

# The Inspiration of the Prophets



## Teacher's Guide

### Surveying the Source

Jer. 28:9; 36:1–4; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 3:16; Titus 1:10–15; 2 Pet. 1:1–4, 20, 21.

### Plotting the Course

#### The students will:

- ▶ Realize that the Bible and prophetic writings are the most valuable when people choose to believe they are from God.
- ▶ Acknowledge that Scripture and spiritual leaders, including prophets, are valuable in helping us to be balanced in

faith, belief, and practice.

- ▶ Understand that the recording of prophecy (God's messages into human language) is for the practical purpose of training and guiding people in God's way.

### Preparing to Lead

In the past, God inspired certain humans as prophets. The results of this inspiration is recorded in the Bible, God's Word. The Bible consists of letters, stories, predictions, prophetic writings, and more. Although it is written by humans and has cultural, personal, and historic

material in it, God guided its creation.

Some people today claim to be prophets. Biblical prophetic writings give criteria to help us determine whether they are true or false prophets. Prophetic writings can give insight and power to transform our lives.

### Getting Started

**A.** Read and discuss with the class these predictions which were made in the past:

1. "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers."—Thomas J. Watson, 1943, Chairman of the Board of IBM. Retrieved June 9, 2007, from <http://www.thatweird.net/facts13.shtml>.

2. "640K ought to be enough for anybody."—Bill Gates, 1981. Retrieved June 9, 2007, from <http://www.thatweird.net/facts13.shtml>.

*Say:* "Obviously, in hindsight, we can see that these predictions turned out to be false—and consequently humorous."

*Ask:* On what basis would you determine whether a prediction was true or if somebody was a true prophet or not?" (See Jeremiah 28:9; Acts 17:11; 1

Corinthians 12:7).

**B.** Two dictionary meanings for the word *prophet* are: (1) "a religious leader regarded as, or claiming to be, divinely inspired"; and (2) "one who predicts the future."—*Webster's New World Dictionary*.

*Ask:* • "Do you agree with these definitions? Why, or why not?" • "What would it be like to have your own personal prophet?"

Have each class member finish this sentence in one of the following ways given below: "I think it would be good to have a prophet to talk to me as. . ."

1. a financial adviser
2. a dating planner
3. an exam partner
4. your choice

### Materials

pens; writing paper; poster board; Bibles

## Delving Into the Word

**A.** Divide the class into groups. Give each group Bibles, pens, and paper. Have each group read the following Bible texts and from those texts, make a checklist for the characteristics of a true prophet: Deuteronomy 13:1–3; Matthew 7:15–20; Jeremiah 28:9; Isaiah 8:20; 1 Corinthians 12:3; 2 Peter 2:1–3.

Once completed, delegate a person from each group to present their criteria for a true prophet to the rest of the class.

**B.** Divide the class into groups. Hand out Bibles, pens, poster board, and the “Purpose of Prophecy” handout (p. 45; one per student). Have each group write what the purpose of prophecy is from each selected Bible passage.

From the verses on the handout, have each group either present a drama or a poster to the class on the purpose of prophecy on one or all of the points discovered from the handout.

## Discussing the Ideas

1. Do you believe God still appoints prophets today? Give reasons for your answer.

2. How would you be able to determine between a prophet from God and a false prophet?

3. If somebody in your church announced he or she was a prophet, what would you think, and why?

4. What examples of predictions do you

find hard to believe?

5. Do you think the main purpose of a prophet is to make predictions? Why, or why not?

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13. When you listen to your pastor or Sabbath School teacher, do you take their words as the words of God? Give reasons for your answer.

## Closing the Activity

Ask the class to meditate on the words of 2 Timothy 3:16 as it is read aloud. Encourage the class to remain silent and spend one to three minutes with God. Suggest that each person ask God to give them spiritual insight in their daily devotions. This quiet time gives God a chance

to speak to them.

Close with prayer, asking God to give each one the ability to discern between false and true prophecy, to give each one guidance and direction as they take into account the insight they can get from scriptural prophecy.

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## **THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY**

<b>BIBLE TEXTS</b>	<b>WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE PROPHECY FOUND IN THESE TEXTS?</b>
1 Thess. 2:13	
2 Tim. 3:16	
2 Peter 1-4, 20, 21	
Heb. 1:1-4	
Titus 1:10-15	
Eph. 4:7-14	