



LARGE GROUP LESSON

BOTTOM LINE:

The prophets told of the coming King to give the people hope.

OBJECTIVE:

Kids will learn that birth of Jesus was foretold by prophets hundreds of years before that first Christmas.

KEY PASSAGE:

Isaiah 9:2-7. Isaiah tells of the coming King.

INTRO

Christmas is coming soon. Different things might come to your mind when you think of Christmas. Some people think of gifts under the tree. Some people think about Santa Claus and his reindeer. Some people think about singing Christmas carols or twinkling lights or getting two weeks off of school.

All of those things are great, but most of us know that the real reason for Christmas is Jesus. Christmas is where we celebrate and remember the birth of Jesus. It's a time where we can stop and think about how much God must love us if he was willing to send us his Son. That's a pretty great thing to think about.

But for a few minutes, I want you to pretend with me. We're going to pretend that we've never heard of Jesus. And it's not because we've never been to church or because no one has ever told us about him. The reason we haven't heard about Jesus is because he hasn't been born yet. Let's go back in time and pretend that we are living seven hundred years before Jesus was born.

We live in city of Jerusalem. It's not a happy place to live. Jerusalem used to be the main city in the powerful kingdom of Israel. Israel was God's nation. But not any more. The kings of Israel and the people stopped following God, and that got them into all kinds of trouble. They started getting attacked by their enemies, like the Assyrians and the Babylonians.

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When they weren't fighting outsiders, they were fighting amongst themselves. Eventually, the nation broke into two: the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah.

Since we live in Jerusalem, we're a part of the Kingdom of Judah. Like I said, it's not a very happy place to live. We're sad and scared, and we feel like we're alone. It seems like God has abandoned us. But the good news is, He hasn't. God loves us.

God sends a prophet named Isaiah to us. A prophet is a man or woman who delivers a message from God. And the message Isaiah gives us is this: God loves you. And because he loves you he wants you to have hope. He wants you to turn from the bad things you've done. And the best news of all: God will send the world his Son, a new king who will rule forever. The Savior of the world.

That's Jesus. Here are some of the words Isaiah spoke describing Jesus to the people who had never met him:

READ Isaiah 9:2-7

MAIN POINT

Isaiah tells us that we have been walking in darkness. It's hard to know where to go when the way is dark. But he describes meeting Jesus as "seeing a great light." Isaiah uses many words to describe Jesus. He calls him a Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace.

The people of Judah were looking for a new king. A strong and powerful King who would protect them from their enemies. God let them know through Isaiah, that Jesus would be their King (or prince), but that he would not have a kingdom of war. His would be a kingdom of peace.

In most kingdoms, the regular people can't just go up to the king anytime they want. But Isaiah tells us that Jesus is our Counselor. That means we can come to him anytime we want and talk to him, share our troubles, seek his help.

Isaiah also tells us that Jesus is our Mighty God. Jesus is a strong king who can handle any problem we bring to him and can help us through every scary time that we face. The words Everlasting Father remind us that we are God's children and Jesus' love for us will never end.

DRIVE IT HOME

I'd say all in all, Isaiah delivered a pretty terrific message to the people. It was a message that they really needed to hear. The people were sad and afraid. They needed hope. They needed to know that God loved them. They needed to know that Jesus was coming.

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Sometimes we're sad and afraid too. We might feel hopeless. We might need reminding that God loves us. When those times come, we can always turn to Jesus for comfort, strength, love, and peace.

CLOSE WITH A SIMPLE PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for sending people into our lives that tell us about Jesus. May the message of Christmas give us hope and peace.

*In Jesus' name,
Amen*