



ZACHARIAS, ELIZABETH, & JOHN

Young Preschool • #NT1 • December 3, 2023

Concept

God is faithful and God is true. God always does what He says He'll do.

Goal

Children will learn that Zacharias and Elizabeth loved God and God kept His promise to give them a special son named John. When God makes promises, He always keeps them.

Passage

Luke 1:5-23, 57-80

Key Verse: "God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give birth to a son, and you will name him John. He will bring you joy and gladness, and many people will be happy because of his birth." Luke 1:13,14

Planning Ahead

Lesson Supplies	Craft Supplies
<p>Activity Station:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Playdough</i> <p>Lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Laminated magnet-backed pictures:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <i>Zacharias</i> ◦ <i>Zacharias with zipped mouth</i> ◦ <i>Gabriel</i> ◦ <i>Elizabeth</i> ◦ <i>John</i> 	<p>Learning Activity #1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed picture of Zacharias, Elizabeth and baby John, 1/child • Heart stickers, 3/child • Crayons

*TEACHERS PLEASE NOTE

For clarity, the italicized areas in the Planning Ahead section indicate supplies that are in—and should be returned to—your classroom SHARED SUPPLY bag.

Background Information/Teacher Helps

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During the Roman occupation of Israel an angel visited a couple who " ... were righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of God" (Luke 1:6). This is remarkable given the hypocrisy that characterized the Jewish priests and leaders throughout the rest of the gospels. Zacharias was of priestly lineage and was performing his duties in the temple when the angel Gabriel visited him. Luke also records that Elizabeth was of the tribe of Aaron, the clan of priests. A baby born to them would be fully qualified under the law to present a sacrifice to God.

Besides being genealogically qualified, God set this boy apart (sanctified him) for His own use from his very conception. The Holy Spirit was upon him in utero! He was to be filled with the Holy Spirit, rather than strong wine or drink (Numbers 6:1-4). God had a plan for his life before he had even come into existence and God, through Gabriel, shared that plan with John's father. John was to prepare the people to receive the fulfillment of the sacrificial system. Also John would fulfill the prophecy of a messenger sent before the Messiah (Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6). God placed him in Zacharias and Elizabeth's care for training.

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Elizabeth's response was quiet joy and awe. As a barren woman, she had borne much humiliation in this culture. God was not only using her for His great purpose but also removing the cloud of shame under which she'd been living in her village. Because she knew the Lord had promised this child to Zacharias, it is probable that Elizabeth knew of his special role. When Elizabeth greeted pregnant Mary, fetal John leaped in her womb and she was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke is careful to record Zacharias and Elizabeth's adherence to the law, having their son circumcised on the eighth day. Both showed a humble attitude at this event as the time arrived to name the baby. They followed God's command and named him John. As Zacharias' speech returned, the people around him were filled with a sense of fear (or awe) and watched to see who John would turn out to be. Because of Zacharias and Elizabeth's trust in God, they were able to play a vital role in preparing a path for the Messiah!

Incorporation Lg. Group

Activity Stations:

- **Craft – Playdough Family**
 - **Instructions:** Make a father, a mother and a baby out of playdough. As the children work, discuss with them that they will learn about a father, mother and their baby.
- **Hand Activity – “This is Mother” [1]**
 - **Instructions:** Say the hand activity and have the children repeat it.
This is Mother, (Point to the thumb on one hand)
This is Father, (Point to the pointing finger on the same hand)
This is brother tall, (Point to tallest finger)
This is sister, (Point to ring finger)
This is baby small. (Point to little finger)

[1] Kathryn W. Kizer, *200+ Games and Fun Activities for Teaching Preschoolers*, © New Hope 1989, p. 54.

Introduction Lg. Group

This man's name is Zacharias (show picture of Zacharias). Can you say, Zacharias? Zacharias was a man who loved God. He loved God his whole life and now he was old. He had learned this:

**God is faithful and God is true,
God always does what He says He'll do.**

Can you say that with me? (Repeat.)

Lesson Lg. Group

Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth (show picture of Elizabeth), were very old and did not have any children. One day an angel named Gabriel came to Zacharias with a message from God (show picture of Gabriel). Zacharias was scared (open your eyes wide) when he saw the angel, so the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias. God sent me to tell you that your wife Elizabeth will have a baby, and you will name him John. Your son, John, will be a special man.”

Remember, Zacharias knew that [say it with me]:

**God is faithful and God is true,
God always does what He says He'll do.**

But because he and his wife were so old, he couldn't believe the angel. So he asked, “How do I know that this is true?” (Hold out your hands and shrug your shoulders questioningly.) Then Gabriel said, “I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time.” And at just that moment he could not talk, just like the angel said! (Cover your mouth; have children mimic.) (Show picture of Zacharias with zipped mouth.)

Lesson Continued

The angel was right. Elizabeth had a baby boy and they named him John, just like the angel had said. (Show picture of baby.) Zacharias could talk again and told all his friends [say it with me]:

**God is faithful and God is true,
God always does what He says He'll do.**

God promised Zacharias that he would have a son and God kept His promise. He gave them a son named John, who would tell people that Jesus would come soon.

God wants us to believe His words, just like Zacharias and Elizabeth did. Jesus came to this earth to tell us that God loves us and to take care of all our bad choices! When Jesus died, God put all of the punishment for our bad choices on Jesus instead of on us! So that all anyone has to do to have a relationship with God is ask Jesus to make them God's child through his forgiveness.

Right now, let's pray and thank God for loving us and for sending Jesus to the world.

Transition

Let's do a craft now that will remind us that God is faithful and God is true, God always does what He says He'll do. God kept His promise to Zacharias and Elizabeth and gave them a very special son named John.

Learning Activity#1 Lg. Group

Craft – Zacharias, Elizabeth and baby John

Instructions: Give each child a printed page of Zacharias, Elizabeth and John. Color the figures and put a heart sticker on each. As they work, have children repeat the concept: God is faithful and God is true, God always does what He says He'll do. Talk with the children about God's faithfulness to His promises.