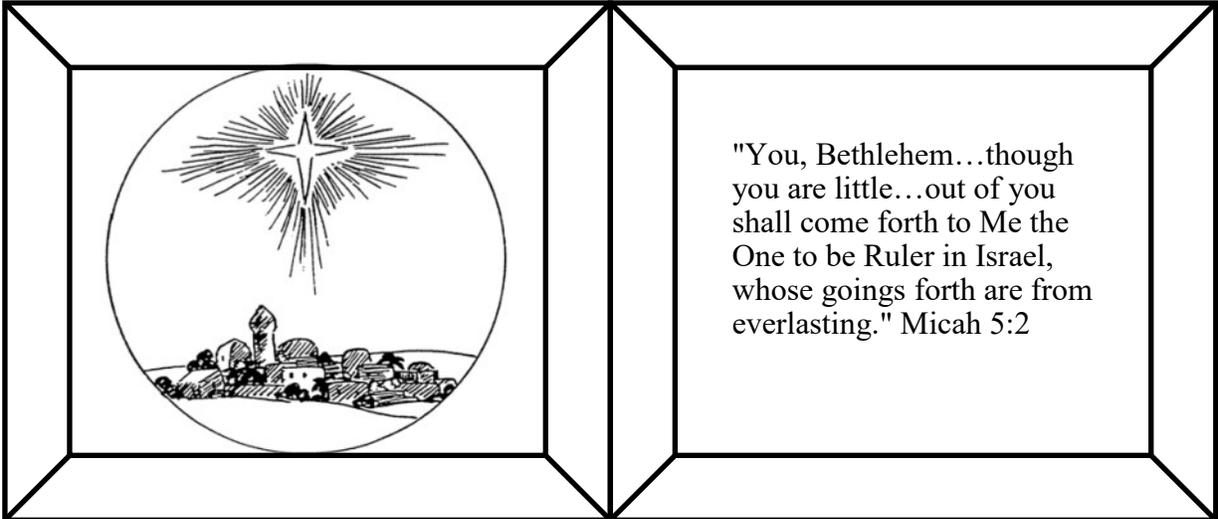
<p>“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15).</p>	<p>“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people” (Genesis 49:10).</p>
<p>“The virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).</p>	<p>“I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; a Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel” (Numbers 24:17)</p>
<p>“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light” (Isaiah 9:2)</p>	<p>“Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace, there will be no end” (Isaiah 9:6-7).</p>
<p>“There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord” (Isaiah 11:1-2).</p>	<p>“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them” (Isaiah 11:6).</p>
<p>It will be said in that day: “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation” (Isaiah 25:9).</p>	<p>Behold, the Lord will come with a strong hand... He will feed His flock like a shepherd; He will gather the lambs with His arm (Isaiah 40:10,11).</p>

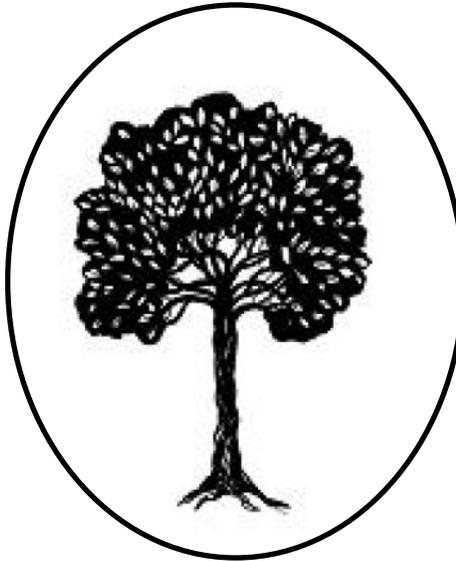
Activity 1 | Advent Calendar Jar Christmas Quotations

<p>“I will raise to David a Branch of righteousness; a King shall reign and prosper, and execute judgment and righteousness in the earth” (Jeremiah 23:5-6)</p>	<p>“I was watching in the night visions, and behold, One like the Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven! His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away” (Daniel 7:13, 14).</p>
<p>“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be ruler in Israel” (Micah 5:2).</p>	<p>“The Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, ‘He is coming’” (Malachi 3:1).</p>
<p>Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:1-2).</p>	<p>“Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David. Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:68,69,78,79).</p>
<p>Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:26-28, 31,33).</p>	<p>[The angel said to the shepherds] “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:11,13,14).</p>
<p>It In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the light shines in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. That was the true Light which gives light to every man who comes into the world (John 1:1-5,9).</p>	<p>Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. An angel of the Lord appeared to him [Joseph] in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and They shall call His name ‘Immanuel’” (Matthew 1:18,20-22).</p>

Activity 2 | Prophecy Christmas Tree Ornaments

You will need 2 pipe cleaners, scissors, tape, and crayons or markers to complete this project. Color and then cut out the ornaments. Be careful not to cut them apart on the fold. Cut each pipe cleaner into thirds. Tape a pipe cleaner segment to the back of side so that it sticks out the top. Bend to form an ornament hanger. Tape the sides of the ornament together to complete the project.





"There shall
come forth a
Rod from the
stem of Jesse,
and a Branch
shall grow out
of his roots."
Isaiah 11:1



"I see Him, but not now; I be-
hold Him, but not near; a Star
shall come out of Jacob;..."
Numbers 24:17



"Behold, the virgin shall con-
ceive " Behold, the virgin
shall conceive and bear a
Son, and shall call His name
Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14

