

May 21, 2025
CONFIRMATION LESSON

Prophets

“Prophecy” is a word that can make us think of fortune-telling, crystal balls, and fantasy novels. You may have seen movies that involve prophecies like Harry Potter or The Matrix. Even Shakespeare used prophecy in his plays!

If you could have your future told to you, would you want that? Would it change how you act?

Prophecy in the Bible is different. It is not primarily about future-telling as it is about **truth-telling**. Prophets are individuals who speak and write down prophecies.

In the United States, we have checks and balances in government so no one person or branch of government becomes too powerful. But thousands of years ago, nations were organized totally differently (for example, no democracy). Prophets were people that God raised up to act kind of like a check and balance against the kings and high priests of Israel and Judah.

But, prophets also had messages for average people. They pointed out when people were behaving badly, probable consequences of that behavior, and what they should do to fix it.

Watch The Bible Project video about the prophets:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edcqUu_BtN0&t=56s

- How are Biblical prophets different from the way prophecy is used in pop culture?
- Why did the Biblical prophets use cosmic imagery?

HOW TO SPOT A PROPHET:

Open the supplemental handout on the church’s website for this lesson.

Although there are many prophets in the Bible, they have a similar life pattern: call, content, community, consequences.

- Follow through infographic on handout, reading appropriate passages in the Bible:
 - CALL. Read **Isaiah 6:5-9**.

- Isaiah said, “Here I am! Send me!” Have you ever raised your hand and volunteered for something? Was it something you were excited for or nervous about?
- CONTENT. Read **Jeremiah 16:18-21** and **Jeremiah 29:10-14**.
 - The prophet speaks harshly but also of God’s mercy and love. Has anyone ever given you good news and bad news at the same time? How did that feel?
- COMMUNITY. Read **Ezekiel 3:1-6**.
 - How would you feel if someone from another school came and started telling you and everyone in your school how to do things, but they never followed their own advice? Maybe they’d have good ideas, but it would be hard to listen to someone who doesn’t know your school or belong to it or show respect for their own message. Prophets came from the communities they spoke to, and they had to listen to their own messages.
- CONSEQUENCES. Read **Daniel 6:16-23**.
 - Danger and persecution followed prophets, because no one likes having their flaws pointed out. But God was with them even during hard times.

Prophets called for justice. Amos was a prophet who was a shepherd and farmer—not a priest, not a scholar, not a prince. Anyone can be called to be a prophet, they don’t need to be rich or have a high education.

Read **Amos 2:6-8**. What is Amos criticizing about his society?

- The poor and needy are being abused. Women are not being respected. The religious leaders are levying taxes simply so they can get drunk.

Read **Amos 6:18-24**. Is it okay to mistreat other people as long as we go to church and pray?

- Our religion and worship do not please God when we are not also living rightly and justly with each other.
- Watch Rob’s Bell’s video called Sunday:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jvTHBwYUaPo> (12 min)
- What do you think about that? Do you think it’s more important to pray and go to church or to live compassionately and generously? How are those two things related, or at least how should they be?

Is there something in your school or church that you could be a prophetic voice for? A way the community could live more kindly? How would it feel to speak up about that?