



THE STORY OF ELIZABETH

LUKE 1:5-80

GOAL

▶ To explain to children the story of the birth of John the Baptist and the miracles God performed to make it happen. This story also discusses how the Virgin Mary was chosen to be the mother of Jesus. This story shows that God has the power to make His plans come true, even if it seems impossible.

WORDS TO KNOW

▶ **Mute:** A person who is unable to speak. God made Zechariah mute for his disbelief.

MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Luke 1:37:** For nothing will be impossible with God.

Luke 1:42: And she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"



OVERVIEW

Read Luke 1:5-80: Zechariah and Elizabeth came from a long line of priests. They were faithful and obedient servants of the Lord. They had longed to have children, but Elizabeth was barren and could not have a child. One day, Zechariah was chosen to burn incense in the temple. While he was in the temple, the angel Gabriel appeared next to the altar. The angel Gabriel told Zechariah that his wife would have a son. Although he wanted to believe the angel Gabriel, Zechariah couldn't understand how this could be possible, as Elizabeth was well passed child-bearing age. Gabriel struck Zechariah mute for his disbelief. Soon after, Elizabeth became pregnant. Six months later, the angel Gabriel appeared before a relative of Elizabeth's, a young virgin engaged to be married; her name was Mary. Gabriel told Mary that she was highly favored in the eyes of God and that she would become pregnant with the Son of God. Mary went to visit Elizabeth, and when she arrived and greeted Elizabeth, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaped. Elizabeth boldly prophesized that Mary's baby was the Lord. Mary responded with a song of praise and prophesy. Elizabeth gave birth to a boy, and her friends and family came to share in her joy. They were all convinced that the baby would be named Zechariah after his father, but Elizabeth said the baby would be called John. The others questioned this because no one in her family had that name, so they appealed to Zechariah. Still mute, Zechariah responded to them by writing on a tablet that the baby would be named John. As soon as he did this, Zechariah's tongue was loosed, and he was able to speak again! Everyone was amazed at this. Zechariah began to praise God. He prophesized that John would be a prophet of the Lord, preparing the way for the Savior of the world.



SUGGESTIONS

Elizabeth is a powerful female example of faith, hope, and courage while waiting for God's perfect timing.

1. Faith and Hope: Elizabeth wanted a child, but she was unable to get pregnant. She knew that God had the power to make it happen. She never doubted His power and never gave up hope that she would have a child.

2. Timing: Elizabeth was well beyond child-bearing years when God blessed her with a child. The child that Elizabeth and Zechariah were to have was special and needed at a very specific time in history. God could have blessed them with a child much earlier in their lives, but that wasn't the plan. John the Baptist's ministry would glorify the Lord, but by waiting until Elizabeth was older, his birth was miraculous, which also glorified the Lord.

3. Courage: First, not being able to conceive children during Elizabeth's time was seen as disfavor from God and punishment for sin. Elizabeth had done nothing wrong, but she likely had to deal with scorn and ridicule from those in her community. Secondly, she boldly prophesized that the child Mary was carrying was the promised Messiah. Lastly, she spoke out against her family and friends who had assumed that her son would be named after his father. She was bold and told them his name was to be John.



**PRE-LESSON
ACTIVITY**

Ages 5-7 Bouncing Bellies

Instruct the students to lie on their backs on the classroom floor, and tell them to put their heads on someone else's stomach. When they are all situated, tell them to say "Ha!" This will make their heads bounce on each other's stomachs. Keep going, and see if the class can really get laughing to make this fun!

The baby in Elizabeth's belly leaped for joy when Mary greeted her.

Ages 5-10 Little Leapers | Supplies: Jump ropes

Divide the class into teams, and give each team a jump rope. The first student in line will attempt to jump rope 10 times in a row without tripping on the rope. Once he or she has jumped 10 times in a row, the next student in line goes. If students miss one, they have to start over. The team that finishes first wins.

Ages 8-10 Unspoken Message | Supplies: name tags or Post-It notes, pens, and paper

Choose a verse from the section of Scripture covered in this lesson. Write one word on each of the name tags, and place one on each student's back. Give each student a piece of paper and a pen, and have them write down the words they see on each other. Once they have all the words, they should put them in the correct order. The first one to unscramble the message wins. No words should be spoken during this activity.



MEMORY
VERSE
MEANING

▶ **Luke 1:37:** There is absolutely nothing that God cannot do.

Luke 1:42: Of all the women to ever bear children, Mary was the most blessed because her child would be the greatest person to ever live.

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POST-LESSON
ACTIVITY

▶ **Ages 5-7 Name on the Board | Supplies:** popsicle sticks, glue, black construction paper, white chalk or white paint pen

Glue the popsicle sticks together to form a rectangle. Glue the black construction paper to the back of the popsicle sticks to create something that looks like a blackboard. Using the white chalk or paint pen, write "His name is John" on the board.

Ages 5-10 The Angel Gabriel Says...

Play Simon Says, but instead instruct the students to say, "The angel Gabriel says..."

Ages 8-10 Charades | Supplies: ideas for the students to act out written on pieces of paper

Select a student to choose one of the ideas from a hat or a basket. Instruct the students that no words can be spoken, they can only use gestures to convey the idea they chose. If the students get stuck, you can give them hints to keep the game moving. Continue with other students until the class needs to move on.



TAKE
HOME

Elizabeth's story is an example of how God rewards those who are faithful.

- 1. Faith and Hope:** God gives us the desires of our heart (Psalm 37:4). That does not mean He gives us everything we want. The big things we want for our lives are desires God has given us. If God has given us the desire, then it will happen! We should never lose faith or hope in something God has promised us.
- 2. Timing:** God has a plan for our lives, and in His perfect timing, the blessings He has planned for our lives will come. Sometimes, it may feel like the blessings we are waiting for will never come, but Elizabeth is a perfect example of why we should never give up hope! We may not understand why we have to wait, but God does. When the time is right, it will happen!
- 3. Courage:** It is not always easy to follow God in this world. Sometimes we need to stand up to popular ideas or actions that we know to be wrong. In these situations, we can rely on God to give us strength to stand firm in our convictions!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 1



Q1a: Elizabeth and Zechariah came from a long line of what?

A1: Elizabeth and Zechariah came from a long line of priests.

Q1b: What are some of your family members' professions?

Teacher Notes: Let the students answer. Then ask them if they have learned anything about these professions from their family members, such as learning how to clear a clogged drain from a family member who is a plumber. Zechariah and Elizabeth were part of a family that served as priests. Being a part of this family helped them to understand how to follow their faith and how to obey God's commands. This knowledge helped them to be blameless in God's eyes, and the perfect people to raise a child who would have a very special mission from God.

SLIDE 2



Q2a: What did the angel tell Zechariah?

A2: The angel told Zechariah that he and Elizabeth would have a son.

Q2b: Have you ever been chosen to perform a very important task?

Teacher Notes: Let the students answer. Zechariah was one of many priests to serve at the temple in Jerusalem. All the priests drew lots to see who would get to burn the incense in the temple. To be the one chosen was like winning the lottery. Being chosen was an incredible honor, so to then also be visited by an angel who had fantastic news for him was a blessing on top of a blessing.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 3



Q3a: What was the angel's name?

A3: The angel's name was Gabriel.

Q3b: Have you ever lost your voice from illness?

Teacher Notes: Sometimes we get sick, making our throats sore and we lose our voice. This isn't as bad as what happened to Zechariah. He couldn't even make a sound. To communicate with others, he had to make signs with his hands or write down the words he wanted to say.

SLIDE 4



Q4a: What was Mary supposed to name her son?

A4: Mary was to name her son Jesus.

Q4b: Is it fair that Mary wasn't struck mute for questioning the angel just like Zechariah did?

Teacher Notes: Let the students answer. Explain to the students that Zechariah was an old man who had grown up among priests and religious scholars. He was a priest himself. He should have known better than to question an angel sent from the Lord. Zechariah should have known that if an angel shows up and says, "God is going to give you a child," that God WILL give him a child. Mary had faith, but no such experience. Mary believed that what the angel said would happen, she just didn't understand how it was even possible.



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 5



Q5a: Who did Mary go to visit?

A5: Mary went to visit her relatives Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Q5b: You have big news. Who is the first person you tell?

Teacher Notes: Let the students answer. Mary had huge news, but she didn't tell her immediate family first. Instead, she traveled all the way to Jerusalem to visit Elizabeth. Mary's news was strange, and the only person she could think of who would understand and believe her was someone else who had been made pregnant through miraculous means: Elizabeth. Mary knew that Elizabeth was in a position to believe her in a way that no one else would be capable of, which is why she traveled to see her.

SLIDE 6



Q6a: What did Mary do in response to Elizabeth's prophesy?

A6: Mary sang a song of praise and prophesy.

Q6b: Have you ever felt confused by or unsure of something?

Teacher Notes: Let the students answer. An angel of the Lord appeared before Mary and gave her astonishing news about her future. While she believed the angel and was overjoyed by the news, the idea of what she was told was difficult to understand. When Elizabeth confirmed everything that the angel had told her, it served as confirmation. Mary was unmarried, so news of her pregnancy would be met with questions and suspicion, but Elizabeth understood what was going on, and she recognized and praised the news. Mary's pregnancy was something to celebrate!



QUESTION & ANSWER

SLIDE 7



Q7a: Zechariah and Elizabeth's son would become known as who?

A7: Zechariah and Elizabeth's son would become known as John the Baptist.

Q7b: God created you for a purpose. Do you know what it is?

Teacher Notes: Just like John, we were created to accomplish specific things in God's plan. If you don't know what that specific purpose is, God will reveal it to you when the time is right. In the meantime, we have all been given an important mission: to spread the love of God to everyone we meet. Having Jesus in our lives is very special, and we should let others know how they can have Him, too!



QUESTION & ANSWER

MEMORY VERSES

▶ **Luke 1:37:** For nothing will be impossible with God.

Luke 1:42: And she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"

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BIG IDEA

▶ God has a plan, and it will come to pass, no matter how impossible it seems!

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CLOSING PRAYER

▶ Dear Heavenly Father, thank You so much for Your faithfulness and for giving us the desires of our hearts. Help us to remain faithful and hopeful as we wait for Your promised blessings that You will grant us in Your perfect timing. We ask these things in Jesus' name, Amen.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 1



Elizabeth and her husband, Zechariah, both came from a long line of priests. Because they both loved God and obeyed His commandments, they were righteous in God's eyes. They desperately wanted a family, but Elizabeth was barren and could not have children. As they grew older and older, their dream of having a child seemed impossible.

SLIDE 2



One day when Zechariah's group of priests were serving at the temple, he was chosen to burn incense in the temple. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared next to the altar of incense. Fear fell upon Zechariah, but the angel of the Lord told him not to be afraid. The angel then gave Zechariah fantastic news, saying, "Your prayers have been heard! Elizabeth will give you a son, and you will name him John." The angel told Zechariah that people would rejoice at the birth of his son, and he would be great in the eyes of the Lord.

SLIDE 3

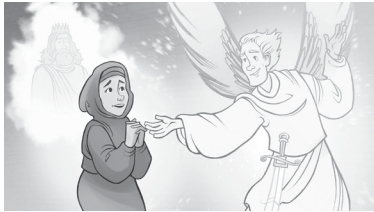


Zechariah wanted to believe what the angel had said, but he and his wife were so old! Zechariah asked the angel, "How could this be true?!" In a voice like thunder, the angel replied, "I am Gabriel. I stand before God himself. The Lord has sent me to give you this good news." The angel Gabriel told Zechariah that because of his unbelief, he would not be able to speak until after the child was born. Zechariah left the temple and went home, unable to tell anyone of the miraculous event that had taken place. Sometime later, just as the angel Gabriel said, Elizabeth became pregnant.



LESSON TRANSCRIPT

SLIDE 4



During the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to visit one of her relatives—a young woman named Mary. The angel Gabriel told Mary, a virgin engaged to be married, that she had found favor with the Lord. The angel Gabriel gave Mary more good news saying, "You will give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will sit on King David's throne and be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Mary was going to give birth to the Messiah!

SLIDE 5



After the angel Gabriel's proclamation, Mary quickly set off to visit Elizabeth and Zechariah who lived in the hill country of Judea. When Mary arrived and spoke a greeting to Elizabeth, Elizabeth's baby leaped in her womb! Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth prophesied over Mary, saying, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"

SLIDE 6



Mary responded to Elizabeth by breaking into a song of praise and prophecy. Mary's song declared the mighty love and power of God. She praised His works, mercy, and faithfulness to His people. She sang, "From now on all generations will call me blessed; for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name!"

SLIDE 7



Elizabeth gave birth to a healthy son. After eight days, friends and family gathered; they were all convinced that the baby would be named Zachariah after his father. But Zechariah, who was still unable to speak, wrote on a chalkboard: "His name is John." Instantly, Zachariah regained his voice! Their son would become known as John the Baptist, and he would prepare his generation for the coming of the Messiah: Jesus!