**Christmas Prophecies & The Best Gift of All**

**Christmas Lesson Week One – Elementary**

*Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:1-2, John 3:16*

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**Opening Activities:**

1. Beforehand, have a small Christmas tree set up in the corner of your room. As the kids arrive, give them different ornaments and decorations to help decorate the tree. Play Christmas music as they are doing this. Say: Christmas is coming soon! It is fun to decorate for Christmas and to celebrate Christmas, isn’t it? And it’s fun to get and give gifts on Christmas day! Today we are going to talk about the greatest gift of all! (If you don’t want to have a Christmas tree set up, you could do the same thing with a bulletin board. Draw a Christmas tree and have the kids draw/color/glue decorations on that tree.)

2. Have a gift wrapping race! Divide your kids into groups. Give each group tape, wrapping paper, and a box. They have to be the first group to wrap their “present”. The catch? Each person can only use one of their hands --and NOT the hand they normally use! For example, if they write with their right hands, they can only use their left hands for this task! Good luck! When the kids finish, laugh at the experience (and the wrapping job) and say: You guys did a pretty good job wrapping these gifts. Wrapping gifts at Christmas time can be fun. It is fun to give and get gifts, isn’t it? Today we are going to talk about the very best gift ever given – and this gift is the reason we celebrate Christmas today!

3. Bring in a few of your favorite Christmas gifts from years past. Show the kids these gifts, telling them why you like them so much. Then ask the kids: What was one of the best Christmas gifts you’ve ever gotten? Let a few of the kids answer. Say: Can anyone tell me exactly what you are going to get for Christmas this year? How about 3 years from now? Who can tell me exactly what gifts will be under their Christmas tree ten years from now? No one can honestly answer those questions – we just don’t know. There was one gift, however, that came 2000 years ago, and several people told us exactly how this gift was going to come – hundreds of years BEFORE that gift arrived! We are going to talk about this very special gift today.
The Lesson:

**Beforehand:** Cut out the Scripture strips at the end of this lesson, put each scripture strip in a box and wrap it like a present. If you have a Christmas tree set up in the room, put the Scripture strip presents under the tree. (You can also use stockings and have one Christmas strip in each stocking if you prefer).

You will also need either one large present with one large cross inside (or several little crosses – one to send home with each child), or several small presents wrapped with crosses inside (enough for each child to have his/her own present). These crosses can be as simple as a cross cut out of construction paper.

Gather the kids together and have them sit in a circle. Point to the tree and say, *Christmas will soon be here. On Christmas, we remember the greatest gift ever given – the gift of Jesus Christ!* Jesus came to earth as a baby over 2,000 years ago... but did you know that it was prophesied that he would come long before that? Hold up your Bible. *This Bible is divided into two sections – the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament tells about the history of God’s people before Jesus came to earth as a baby. It starts with creation and ends about 400 years before Jesus was born. In this section of the Bible are some prophecies that were spoken about the birth of Jesus – hundreds of years before He was born – and EACH ONE happened, just like it was said!* Today, we are going to look at some of these prophecies.

Take the first present out from under the tree. Play some music while the kids pass the present around the circle. When the music stops, whoever has the present needs to open the present, take out the Scripture Strip, and read the verse on the Scripture strip. Discuss each verse right after it is read. Then repeat the game until all the Scripture strips have been read and discussed.

**Discussion Guide:**

1. Isaiah 11:1-2: These verses tells us that Jesus would be from the family of Jesse – who was the father of King David. In other words, Jesus would be born into the same family that King David was! This happened! Both of Jesus’ earthly parents – Mary and Joseph – were in the family of King David!
2. Jeremiah 23:5-6: These verses also tell us that Jesus would be born from the same family as King David. King David himself was even promised that one day one of His descendants would be a king that would reign forever – and Jesus does! Jesus’s kingdom will never end!

3. Isaiah 7:14: This verse tells us that Jesus would be born of a virgin – a woman who is not married and had never been with a man like a married woman is! Guess what? Jesus’s earthly mother was Mary – a young lady who was not yet married and had never been with a man. This is a miracle – but it really happened – just like Isaiah said it would! This verse also tells us that His name would be Immanuel. Do you know what Immanuel means? It means “God with us”. Jesus was God coming down to earth to be right here with us!

4. Micah 5:2: This verse tells us EXACTLY where Jesus was going to be born! What town did it say? The town of Bethlehem. Micah wrote these words hundreds of years before Jesus was born – and they came true! Jesus’s earthly parents had to travel to Bethlehem right before Jesus was born and Jesus ended up being born while they were there – just like Micah had prophesied hundreds of years before!

5. Psalm 72:10: What does this verse sound like it is prophesying? After Jesus was born, some people called Magi (also known as wise men or kings) came looking for him. They saw a special star in the sky that told them a special king had been born, so they went searching for him. They brought him special gifts – does anyone know what they were? Gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. These verses in Psalm predicted that those kings would come looking for Jesus and that they would bring him gifts!

6. Jeremiah 31:15: These verses tell of something very sad that would happen close to Jesus’s birth. When the Magi went looking for Jesus, they went to the palace first. That makes sense, doesn’t it? If you are looking for a king, wouldn’t you expect him to be in the palace? However, Jesus wasn’t in the palace – but King Herod was. When King Herod heard that a baby had been born who would one day be king, he got very jealous. He ordered all the baby boys age two and under to be killed! That made so many people very, very sad . . . which is what this verse is talking about. Jeremiah told what King Herod would do hundreds of years before it happened!

When all the gifts have been opened, say: All of those verses we just read were written by people hundreds of years before Jesus was born – and each one of those verses
happened just as they were written! Isn’t that amazing to think about? God had the plan to give us this greatest gift of all from the very beginning!

But what was so special about the gift of Jesus? Why did we need a gift like that?

Take out the last present. (If it is possible, have individual crosses wrapped for each of your kids so that they can each open their own present. You could also do this with one large box that has several little crosses in it and pass the crosses out after opening the last present.)

Say: Jesus was a very special gift. He never did anything wrong! He lived a perfect life, and when He grew up, He gave us an even greater gift. Do you know what that gift was? There’s a hint in these presents. Let’s open them and see!

Open the last present (or give each kid a present and let them open up their own present to reveal the cross inside. Say: When Jesus was older, He took the punishment for every wrong thing we have ever done by dying on a cross. That’s what this cross is for! This cross can help us think about and remember that Jesus died for us!

Jesus died and was buried, but three days after He died, He rose from the dead! He was alive again and many people saw Him, talked to Him, and ate with Him! Jesus is alive today and He is getting heaven ready for us. One day, we can go to heaven and be with Jesus.

You see, Jesus truly was – and is – the greatest gift of all!

Read John 3:16 from your Bible.

End with a prayer – thanking God for sending the greatest gift of all – Jesus!

**Additional Activities:**

1. Make your own little town of Bethlehem gingerbread houses. Find directions on how to do this here: [https://www.happinessishomemade.net/make-graham-cracker- gingerbread-houses/](https://www.happinessishomemade.net/make-graham-cracker- gingerbread-houses/)
2. Make a cross Christmas ornament. Find one here: 
https://premeditatedleftovers.com/naturally-frugal-mom/cross-ornament-craft-kids/

3. Make chocolate covered crosses using pretzel rods, melted chocolate chips and sprinkles! Find instructions here: https://eerdlings.com/forty-days-of-crafts-chocolate-dipped-pretzel-cross/. For added fun, let the kids add sprinkles to their crosses. Talk about the gift that Jesus gave when He died on the cross for our sins!

4. Make a Christmas wreath depicting the different prophecies and how they came true. Use paper plates and paper muffin tins (red and green ones would look nice). Give the kids the red and green tins and have them draw pictures to represent the different verses you read today on each tin (a different story on each tin). Help them cut the center out of the paper plate and then glue the tins to the paper plate. Put a bow on the top. (You can print the attached one on red or green construction paper and let them use that one if you want).
Christmas Scripture Strips

Isaiah 7:14 "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isaiah 11:1-2 "There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him . . ."

Jeremiah 23:5-6 "Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely . . . and this is the name by which he will be called: The LORD our righteousness."

Micah 5:2 "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days"

Psalm 72:10 "May the kings of Tarshish and of the coastlands render him tribute; may the kings of Sheba and Seba bring gifts!"

Jeremiah 31:15 "Thus says the Lord: A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping. Rachel is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more"