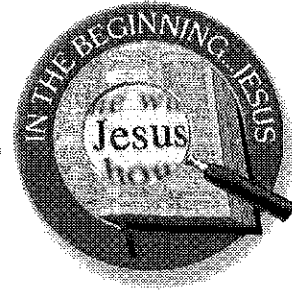


In the Beginning...Jesus



Lesson 29 God's Anointed One

Themes:

- Through His prophets, God predicted the re-building of Jerusalem and the temple, and the return of His people.
- God promised to send His Anointed One to bring good news to His sinful people.

Scripture:

Portions of Isaiah 44-45; 61:1; Ezra 1:1-3

Memory Verses:

Review John 1:1-10

Visuals for Lesson:

- Bible.
- *In the Beginning...Jesus* poster.
- Resource Packet:
 - TIMELINE 1-20—Make one copy of each piece of the timeline for each small group (and put each set of pieces into a separate bag) for the Pre-Lesson Activity. Take one copy of the timeline and place each piece in chronological order on an appropriate length of paper (e.g., tape several sheets of construction paper together, end to end). The correct order can be found in the Lesson.
 - PREDICTION, 1st PREDICTION, 2nd PREDICTION.
 - CHRONOLOGICAL EVENT 1-5.
 - GOD'S ANOINTED=THE MESSIAH—Cover the “=THE MESSIAH” with a piece of construction paper.
 - God-Man visual (from previous lessons).
 - LOCKED HEART.
 - JESUS IS THE KEY visual (from previous lessons).
 - Bible Clue Card #33.
- Post-It® Notes to cover the words “CAPTIVES,” “NO,” and “NO” on the GOD—MAN visual.
- White board and markers or a long piece of tape attached to the wall to form a timeline.
- Magnifying glass (for use in reading the clue card).

Pre-Class Preparation:

Arrange for an adult to act out the "Prediction" scenario as described in the Lesson. Make sure he understands exactly what to do in order for your prediction to be proved correct.

Pre-Lesson Activity:

Divide the class into small groups of 4-8 children. Give each group a bag of timeline pieces. Tell the children that each of the pieces tells about an important event in Israel's history that we have studied in the Bible this year. As quickly as possible, the children should arrange the pieces in chronological order.

Lesson

Display a completed timeline with the events of Israel's history placed in chronological order:

1. God makes a covenant with Abraham.
2. God gives Jacob 12 sons—the nation of Israel.
3. The people of Israel become slaves in Egypt.
4. God chooses Moses to be His prophet.
5. Israel celebrates the first Passover.
6. God delivers Israel from Egypt.
7. Israel receives God's law at Mt. Sinai.
8. God instructs Israel to build the tabernacle.
9. Israel enters the promised land.
10. God appoints judges to deliver His people.
11. God makes Saul king.
12. God chooses David to be king.
13. Solomon becomes king.
14. The temple is built in Jerusalem.
15. Israel is divided into two kingdoms.
16. Israel and Judah turn away from God.
17. God sends His prophets to warn Israel and Judah.
18. Israel is taken into captivity by Assyria.
19. Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed.
20. Judah is taken into captivity in Babylon.

What are the last two events listed on the timeline? [Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed. Judah is taken into captivity.] Ask the children if these last two events were

a surprise to God. Why not? Should they have been a surprise to God's people? Why not? [God had sent His prophets to warn the people.] In other words, these events had been *predicted* by God's prophets *before* they happened.

Display the **PREDICTION** sign. Quickly lead the children through the following scenarios:

Suppose I were to predict that, sometime today, a man will walk into our classroom. Would this be something that could "just happen"?

Suppose I were to predict that, sometime during our class time, a man will walk into our room. Would this be something that could "just happen"?

Suppose I were to predict that, sometime during our class time, a man wearing a/an [article of clothing your volunteer is wearing] will walk into our classroom. Would this be something that could "just happen"?

Suppose I were to predict that, within the next fifteen seconds, a man named [man's name] and wearing a/an [article of clothing that your volunteer is wearing] will come into our classroom, say, "Hello," and then leave. Would this be something that could "just happen"?

(Have the man enter the classroom, walk to the front of the class, say "Hello" and then leave.)

Explain that sometimes when people make predictions, the thing predicted may or may not happen. Ask the children how they think you were able to make the last prediction correctly. Point out that you could predict it correctly because you had planned it ahead of time.

Tell the children that God also gave His prophets predictions of what would happen ahead of time. For example, the "Man of sorrows" described in our last lesson was a prediction. He was a Man God told Isaiah about who would come in the future. Explain that you are going to read about two more predictions from the book of Isaiah. Each prediction is also about a special man. These predictions were written BEFORE Judah was taken away into captivity and BEFORE Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed.

Have the children turn to **Isaiah 44** and choose children to read verses **24** and **28**:

Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from the womb: "I am the LORD, who made all things, who alone stretched out the heavens, who spread out the earth by Myself...who says of Cyrus, 'He is My shepherd, and he shall fulfill all My purpose'; saying of Jerusalem, 'She shall be built,' and of the temple, 'Your foundation shall be laid.'"

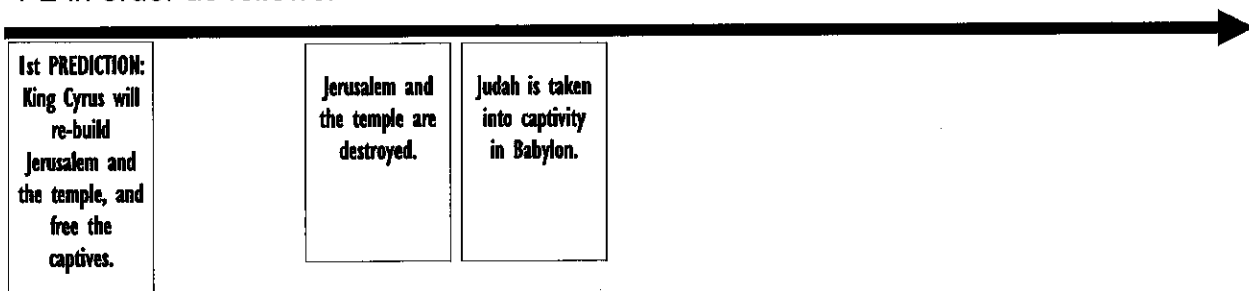
Read **Isaiah 45: 13b**:

He shall build My city and set My exiles free.

Ask: *What prediction is being made about Jerusalem and the temple?*
[They will be rebuilt.] *What prediction is being made about the exiles?*
[They will be set free.] *God also names the person who will do this. Who is it?* [Cyrus.]

*In **Isaiah 45:1**, God calls Cyrus His “anointed” (**display GOD’S ANOINTED ONE**), meaning that Cyrus is someone who is chosen by God for a special purpose. Chapter 45 also says Cyrus is a mighty king—but not a king from the people of Judah or Israel. He is a king from another country.*

Using a white board (or tape on a wall) make the timeline arrow. Tape **1st PREDICTION** at the beginning of the timeline, and then **CHRONOLOGICAL EVENTS 1-2** in order as follows:



Point out that at the time of this prediction, Judah was still living in its own land, Jerusalem was still its capital city, and the temple was still standing. So these verses were also predicting that Jerusalem and the temple would be destroyed and the people of Judah would be taken away as exiles—captives.

*How likely would it be that this prediction would “just happen” all by itself?
Why not?*

Explain to the children that we already know that the first part of the prediction came true: Judah was taken captive to Babylon, and Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed. Now we must continue with the story from the Bible to see if the next part came true.

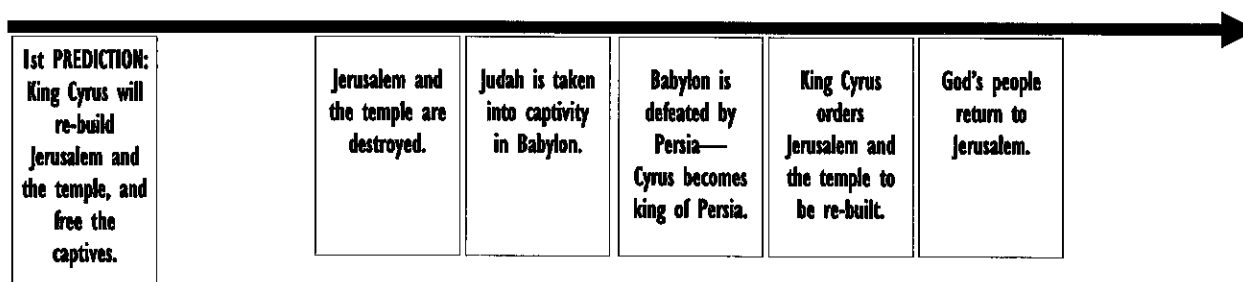
Have the children turn to the book of Ezra. Explain that this book continues the story of what happened to the people of Judah after they had been taken as captives into Babylon.

Read **Ezra 1:1b** and then choose a child to read verses **2-3**:

The LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and also put it in writing:

“Thus says Cyrus king of Persia: The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He has charged me to build Him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever is among you of all His people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of the LORD, the God of Israel--He is the God who is in Jerusalem.”

Explain that these events happened more than 100 years after the predictions in Isaiah were written. Place the new pieces on the timeline so it now looks like this:



After Judah had been captured and taken to Babylon, the king of Babylon was defeated by the king of Persia. The king of Persia was a man named Cyrus. He decided to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and he set the captives free so that they could return to the promised land.

Had God simply made good guesses in this prediction? How would you explain how this all came true?

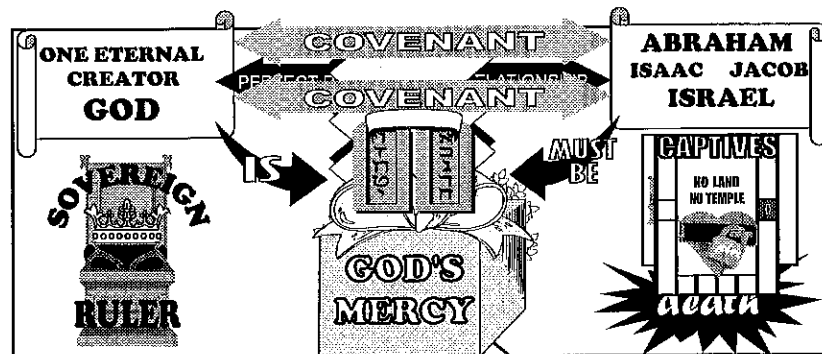
Point out that God's predictions were not just good guesses. God is the one who planned it all ahead of time and then made it happen just as He said. God chose His anointed one, a man named Cyrus, to be king. God made it happen. God wanted Cyrus to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, and to set the people of Judah free. So God stirred up Cyrus' heart to make it happen.

On the **GOD—MAN** visual, put Post-It® Notes over the word **CAPTIVES** and over the **two NOs** (that come before the words **LAND** and **TEMPLE**).

Do you think these events solved the problem? Will God's chosen people now be happy living back in Jerusalem? Will they be happy with this new temple? Is this the final completion of all of the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob? Are God's people truly free now?

Display the **LOCKED HEART**. What is unusual about this heart? [It has a lock on it.]

This heart is a clue. What does it hint at? Why would a heart be locked? [Allow the children to respond.] Tape **LOCKED HEART** over **SIN HEART** on the **GOD—MAN** visual, which should now look like this:



*There are different ways to be held captive. It is true that God chose Cyrus for a special purpose—to free His people from captivity in Babylon. But Cyrus was not able to free God's people from their bigger problem. What was that? [Their sinful hearts.] God's people were being held captive to sin—it was like a lock on their hearts. (Remove the Post-It® Notes from the word **CAPTIVES**.) Unless that problem could be solved, God's people could never be happy, no matter where they lived.*

Remind the children that at the beginning of the lesson you told them that you were going to talk about two predictions God gave to Isaiah. Each prediction was about a special man. So far, we have only talked about the first man, Cyrus. Now we will read about the second man.

Display Bible Clue Card #33. Choose a child to come and insert the card behind the red paper on the **JESUS IS THE KEY** visual to reveal:

*Scripture: Isaiah 61:1
Clue under Window #1*

Have the children turn to **Isaiah 61:1**:

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, because the LORD has anointed Me to bring good news to the poor; He has sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound.

In this verse a special Man is speaking. What does He say He was sent to do? [Allow the children to respond.] What would be the best kind of news for God's people? Is this man given a name?

Open Window # 1 to reveal: **GOD'S ANOINTED ONE.**

Tape **2nd PREDICTION** immediately to the right of **1st PREDICTION** on the timeline. Explain that this second Man was going to have a different purpose than Cyrus did. This anointed Man was going to do something to set captives free. He would free people who were held captive by sin. Over time, the Jewish people had a special name for this Man: Messiah, which means "Anointed One" (**display GOD'S ANOINTED ONE** and remove the paper to reveal: **=THE MESSIAH**). He would be the One to bring good news to brokenhearted sinners—good news that He will set sinners free.

Did this prediction also come true? When?

Point out that at the time of Judah's return to Jerusalem, this prediction still had not come true. God's people had to wait and trust God that He would keep this promise. This prediction was all part of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages that someday would finally be revealed!

Application

- Refer to the prediction of the man entering the classroom from the beginning illustration. Review why the teacher was able to make that particular prediction correctly. Ask the children if they can think of any circumstances in which the teacher would have been wrong? For example, what if the man had gotten the instructions wrong and had worn a different [item of man's clothing]? What if the man had decided at the last minute that he didn't feel like doing it? Could the teacher have done anything about this? Why not? Would this kind of thing ever happen to God's predictions? Why not? Read and discuss **Isaiah 46:10b-11**. Recall that the prediction about Cyrus was made before Cyrus was even born. Could Cyrus have made himself be born at just the right time and in just the right place? Have the children read **Ezra 1:1b**. What words does the Bible use to show that the idea to re-build Jerusalem and the temple came from God and not from Cyrus? Does knowing this make you more in awe of God and His Word? Why or why not?
- Summarize **Nehemiah 9:6-37** and/or read short portions (e.g., vs. **30-31**). Point out that these verses give a summary of Israel's history. The people are reminded of God's goodness, faithfulness, and mercy, and of Israel's wickedness and faithlessness. Why was it important for the people to be reminded of this? Why is it important for each of us to be reminded of this? Is there a memory from your childhood about being disciplined that you still remember very clearly? As you look back, do you better understand why your parents disciplined you? Do you remember your parents forgiveness? Does that help you to better love and trust your

parents? What does God want His people to learn from their past history? Are these lessons you need to learn, too? In what ways?

- **WORKBOOK**—Have the children turn to Lesson 29 in their workbooks. In the notebook section, have them fill in the missing words to complete today's clue. Read **Isaiah 61:1**. How are sinners like poor people? (Hint: What are sinners in need of?) In what ways are sinners brokenhearted? Do you feel this in your own heart? In what ways are sinners like captives or prisoners? What do the words "bind up" mean? What would it be like for a sinful heart to be "fixed"? What would liberty be like for a sinner? Why couldn't Cyrus do this for God's people? Do you know the identity of the Man speaking in this verse? (Why do you think it is Jesus?) How has Jesus set sinners free and fixed their broken hearts? Is this true of your own heart? Or, do you still feel like something is weighing your heart down? Have the children draw a lock on the heart in the workbook. Can they predict what this heart might look like after God's Anointed One "binds" it up? Then, in the box, have the children write how they think Jesus fulfilled this clue.

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