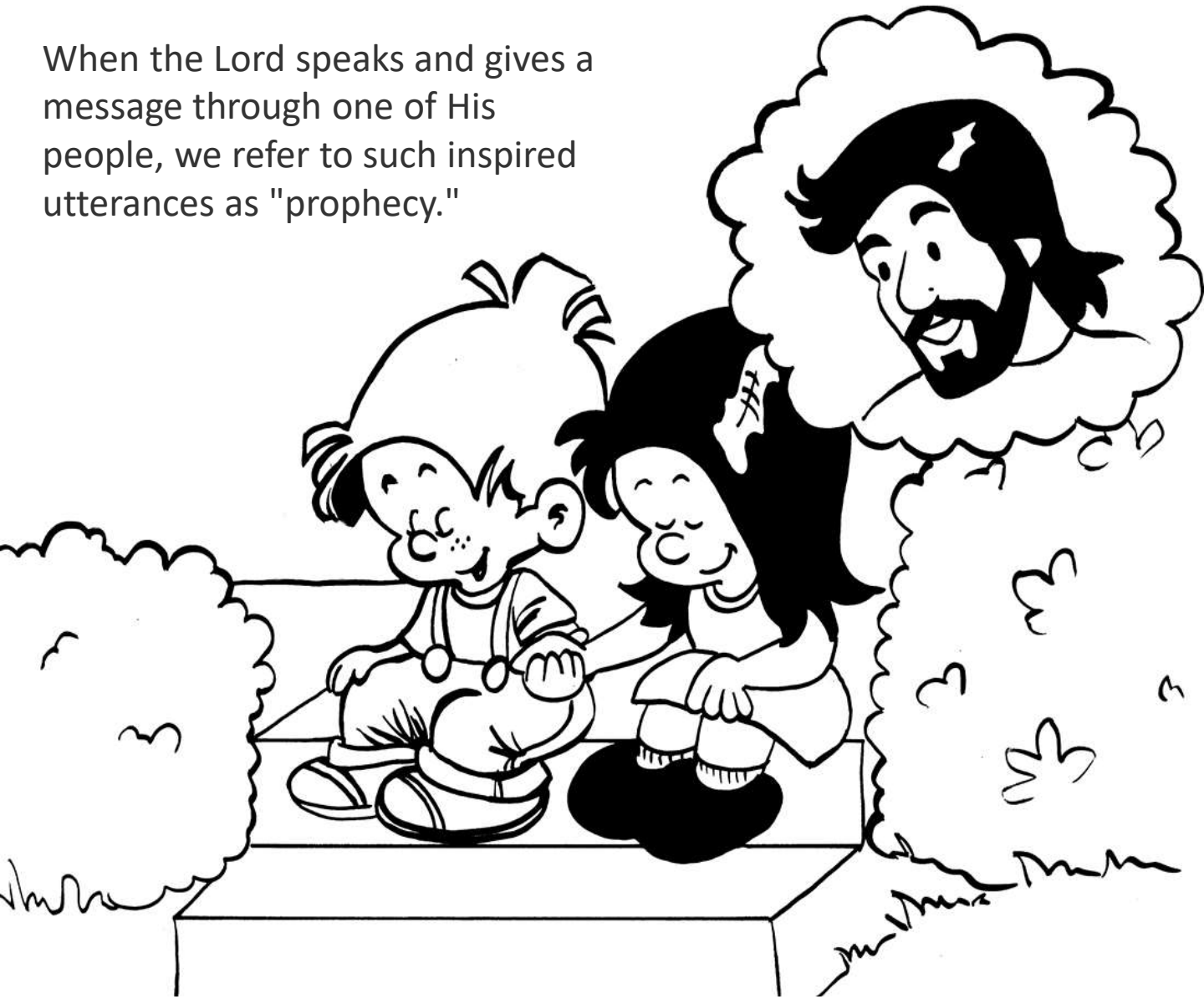


Hearing from Heaven



Class Section 1: What Is Prophecy?

When the Lord speaks and gives a message through one of His people, we refer to such inspired utterances as "prophecy."



* "Forthtelling"

Many people think of "prophecy" as predicting the future, but this is not always the case. The word "prophecy" is taken from a Greek word *propheteia* that means "the speaking forth of the mind and counsel of God."

Prophets do a lot of foretelling under the inspiration of God's Spirit. But a further meaning of prophecy is to simply give God's Word, whatever it may be.

Class Section 2: About Prophecy in the Bible

Let's look at some of the ways God has used the gift of prophecy to speak to His people through history.

Genesis 12:1-2, 4 - The Lord said to Abraham, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you."...So Abraham departed as the Lord had instructed,

Genesis 31:3, 18 - The Lord said to Jacob, "Return to the land of your father and grandfather, and I will be with you." He [Jacob] packed all the belongings he had acquired in Paddan-aram and set out for the land of Canaan, where his father, Isaac, lived.



1 Samuel 3:9-10—Eli said to Samuel, "Go, lie down; and it shall be, if He calls you, that you must say, 'Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. Now the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel answered, "Speak, for Your servant hears."

Jeremiah 1:4-9 - The Lord gave me [Jeremiah] this message: "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb. Before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations."

"O Sovereign Lord," I said, "I can't speak for you! I'm too young!"

The Lord replied, "Don't say, 'I'm too young,' for you must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you."... Then the Lord reached out and touched my mouth and said, "Look, I have put my words in your mouth!"



Matthew 10:5, 19-20 - Jesus sent out the twelve apostles with these instructions: ... Don't worry about how to respond or what to say. God will give you the right words at the right time. For it is not you who will be speaking—it will be the Spirit of your Father speaking through you.



Acts 8:26-27 - An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went.



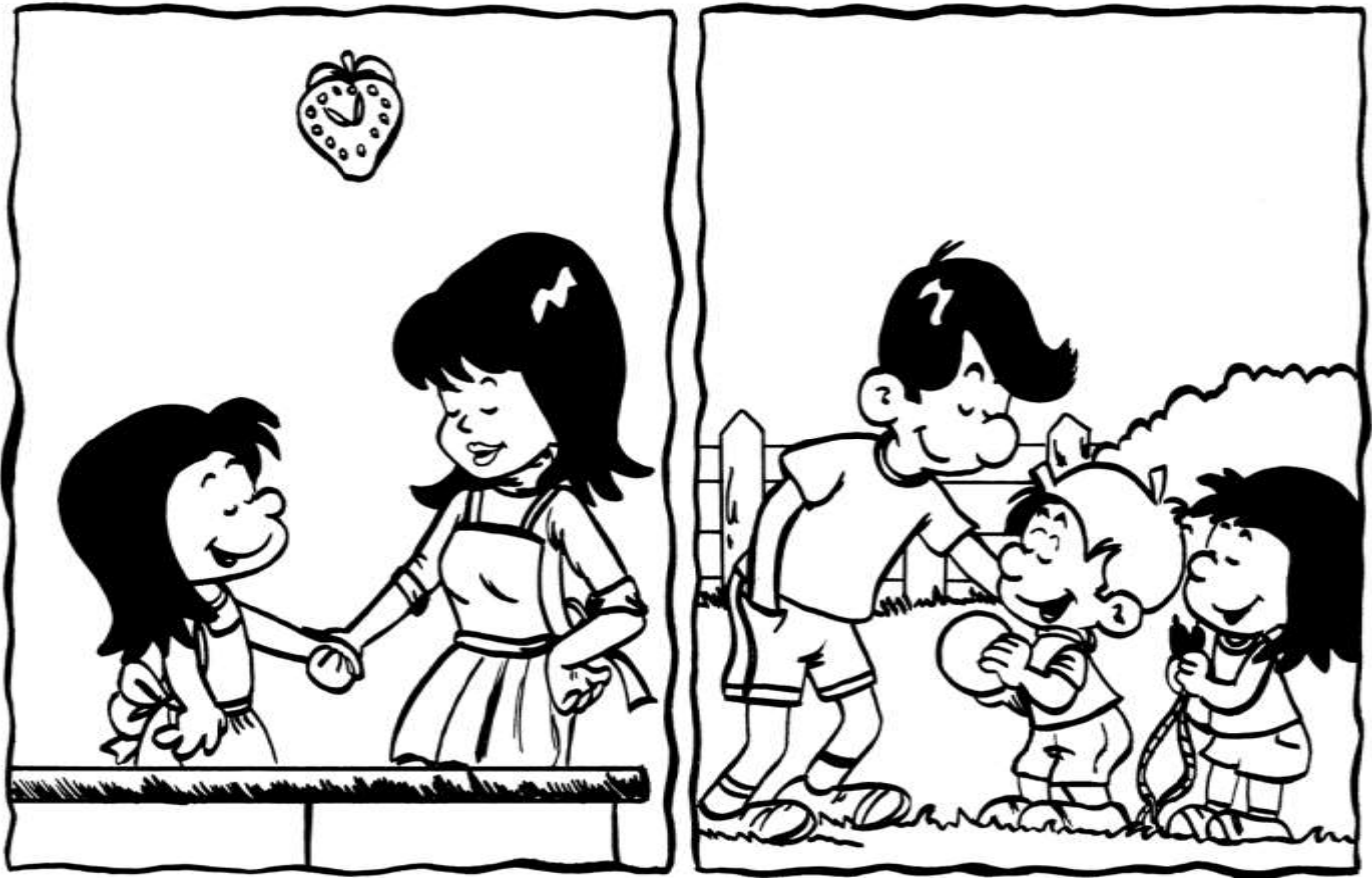
Acts 23:11 - That night the Lord appeared to Paul and said, "Be encouraged, Paul. Just as you have been a witness to me here in Jerusalem, you must preach the Good News in Rome as well."



Class Section 3: God Speaks Today

We have a permanent, written record of God's unchangeable Words in the Bible, but God is still speaking today, through prophecies, visions, and signs.

You should get as many answers from the recorded Word as you can, but often the Lord wants to give you specifics for your particular situation through speaking to you directly in prophecy.



The Lord wants to speak to us to guide and encourage us. He promises:

Psalm 84:11—No good thing will [God] withhold from those who walk uprightly.

Psalm 138:3—In the day when I cried out, You answered me

Isaiah 30:21—Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, "This is the way, walk in it."

Jeremiah 33:3—Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

Listen to the Voice of God

Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965, Nobel Prize winner, missionary doctor in Cameroon and French Equatorial Africa [now called Gabon]) was a great musician and doctor who went to Africa to be a missionary and help the sick. One time he was traveling up a river with a boat loaded with supplies for a hospital he had built. As they were traveling he noticed a big tree had fallen in the water. If they hit it, the boat could sink and they would drown.

After his visit to the hospital, Albert returned back down the river. It was late at night and very dark. He warned the men not to go too near the bank of the river but to stay out closer toward the middle.

Suddenly the Lord gave Albert a check in the Spirit that they were getting too close to the shore. All the men said they weren't and that it was fine where they were, so Albert sat down again. *I guess they know*



best, he thought. After all, they go up and down this river all the time and their eyes are trained to see into the dark forest. My eyes are not as good as theirs!

Suddenly the Lord spoke again to Albert's heart, this time with a much stronger warning. *You need to obey Me or you'll all drown!*

Albert jumped up and commanded the men to instantly move the boat farther out to the middle of the river. They had no sooner obeyed than suddenly they saw the huge, dark mass of a giant tree that had fallen in the water. Had they not turned aside at that instant the boat would have rammed it and sunk!

Class Section 4: How To Hear From God in Prophecy

*** How to Hear from the Lord**

- ❑ Find a quiet place.
- ❑ Begin your time with the Lord by praising Him and/or by reading His Word. Then, either ask the Lord a specific question or just generally ask Him what He wants to tell you.
- ❑ Closing your eyes will help eliminate distractions.
- ❑ Be still and focus your mind on the Lord. Concentrate on Him.



□ Sometimes the Lord may speak by bringing to mind a verse or passage from the Bible. He brings it to life or He applies it to a particular situation or decision you are faced with. If He reminds you of something like this while you are praying, then look it up and read it right then, asking the Lord to help you apply it.



□ Sometimes the Lord may speak a new message that you've never heard before. The words will probably not be audible, but a "still, small voice" in your mind.

As you continue to study His Word, letting it fill your heart and mind, the more your ability will grow to recognize His still, small voice when you ask Him to speak to you.

John 10:27a—My sheep hear My Voice.

Jesus, I come before You now as young Samuel of old, waiting patiently and quietly for You to speak to Me. Please help me to hear Your voice.