



## The Promised Child

### Leader's version

**Check in** – ask everyone, including the leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

This Bible study can be used to introduce the book 'The Promised Child'. If you would like free copies of this book to give to prisoners, please email [gillian@tfcministries.org.uk](mailto:gillian@tfcministries.org.uk)

Explain that 'prophecy' is when God speaks, by His Holy Spirit, through one person to tell other people God's message. We are going to investigate some prophecies in the Old Testament and see how they were fulfilled in the birth of Jesus of Nazareth.

### What does the passage say and mean?

90 minutes

1. Read Genesis 3 v 1-15 (with emphasis on v15). This is the account of the first time people sinned (rebelled against God) and the curse that God then put on the devil (the snake). What prophecy do we see in v15?

*There will be enmity between the devil and the woman down through the generations. The woman's offspring (descendant) will crush Satan's head but Satan will strike the offspring's heel.*

2. Read Luke 2 v 6-7. Whose birth are we reading about? How do you think this birth might link up with the prophecy in Genesis 3 v 15?

*The birth of Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus is the 'offspring of the woman' who will 'crush Satan's head' but be 'struck on the heel'.*

3. Read Mark 10 v 45. How does this verse help us understand Genesis 3 v 15?

*Jesus, who was fully God and fully human, died on the cross to 'pay our ransom'. He died to pay our debt for sin, so that we can be forgiven and have eternal life with Him. He 'crushed Satan's head' by taking away Satan's power over us. But Satan 'struck his heel' in Jesus' suffering and death. Jesus' victory over Satan is*

*complete – Satan’s head is crushed. Satan’s attack on Jesus was for a limited amount of time and was reversed by the resurrection – it was only a bite, not a lethal wound.*

4. Read Isaiah 7 v 14 and 8 v 3. God gives this prophecy to a king of Judah as a sign of His power and authority over the political situation Judah was facing. What is the sign and how was it fulfilled in the prophet’s lifetime?

*That the virgin would be with child and give birth to a son, called Immanuel. It is fulfilled in Isaiah’s lifetime by his own wife (presumably a new wife) conceiving and having a child. The detail about the name is not fulfilled in this child’s birth.*

5. Read Matthew 1 v 18-25. Seven hundred years after Isaiah, the prophecy was fulfilled again, this time to completion. How does the birth of Jesus fulfil Isaiah’s prophecy?

*Mary, who is a virgin, conceives a son by divine intervention. Mary and Joseph are both told to call Him Jesus, which means ‘the Lord saves’. Although not formally named Immanuel at His birth, Jesus is later recognised as Immanuel, ‘God with us’.*

6. Read Micah 5 v 2. What detail about the birth of a ruler over the nation of Israel do we read about in this prophecy, which was given 700 years before Jesus was born?

*A ruler ‘whose origins are from of old’ will be born in Bethlehem.*

7. Read Matthew 2 v 1&4-6. The wise men come looking for a king and consult with King Herod to locate him. Where was Jesus born?

*Bethlehem. The answer given to King Herod shows that this prophecy was well known to the chief priests.*

8. What should King Herod and the Jewish priests have understood by Micah’s prophecy?

*That the baby who had just been born in Bethlehem was the Christ – the anointed one of God, the person for whom the Jews had been waiting for over a thousand years, who would save them.*

**?**

We are starting to see that the birth of this baby was prophesied in detail many years before the event. Why do you think God gave these prophecies?

*The fulfillment of the prophecies shows us that God was completely in control of the event. They show us that the birth of Jesus was planned long before it happened. It was no accident. God’s plan to rescue us rolled into operation immediately the first sin was committed. From then on God kept giving signs to His people to remind them that He would rescue them from their sin. As the prophecies got more and more specific, the odds of them being fulfilled by chance became impossible.*

9. Read Matthew 2 v 9-11. The wise men bring gifts to the child and His mother. What are the three gifts?

*Gold, frankincense (an aromatic resin from the dried sap of a tree), myrrh (used in temple incense, also used to embalm the dead).*

*The three gifts are themselves prophetic about what will happen to the baby when He grows up:*

*Gold symbolises Kingship*

*Frankincense was used by Priests in the temple offerings. (Old Testament priests were set apart by God to be the 'middle-man' between sinful mankind and holy God. Only the priests could sacrifice animals on behalf of the people to pay for their sins).*

*Myrrh symbolises Suffering*

*Explain that we are now going to look at some OT prophecies about these things.*

Questions 10-12 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. You need to write them on flip-chart sheets for the group to work on in pairs.

10. **SDL Gold for a King:** Read 2 Samuel 7 v 12-13. This prophecy was made to King David. What does God say will happen to one of David's descendants?

*He will be a king of an eternal kingdom.*

11. **SDL Incense for a Priest:** Read Psalm 110 v 4. This psalm, written 1000 years before Jesus was born, is well recognised as referring to the coming Christ. What does this verse tell us about the Christ?

*He will be an eternal priest. (Melchizedek was a priest who blessed Abram after a battle, Genesis 14).*

12. **SDL Myrrh for Suffering:** Read Isaiah 53 v 3. What does this verse, written 700 years before Jesus was born, tell us about the Christ?

*He will suffer and be rejected.*

13. **Gold for a King:** A king is one who rules and reigns. Read John 14 v 15. What does it mean to live with Jesus as your King?

*We listen to, believe and follow Him. We live His way, not our own. We discover His way only in the Bible.*

14. **Incense for a Priest:** Read Hebrews 7 v 27. What does this verse tell us about Jesus as our Priest?

*Jesus made the ultimate sacrifice by giving His own life to pay for our sins. This sacrifice never needs to be repeated – our debt is fully paid.*

15. **Myrrh for Suffering:** Read Matthew 27 v 27-50. How was Isaiah 53 v 3 fulfilled?

*Jesus was mocked, spat on, beaten and crucified by those He had come to save. On the cross He was abandoned by His Heavenly Father – He knew the estrangement from God that is caused by sin, not for any sin of His own, but because He was carrying our sin.*

16. Can you now see how Genesis 3 v 15 was fulfilled by Jesus?

**?**

Read Ephesians 1 v 4. When did God's plan to rescue us from our sin start?

What does this tell you about how much God cares for you?

*The plan was from before creation. God cares for us so much that He planned to rescue us from our rebellion against Him before any of us had been created! He kept drip feeding information about the rescuer (and the rescue) throughout history in order to give His people hope and show them that He loved them.*

**Check out** – ask everyone, including leaders, how they found the study and if they are safe to go back to the cell.



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