



ZACHARIAS, ELIZABETH, & JOHN

Preschool-K • #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 #2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Paper lunch bag, 1/child• Pieces of Zacharias (head, body), 1 each/child• Small wiggly eyes, 2/child• Labels (Avery 5160) with the lesson concept printed on them, 1/child• Glue sticks

*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!

Set Up

- The week before class – The teacher should recruit an "aide" for the Introduction.
- The day of class – Cut Zacharias pieces for Learning Activity #1.

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. Talk about how exciting it is to prepare for a baby. **Note: playdough should remain in the classroom for subsequent classes to use.**
- **Dramatic Play – Family**
 - **Instructions:** Give the kids some time to play "house".

Introduction Lg. Group

Object Lesson

Instructions: The teacher's "aide" will stand in front of the teacher, with his/her back to the teacher.

<<Aide's name>>, I want you to fall back into my arms. I promise I will catch you!!!" (Before continuing with the demonstration, ask the children...)Who knows what is going to happen? Will I catch <<aide's name>>? Would you trust me? (Talk to the <<aide's name>>.) "Fall back into my arms. I will catch you. You can trust me." (Aide falls back and is caught.) You see, <<aide's name>> trusted me and had faith that I would do what I said I would do.

God wants us to have faith in Him. Faith in God means believing that God will do what He says He'll do. Who knows of a promise that God makes to us?

Listen while I tell you about a promise God made to Zacharias and Elizabeth (show pictures of Zacharias and Elizabeth). Zacharias loved God his whole life and now he was old. He had learned this about God:

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

Can you say that with me? (Repeat.)

Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth, were very old and did not have any children. One day when Zacharias was talking to God, an angel named Gabriel appeared (show picture of Gabriel). Zacharias was scared (open your eyes wide) when he saw the angel, so the angel said to him, "Don't be afraid, Zacharias."

Lesson Lg. Group

Lesson Continued

"God has sent me to tell you that your wife Elizabeth will have a baby, and you are to name him John. Your son, John, will be great in God's eyes. He will be filled with God's Spirit, and he will turn the hearts of people back to God."

Now 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 had trouble believing the angel and asked, "How do I know that this is true?" (Hold out your hands and shrug your shoulders questioningly.) Then Gabriel said, "You will know that what I say is true because until your son John is born, you will not be able to talk." And at that very moment he could no longer talk, just like the angel said!!! (Cover your mouth; have children mimic.) (Show picture of Zacharias with zipped mouth.)

When Elizabeth had her baby, do you think the baby was a boy or a girl? The angel was right, of course. Elizabeth had a son. When his friends asked the baby's name, Zacharias couldn't talk so he wrote, "His name is John." [Write these words on the paper and show it to the children.] At that moment God made him able to talk again, just as the angel had promised! Then Zacharias happily said, "And you, my son John, you will be a special man for God. You will go before the Lord Jesus to prepare the way for Him."

**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. Zacharias believed God. Even though Zacharias and Elizabeth were old, God kept His promise. God blessed them with a son named John who would give a special message to the world. John would tell people that Jesus was going to come soon to forgive us for our bad choices called sins.

Let's get into our small groups to talk about God's promise.

God wants us to believe His words just like Zacharias and Elizabeth did. God promised that we can be His friend when we ask Jesus to forgive us for all our bad choices. Do you believe that promise? When Jesus died, God put all of the punishment we deserve on Jesus instead of on us. God loves us that much. Will you ask Jesus to forgive your sins? You can talk to God about this when you pray.

Transition

Learning Activity#1 Sm. Groups

Learning Activity#1 Continued

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

Can you think of some other things God promised He would do?
(Suggestions: be with us all the time, give us the ability to obey Him, teach us to love other people, teach us to share.)

Right now, let's pray and thank God for loving us and for sending Jesus to the world. (Pray with the children.)

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 and gave Zacharias and Elizabeth a very special son named John.

Learning Activity# 2 Lg. Group

Craft – Paper Bag Puppets

Instructions: Give each child a lunch bag and the two pieces of Zacharias. Glue Zacharias' body to the bag just up to the place where the bag bottom hits the bag. Glue Zacharias' head to the bottom of the bag so it appears to be on his body when the bag is closed. Glue the wiggly eyes on Zacharias' head. When the children put their hand in the bag and move the bottom, it should look like Zacharias is talking. Color Zacharias. Give each child a label with the lesson concept to stick on the bag. As the children work, talk with them about God's great promise to Zacharias and Elizabeth and to us. Ask them why they think Elizabeth and Zacharias had faith that God would keep His promise.