

Walking With God

Prophets: Isaiah



Prayer Starter

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit...
Dear Lord, in the spirit of your great prophets, show us, too, how to share the message of your good news. We pray that your guidance helps us to understand our faith and find the best in ourselves and in the people around us. Amen.

Hye-Q

Moses or Joshua?

Circle the name of the person who did the following:

1. Brought the Ten Commandments from Mt. Sinai

Moses

Joshua

2. Sent spies into the city of Jericho

Moses

Joshua

3. Saved a woman named Rahab

Moses

Joshua

4. He and his men walked around the walls of the city with the Ark of the Covenant

Moses

Joshua

5. Taught a younger man to lead his people

Moses

Joshua



What's A Prophet?

Prophet Markareh Uurquunt

- are called by God to express his will to others
- share God's plans and promises as revealed to them by God
- remind people very boldly of how they are or are *not* following God's ways

Daily Bread

Some of God's special messengers in the Bible were called "prophets." God chose them to remind the people about the right way to live or even to scold them when they were behaving badly. God also often shared what could happen if believers forgot what it meant to be good and to act wisely.

Isaiah is a prophet who lived about 2800 years ago in the Kingdom of Judah.





During his lifetime, Judah and Israel were at war. He must have been sad to look around him and see that he and his countrymen were not living in the way that God asked them to. They were certainly not following the greatest gift God gave them, the Ten Commandments! He thought that he himself did not live a clean life.

One day, he had a vision. He saw God on a big throne with angels all around him. He was filled with awe. The angels came down from the altar with a burning coal and touched his lips and told him that he was forgiven of anything that he did or said before that was bad. He had a chance now to do good things.

At that moment, God called him to serve in helping people understand how to live according to God's ways. He became God's messenger. Isaiah wrote everything down.

God told Isaiah that the people of his country and the countries around his would have a bad time in the future.

He also said that from those bad times would grow a better time for the whole world. He gave Isaiah many details of things that would happen in the future.

In Isaiah's writings, he described the virgin birth of a baby in the family of David and described some of the things in the life of Jesus Christ that would not happen until over 700 years later.



Well Versed

I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?"
Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."

Isaiah 6:8

SCRIPTURE SOURCE

"The wolf and the lamb will feed together. The lion will eat hay like a cow. But the snakes will eat dust. In those days no one will be hurt or destroyed on my holy mountain. I, the LORD, have spoken!" *Isaiah 65:25*

All of the things that Isaiah wrote were supposed to be sharing a vision of the future through the words of God. In this passage, God tells Isaiah that after many wars and hard times and after the arrival of a Savior (Jesus), all the creatures of the world, including people, will live in peace and no longer fight with each other. God wants our cooperation to fulfill this prophecy. We, as Christians, want to remind the world about this message of peace. Can you be a messenger of God?



Celebrate with God

Isaiah describes his vision of God in the Bible (Isaiah 6:1-7)

1. I saw the Lord. He was sitting on a lofty throne, and the train of his robe filled the Temple.
2. Attending him were mighty seraphim, each having six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew.
3. They were calling out to each other, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!'
4. Their voices shook the Temple to its foundations, and the entire building was filled with smoke.
5. 'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined! I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.'
6. Then one of the seraphs flew to me with a live coal in his hand which he had taken with tongs from the altar.
7. With it he touched my mouth and said, 'See this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.'

Imagine you are Isaiah. What do you tell a friend about what you saw, heard, felt, and smelled as described in the verses above?



BIBLE BYTES

Seraphim is a plural form of the word "Seraph." Isaiah describes what they look like in the Bible verse above. His description does not fit our perception of angels as cute little winged creatures with baby faces! Seraphim were fierce and majestic-looking. They were always at God's side, praising him constantly.

St Nersess Soorp Nersess

In the Armenian Tradition

St. Nersess Shnorhali was Catholicos* of the Armenian Church in the 12th Century. He worked very hard to lead the people of Armenia to a deeper Christian faith, filled with prayer and worship and right living. He wrote countless poems, prayers, hymns, and essays, most of which are still in use today. Here is one of those prayers we use often in Sunday School. It appears in the Rest Service, one of the daily Armenian worship services (known as the "hours"). It is one of a set of 24 prayers popularly known as "I Confess With Faith"

meant to be prayed at every hour of the day.

*"Catholicos" is the title for the leader of all Armenian churches in the whole world. He is elected for life by the National Ecclesiastical Assembly, which consists of clergy and laypeople representing Armenian churches throughout the world. He resides in Etchmiadzin, Armenia. The first Catholicos was St. Gregory the Enlightener.

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An Exercise In Prayerful Thinking

Jesus, Wisdom of the Father

Write each line in your own words

O Jesus, Wisdom of the Father, grant me wisdom

That I may always think, speak and do

That which is good in your sight

Save me from evil thoughts, words and deeds

And have mercy upon me, a great sinner, Amen.

We remember Isaiah's vision every Sunday at our Divine Liturgy! The angels' song of praise - "Holy, holy" - has become our beautiful church hymn "Soorp, Soorp."



Did you know...!?

Family Focus

Today students learned that a prophet is more than someone who knows God's plans for the future. More importantly, prophets remind us of how to live godly ways. We talked about the most important prophet, Isaiah and students drew their interpretation of his amazing encounter with God. They also learned a prayer by St. Nersess Shnorhali that was all about living right.

Living Your Faith

1. Take the drawing done by your child and place it in a location where other members of the family can see it and talk about it.
2. Look up the website of the Armenian Holy See (www.armenianchurch.org) with your child. Show them a photo of the Catholicos and discuss his role in the Armenian Church.
3. Recite the prayer "Oh Jesus, Wisdom of the Father" together often, in English or Armenian.

3. Have the children sit in a circle on the floor or stand around your desk. Place the toy blocks in the middle and tell the children to construct a wall in the shape of a circle, like the wall around a fort or an old city. While the children build the wall, read the story of Joshua from the **Daily Bread** to them. If students have become too focused on building the wall, have them pause and listen attentively before they continue. After you've read the story and the wall is built, tell the students that you will do what Joshua's army did. Have them pretend they have horns. Lead them to march around the toy wall six times, counting out the number of times you make the circle, only making the trumpet sounds. Then go around a seventh time and have the students mime shouting (no actual yelling unless you won't be disturbing anyone else) and knock down the wall. 10 min.

4. Have students help clean up blocks (or boxes). After they have settled down, read **Scripture Source** and discuss the questions. Discussion guidelines: God tells Joshua to study and follow his commandments (as Moses taught them), to really *think* about these teachings constantly (day and night) so that they can truly be absorbed and lived. He advises him to *study* the Scripture so that with all this understanding, he will achieve true success. He exhorts him to be brave and that God will be with him *wherever* he goes. Discuss with students how this advice is true today. How can knowing God's teachings and that he can be always with us wherever we go help us be stronger? (Possible answers: with this knowledge and his presence, it will be easier to do the right thing, and do it without thinking, from the heart.) Give examples of people strengthened by prayer. People who have been buried under rubble in earthquakes have prayed and felt God at hand, making them strong. There might be current events that will also serve as examples.

5. As a segue to **In The Armenian Tradition**, tell students: "So with this advice, Joshua overcame Jericho and pushed further into the land that God had promised them. But every battle is not necessarily won, is it? And that doesn't mean faith is not strong! One of the reasons the Armenian Church is still around and the reason why we, as Armenians, are Christian was because of the

strong faith of our ancestors. We are going to read now about one of the important people in Armenian Church history who was also a great soldier like Joshua. His name was St. Vartan Mamigonian." (Write the words Joshua and St. Vartan Mamigonian on the board.) Choose a child to read first and have each student read two or three sentences in this section. 10 min.

6. After the story has been read, distribute the construction paper, crayons, scissors, glue sticks, and Vartanantz figures. Review figures with students: King Yazdigerd was the King of Persia; the commanders were Persian generals; the magi were Persian priests. Among the Armenian figures: Catholios Hovsep was the head of the church in Armenia at the time and Fr. Ghevont was the priest who went into battle with Vartan, praying with the soldiers and giving them all communion on the battlefield. He and others are remembered in a special feast day two days before the feast day of St. Vartan (Vartanantz). Have children color the figures, cut them out, and affix them where they wish. They might want to draw a backdrop on the construction paper. Display them in the classroom for a few weeks before sending them home.

7. If there is time remaining after clean-up, look at lesson sidebars. Dismiss the students with the following prayer: "Thank you, Lord, for bringing us together today. Help us to remember how important it is to study the Bible and know your story so that we can be strong and successful in every important way." 30 min.

UNIT
1
Lesson
Six

Walking With God

Prophets: Isaiah

Key Concepts

1. Isaiah was a prophet who answered God's call to be his messenger.
2. Prophets remind people of the right ways to live; they are also empowered to share God's promises for the future.
3. Isaiah is known for his prophecies about the coming Messiah.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Review the accomplishments of Moses and Joshua.
2. Discuss the meaning of the word prophet.
3. Examine the life of Isaiah and his message.
4. Illustrate Isaiah's vision.
5. Read about who St. Nersess Shnorhali was and the role of the Catholicos.
6. Recite a prayer that was written by St. Nersess.

Materials Needed

Isaiah's Vision handout (from the back of this manual)
Crayons or markers

Procedure

1. Welcome students and say the opening prayer together. Have them take the review quiz in **Hye Q**. Use the opportunity to review material from both sessions, flipping back in their textbooks. Answers: 1. Moses 2. Joshua 3. Joshua 4. Joshua 5. Moses. 10 min.
2. Write the word "prophet" on the board. Ask children what they think of when they see this word. Now have them look at the definition and pictures in **What's A Prophet?** Which would they choose to portray a prophet? Their choice will probably be the bearded figure who most probably *does* look like many of the Old Testament men called to prophecy. Point out that the saintly woman pictured at the top left is Anna, a prophetess who was at the Temple when Jesus was brought by his parents to be presented to God, an event she had been waiting for. Conclude that *anyone* can be called by God to share his message and promises with the world so that anyone pictured could be called by God to be a prophet. 5 min.
3. Read **Daily Bread** and **Scripture Source** together. Discuss how children can actually serve as God's messenger, even today, even in their own young lives. (Since this entails reminding people how to live godly lives, the best way might simply be to serve as an example; or in the case of younger siblings, to teach them). 10 min.
4. Distribute the Isaiah's Vision handout and crayons/markers. Ask students to take turns reading out loud a verse from Isaiah 6 as outlined in **Celebrate with God**. Pause to

reflect on the image presented in each verse. Discuss question. Have the children draw what they think Isaiah's vision of God looked like. While the children are drawing, read the sidebar **Bible Bytes** to them. 15 min.

5. After the students have drawn their pictures, have them bring them up and tape them on the wall in a grouping, noting that "You know, no matter how differently we all draw, everyone teaches us something from their interpretation." Point out something notable in each drawing. Leave them there until class is dismissed at which time they should take them home.
6. Segue with "In the Armenian Church, one of its greatest leaders, almost prophet-like himself in his visions and work, was the Catholicos St. Nersess Shnorhali." Read **In the Armenian Tradition**. Review the prayer with students. Discuss **An Exercise in Prayerful Thinking**. Conclude with everyone saying the prayer together. 20 min.

UNIT
1
Lesson
Seven

Walking With God

Protesters: Esther

Key Concepts

1. Doing the right thing can sometimes be difficult.
2. Nevertheless, God calls us to faithful conviction on behalf of truth and righteousness.

Objectives

During this session students will

1. Review information about the Prophet Isaiah.
2. Read and discuss the Bible story of Esther.
3. Identify the first saint of the Armenian Church and compare her conviction to Esther's.
4. Make a stained glass window depicting St. Santookht.