

STORY

Zacharias - Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

TEACHER PRAYER

Dear Father in Heaven, we are all on a journey of faith where we must simply trust your promises and lay aside our reason and doubts. Help me, O Lord, to trust that you will bless Your Word as I speak it to the students in my care. Help us to see that you do indeed keep all your promises to us so that we firmly believe that you also forgive us our sins through Jesus' work and will bring us through life to eternity with You in heaven. Amen.

VOCABULARY

lot - different colored stones from which one was selected at random; this was a way the Lord used at that time to show whom He had selected.

OUTER AIM

God sends John as a messenger to prepare for Jesus' coming.

INNER AIM

God keeps His promises.

BACKGROUND

(Rupprecht Bible History References Vol. 2, pp. 2-11)

About 4,000 years had passed since God gave His first promise of the Savior to Adam and Eve.

Through the years God had revealed increasingly more information about the coming Savior, but it had been 400 years since the Lord had last given information through Malachi the prophet. Malachi, besides speaking of the Savior coming, also prophesied that God would send a messenger ahead of Jesus to prepare the people for His coming (Mal 3:1). This story tells of the events surrounding the birth of that messenger, John the Baptizer.

Below are notes on each verse of the account:

v. 5

- ▶ John's parents: Zacharias: a priest of the course (or division) of Abijah (Abia in Greek).
- ▶ Each course of priests took turns ministering in the Temple for one week.
- ▶ There were about 2,000 priests at the time of Jesus.
- ▶ Elizabeth: "God her oath," descendant of Aaron and relative of Mary— though of a different tribe.

v. 6

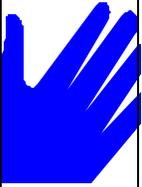
- ▶ Both parents are described as "righteous before God, walking .. blameless" which describes believers in the coming Savior.

v. 7

- ▶ They had no children, which in those days was considered shameful.
- ▶ Children were regarded as a great blessing of the Lord.
- ▶ Because of their age, it seemed impossible to sire and bear children.

vs. 8-10

- ▶ Zacharias was chosen to perform for one week the twice daily public ceremony of prayer and of burning incense in the temple.
- ▶ God had given this ceremony to picture how Christ would bring the people's (that is the Jews) prayers to God.
- ▶ Their prayers would rise to God like the smoke of the incense.



vs. 11-12

- ▶ An angel suddenly appeared beside the altar where Zacharias was worshipping.
- ▶ Zacharias, knowing his own sinfulness, was immediately afraid in the presence of the holy angel.

vs. 13 - 17

- ▶ But the angel told Zacharias not to fear, for he was bringing joyous news.
- ▶ The prayers of Zacharias and Elizabeth and other believers of Israel were indeed being heard.
- ▶ A special son would be born to them who would be dedicated as the forerunner of the Lord.
- ▶ Malachi prophesied (Mal 4:5), John would go before the Savior to prepare people's hearts to believe in Jesus.
- ▶ John would be great as a Spirit-filled preacher boldly calling people to repent and believe in the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

vs. 18 - 20

- ▶ Zacharias' human reason got in the way of his believing God's message, causing him to doubt Gabriel, the messenger from the very presence of God.
- ▶ For that reason the angel chastised him by taking away his voice until the Lord should fulfill also this promise.
- ▶ Gabriel was also the "messenger of God" sent to Daniel and Mary.

vs. 21-22

- ▶ Zacharias' loss of voice also became a sign for the people who had gathered outside to pray.
- ▶ They perceived that he had seen a vision.

vs. 23-25

- ▶ Zacharias was allowed to continue his service at the temple before he returned home to his wife with the good news.
- ▶ As the Lord promised, she conceived.
- ▶ Then she hid herself for five months, perhaps to be a picture of how— for a time, but not permanently — the Lord's blessing had seemed hidden to them.

vs. 57-58

- ▶ About nine months later, when the full time after Elizabeth had conceived had passed, as God had promised, she gave birth to a boy.
- ▶ This brought much rejoicing from neighbors, friends, and relatives for this blessing.

v. 59

- ▶ Through the rite of circumcision, the child entered into the life of the nation of Israel and into the covenant made with Abraham.
- ▶ God had commanded circumcision (Gen 17:10-14) (Baptism had not yet been instituted.) to be performed on the 8th day after birth; the child was customarily named then as well.
- ▶ Children were often named after their parents or close relatives.

vs. 60-63

- ▶ But in testimony to their faith in God's message sent by the angel, both parents insisted that his name was John.
- ▶ "John" was an unusual name for them to pick, going against the custom of their day, since they didn't have any relatives by that name.

vs. 64-66

- ▶ As soon as Zacharias demonstrated his faith by declaring the God-given name of John, the promise was fulfilled to loose his tongue.
- ▶ Praises, with no hint of blame, flowed from his heart toward God.

- ▶ All those around them were awed by God's amazing work causing them to wonder what God had in mind for this child.
- ▶ We notice that the hand of the Covenant Lord blessed John as he grew up into the role the Lord had preset for him.

vs. 67-75

- ▶ The Holy Spirit moved Zacharias to proclaim in joyous prophecy that the Lord indeed was keeping His greatest promise, that of the coming Savior.
- ▶ God was now fulfilling all His ancient promises for deliverance from the spiritual enemies of His people.

vs. 76-79

- ▶ Zacharias prophesied of John's important role in God's plan.
- ▶ John would proclaim Jesus to the people and show them how they would find light and peace in Jesus to replace the darkness and trouble of sin.

v. 80

- ▶ John became strong in the Spirit, learning from the O.T. Scriptures to prepare for the role set for him.
- ▶ Until age thirty, when he would be allowed to preach to Israel, John chose as his home the solitude of the deserts between Jerusalem and the Dead Sea.

STUDENT PRAYER

Dear Father in Heaven, We have learned that You keep all Your promises to us. When our reason would make us doubt Your Word and our patience wears thin, overcome our doubt and strengthen our faith to believe Your promises will be fulfilled according to Your wise plans. Send Your Holy Spirit on us that we may be bold in believing Your promises of forgiveness, of life and salvation in Jesus and so reach the home You have promised to all who believe in Jesus. Amen

PRESENTATION

Ask the children to think of promises that they have made or that others have made to them. Sometimes these human promises are broken by circumstances, forgetfulness, or their impossibility. When people break promises, they hurt each other and cause mistrust. But God never breaks His promises to us. God showed this when He kept His promise by sending John to Zacharias and Elizabeth. For God had promised them a son when He foretold, some 400 years earlier, that He would send a messenger to prepare people for Jesus.

Briefly review the previous story as time allows. Make links to the new story when possible.

Tell the story: Teachers, be encouraged to tell the story in your own words while remaining faithful to the scriptural account. When scripture records the story in more than one place, you may want to harmonize the accounts (including extra details found in each account.) Let the students know where they can find the additional details in the Bible.

Discuss the story: While reviewing the major events of the story, discuss the possible applications to the students' lives. Ask questions that make them think about the story and show that they understand the story.

APPLICATIONS

1. God made many important promises in the Old Testament about Jesus. Those made about His life on earth have all been kept. He promised that Jesus would suffer and die to take away the sins of the world and Jesus did that. And God promised that by believing in what Jesus has done for us, we too will have eternal life in heaven. This is God's promise to us. Can we trust God's promise to us? Why?
2. What is faith? It is trusting or relying on God's promise, even if our human reason doubts God's message. Discuss Heb 11:1; 12:1-2.
3. God has promised that He will be with us always, in every trouble or problem that we face. And He promises that all things work together for good to them that love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Can we believe those promises? Why is it good to look back over our lives to see how God has kept His promises to us? How does that help us face the future?
4. What are some other promises that God has made in His Word? Have we seen all of them fulfilled yet?
 - a. Noah - no more great floods.
 - b. Continuous seasons of sowing and harvesting.
 - c. Christ coming as a man.
 - d. Christ coming a second time.
 - e. Abraham having countless children.
 - f. God's promise to never leave or forsake His people.

PASSAGES

These passages can be assigned as memory work or simply discussed in class as to how they fit the lesson.

Lower

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

Matthew 28:20 - Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

Middle any of the above and...

Joshua 1:9 - Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.

Hebrews 11:1 - Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Upper any of the above and...

Romans 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

Hebrews 13:5 - Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Malachi 3:1 - Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me.

HYMN CHOICES

"Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord" (TLH 91 1-4)

"We Have a Sure Prophetic Word" (TLH 290 1-4)

"I Am Trusting Thee, Lord Jesus" (TLH 428 1-6)

Zacharias and the Birth of John

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

The Story

Parents: Review this lesson with your child.

Have you ever made a promise to someone? Today's story is about a very important promise that God made to all people! Because of sin, all people need a Savior. God promised to send a special person to tell people about the coming Savior, Jesus.

In the city of Jerusalem there was a priest named Zacharias. He had a wife named Elizabeth, and they worshiped and loved God. But they were sad that they had no children. One day, Zacharias was doing his work in the church, when suddenly he saw an angel of the Lord! Zacharias was very scared, but the angel told him not to be afraid. The angel told him that God had heard his prayers and would send him a son! The angel also told him to name his son John.

Zacharias wondered how this would happen since he was so old. The angel said to him, "God sent me to tell you this good news! Because you did not believe me, you will not be able to speak until the baby is born." At that moment, Zacharias lost his voice and was not able to speak. Finally, the time came for Elizabeth to have the baby. Since it was a boy, all the friends and relatives wanted to name him Zacharias after his father. But Elizabeth told them his name would be John. So the relatives asked Zacharias what to call the baby. Because he could not talk, Zacharias wrote on a tablet "His name is John." Suddenly he was able to speak again! Zacharias thanked and praised God.

Everyone was amazed at the birth of John, for they knew that he was a special baby. Do you know why John was so special? The Lord chose him to prepare the way for Jesus. The people were excited because they knew that Jesus would be coming to save

them from their sins! God kept His promise to send a special person to tell people about Jesus.

God always keeps His promises to us!

Passage

Jesus said, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matt. 28:20

Hymn WS 709 v. 1

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation;
God loves me dearly loves even me.
Therefore I'll say again:
God loves me dearly,
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

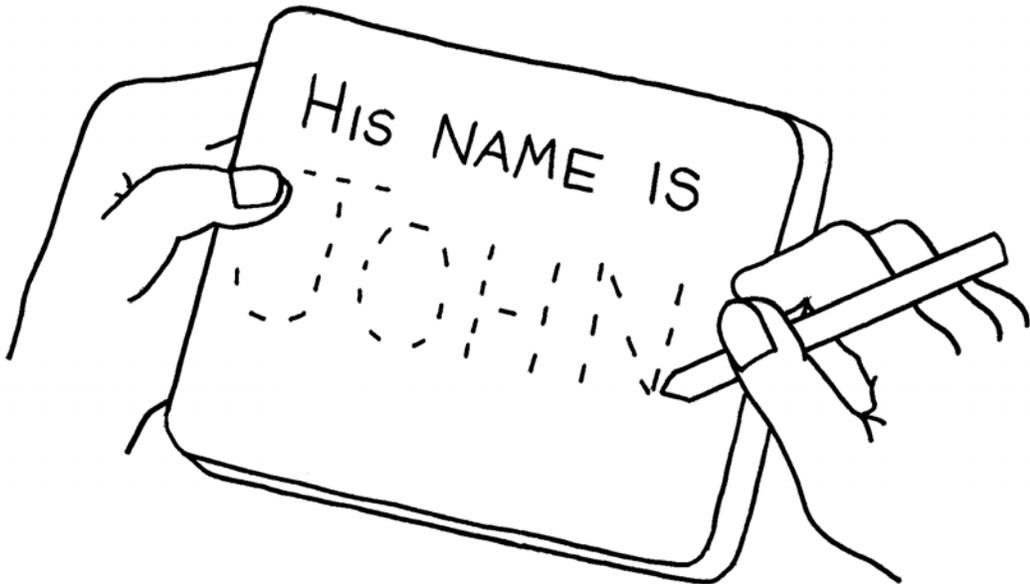
Prayer

Dear Jesus,
We are happy You always keep Your promises. Thank You for coming to die for our sins so we can be with You in heaven. Amen.



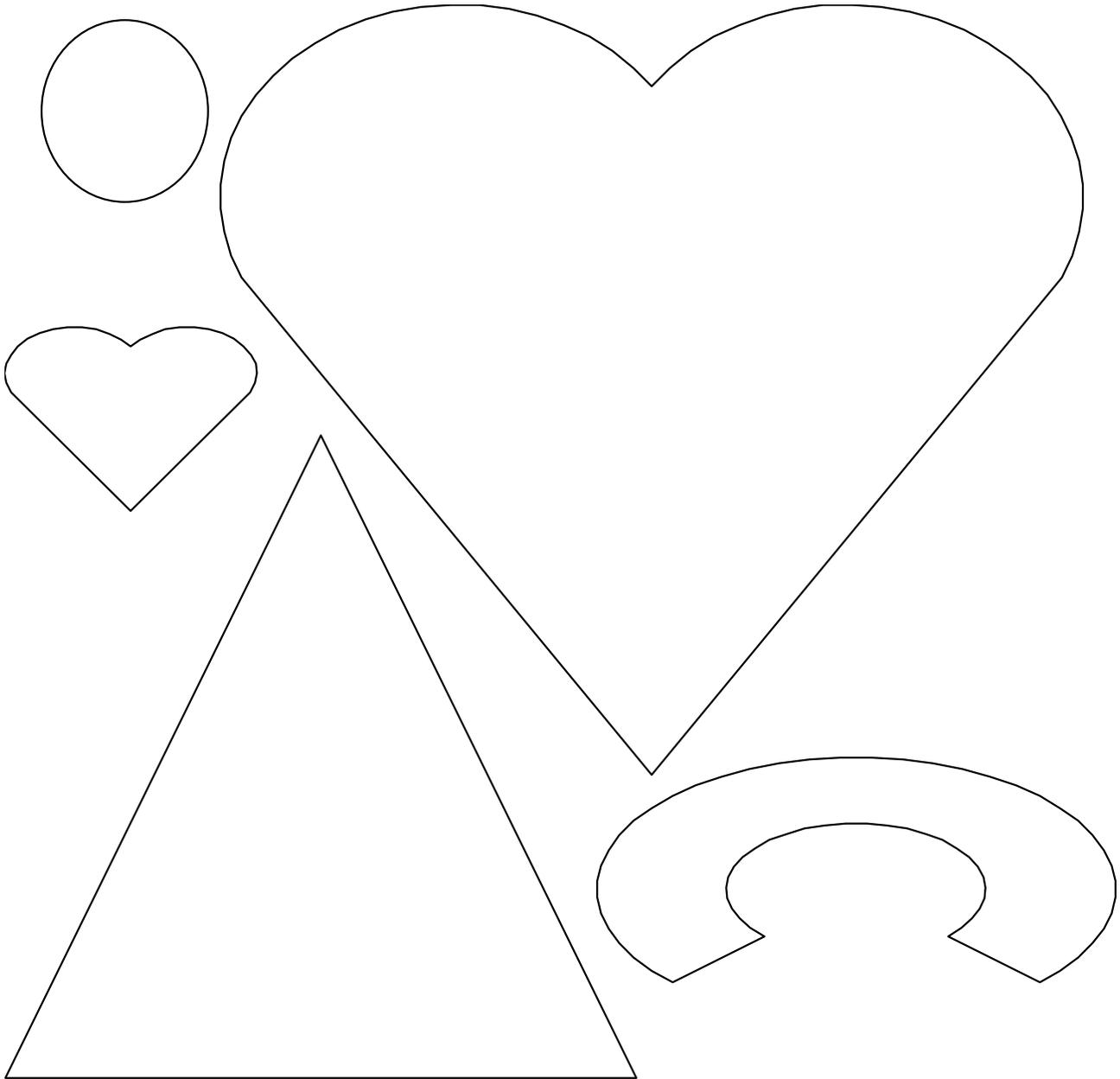
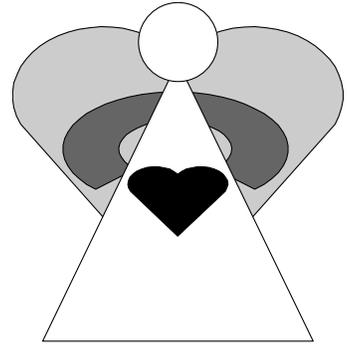


Classroom Activity - Trace the letters on Zacharias' tablet to show what the baby's name will be.



Classroom Art Activity - Angel

Cut out the shapes below and arrange in the order shown to make the angel. NOTE: You may use construction paper or wallpaper and add glitter or glitter glue to decorate. You may also use a doily heart for wings.



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Luke 1:5-25, 57-80



The Story

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In the city of Jerusalem there was a priest named Zacharias. He had a wife named Elizabeth, and they worshiped and loved God. But they were sad that they had no children. One day, Zacharias was doing his work in the church, when suddenly he saw an angel of the Lord! Zacharias was very scared, but the angel told him not to be afraid. The angel told him that God had heard his prayers and would send him a son! The angel also told him to name his son John.

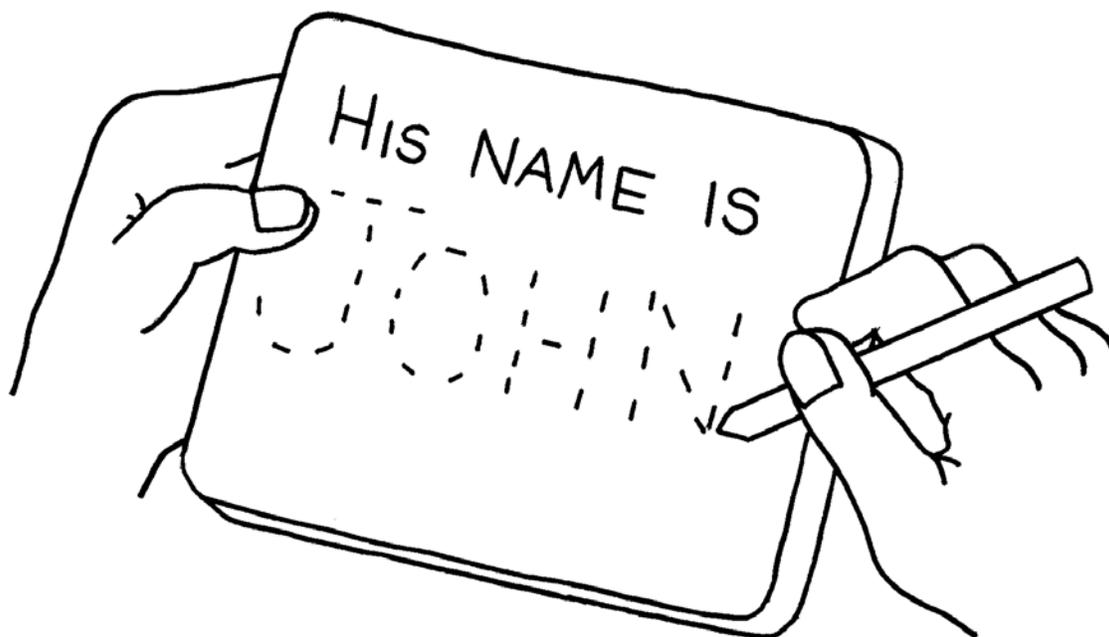
Zacharias wondered how this would happen since he was so old. The angel said to him, "God sent me to tell you this good news! Because you did not believe me, you will not be able to speak until the baby is

born." At that moment, Zacharias lost his voice and was not able to speak. Finally, the time came for Elizabeth to have the baby. Since it was a boy, all the friends and relatives wanted to name him Zacharias after his father. But Elizabeth told them his name would be John. So the relatives asked Zacharias what to call the baby. Because he could not talk, Zacharias wrote on a tablet "His name is John." Suddenly he was able to speak again! Zacharias thanked and praised God.

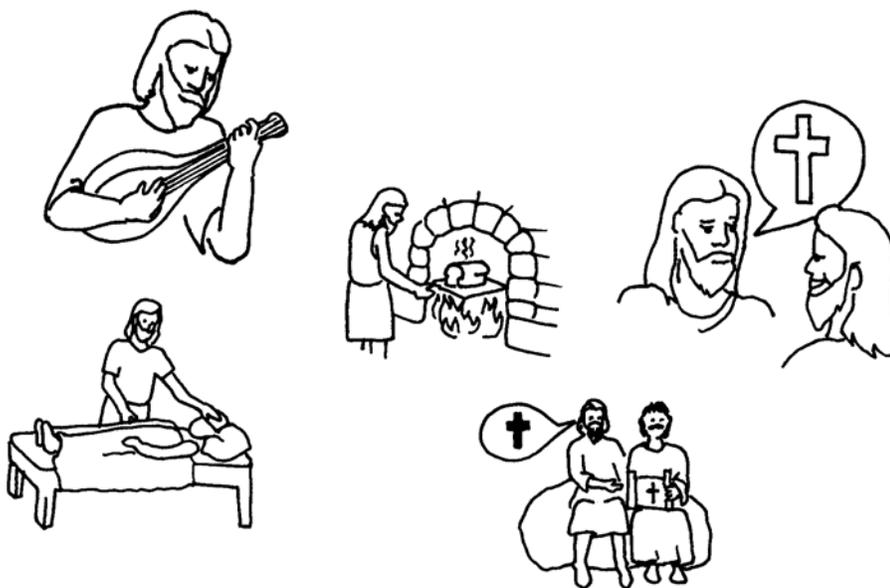
Everyone was amazed at the birth of John, for they knew that he was a special baby. Do you know why John was so special? The Lord chose him to prepare the way for Jesus. The people were excited because they knew that Jesus would be coming to save them from their sins! God kept His promise to send a special person to tell people about Jesus.

We are happy that God always keeps His promises to us.

Activity One - Trace the letters on Zacharias' tablet to show what the baby's name will be.



Activity Two - What special job did God give to John? Circle the picture that shows what John should do.



GOD

always keeps His promises!

Activity Three- What special job did God give to You? Draw a picture that shows how you can be like John.

Passages

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

Jesus said, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Matthew 28:20

Talking to Jesus

Dear Jesus,
We are happy You always keep Your promises. Thank You for sending John to tell people about You. Thank You for coming to die for our sins so we can be with You in heaven. Amen.

Zacharias and the Birth of John

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80



The Story

Have you ever made a promise to someone? Today's story is about a very important promise that God made to all people! Because of sin, all people need a Savior. God promised to send a special person to tell people about the coming Savior, Jesus.

Once there was a priest named Zacharias who was married to a woman named Elizabeth. They worshiped and loved God, but were sad because they had no children.

One day, Zacharias was doing his work in the church, when suddenly he saw an angel of the Lord! Zacharias was very scared, but the angel told him not to be afraid. The angel said that God had heard Zacharias' prayers and would send him a son! The angel also told him to name his son John.

Zacharias wondered how he could have a son since he was so old. The angel said to him, "God sent me to tell you this good news! Because you did not believe me, you will not be able

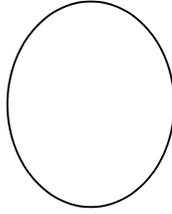
to speak until the baby is born." At that moment, Zacharias lost his voice and was not able to speak. Finally, the time came for Elizabeth to have the baby. Since it was a boy, all the friends and relatives wanted to name him Zacharias after his father, but Elizabeth told them his name would be John. The relatives asked Zacharias what to name the baby. Because he could not talk, Zacharias wrote on a tablet "His name is John." Suddenly he was able to speak again! Zacharias thanked and praised God.

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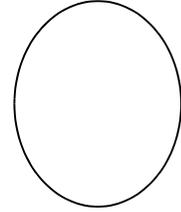
God kept His promise to send a special person to tell people about Jesus. We know God always keeps His promises to us!

Something to Think About - On each circle, draw Zacharias' face to show how he felt...

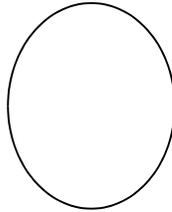
when he saw the angel.



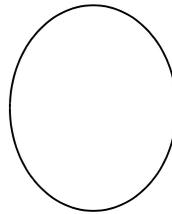
when he heard that Elizabeth would have a baby.



when the baby was born.



when God let him speak again.



Recalling the Story - Circle the word that belongs in each sentence.

1. Zacharias was a (king, priest, baker).
2. Zacharias and Elizabeth thought they were too (young, old, poor) to have a baby.
3. The angel told Zacharias to name the baby (Zacharias, Jesus, John).
4. God took away Zacharias' voice because Zacharias (doubted God, got angry at God, believed God).
5. John's important job was to (rule people, raise animals, tell people about Jesus).
6. God always (keeps, breaks, forgets) His promises.

Passages

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. John 3:16

Jesus said, "Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen. Matthew 28:20

Talking to Jesus

Dear Jesus,
We are happy You always keep Your promises. Thank You for sending John to tell people about You. Thank You for coming to die for our sins so we can be with You in heaven. Amen.

Zacharias and the Birth of John

Luke 1:5-25, 57-80

What sorts of things do people promise to one another?

Why do we sometimes add the words "I promise" to what we say?

Are people's promises ever broken?

Prayer

Dear Heavenly Father, Your promises are the most important truths we have. You promised and sent Your Son who took our sins away. You have promised to be with us always. You have promised to take us to heaven. Help us remember that all Your promises are sure! Amen.



The Story (Luke 1:5-25; 57-80)

There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. (6) And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. (7) But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

(8) So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, (9) according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. (10) And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

(11) Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (12) And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. (13) But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. (14) And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. (15) For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. (16) And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. (17) He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn



the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

(18) And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

(19) And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. (20) But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

(21) And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. (22) But when he came out, he could not speak to them, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

(23) So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. (24) Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, (25) "This the Lord hath dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me to take away my reproach among people."

(57) Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. (58) When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

(59) So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. (60) His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John"

(61) But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." (62) So they made signs to his father - what he would have him called. (63) And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled.

(64) Immediately his mouth was

opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

(65) Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. (66) And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

(67) Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: (68) "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, (69) And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, (70) As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, (71) That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, (72) To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant, (73) The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: (74) To grant that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, (75) In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

(76) "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, (77) To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, (78) Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; (79) To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

(80) So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

What the Story Tells Us - Fill in the blanks with the best answer from the lesson.

1. _____ was a priest.
2. _____ was his wife.
3. Gabriel said that God promised to give Zacharias a _____.
4. Because Zacharias doubted, he was not able to _____.
5. When the time came to name the baby, Zacharias wrote, " His _____ is _____."
6. John would point people to _____.

Outer Aim

God sends John as a messenger to prepare for Jesus' coming.

What God Tells Us – Mark each as (T) rue or (F)alse.

1. _____ Zacharias and Elizabeth prayed for a son.
2. _____ God would not give them what they asked because Zacharias doubted.
3. _____ God kept His promise.
4. _____ God sent John to be a priest in the temple.
5. _____ Elizabeth named the baby after his father.
6. _____ God's promises are still sure today.

Inner Aim God keeps His promises.

Passages

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

Jesus said, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen. Matthew 28:20

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9

Now, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.
Hebrews 11:1

Hymn - TLH 428 v. 1-4

I am trusting Thee, Lord Jesus,
Trusting only Thee;
Trusting Thee for full salvation,
Great and free.

I am trusting Thee for cleansing
In the crimson flood;
Trusting Thee to make me holy
By Thy blood.

I am trusting Thee for pardon;
At Thy feet I bow,
For Thy grace and tender mercy
Trusting now.

I am trusting Thee to guide me;
Thou alone shalt lead,
Ev'ry day and hour supplying
All my need.

Hymn 428 was written hundreds of years after Zacharias' and Elizabeth's time. Explain whether or not this hymn could apply to them.

Your Turn - Make three columns on a sheet of paper. In the first column, list as many of God's promises as you can. Next to each one, list who first received the promise. In the third column, show which promises apply to you.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven,

We have learned that You keep all Your promises to us. When our reason would make us doubt Your Word and our patience wears thin, overcome our doubt and strengthen our faith to believe Your promises will be fulfilled according to Your wise plans. Send Your Holy Spirit on us that we may be bold in believing Your promises of forgiveness, of life and salvation in Jesus and so reach the home You have promised to all who believe in Jesus. Amen.

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(11) Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. (12) And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. (13) But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. (14) And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. (15) For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. (16) And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the



Lord their God. (17) He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

(18) And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

(19) And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. (20) But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

(21) And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. (22) But when he came out, he could not speak to them, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. (

23) So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. (24) Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, (25) "This the Lord hath dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me to take away my reproach among people."

(57) Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. (58) When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

(59) So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. (60) His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John"

(61) But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." (62) So they made signs to his father - what he would have him called. (63) And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled.

(64) Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

(65) Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. (66) And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

(67) Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: (68) "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited and redeemed His people, (69) And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of His servant David, (70) As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, Who have been since the world began, (71) That we should be saved from our enemies And from the hand of all who hate us, (72) To perform the mercy promised to our fathers And to remember His holy covenant, (73) The oath which He swore to our father Abraham: (74) To grant that we, Being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, (75) In holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.

(76) "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; For you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, (77) To give knowledge of salvation to His people By the remission of their sins, (78) Through the tender mercy of our God, With which the

Dayspring from on high has visited us; (79) To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

(80) So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the desert still the day of his manifestation to Israel.

Recalling Details - Retell the story in five sentences.

What the Story Tells Us

God sends John as a messenger to prepare for Jesus' coming.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you know that Zacharias and Elizabeth were believers?
2. What did God promise and how did He fulfill it?
3. What was the consequence of Zacharias' doubting?
4. Name two of the main points in Zacharias' song.
5. Compare Mary's Question, "How can this be?" (Luke 1:34) with Zacharias' "How shall I know this?" (Luke 1:18). How are the questions similar and different?

What God Tells Us

God keeps His promises.

Passages

(Matthew 28:20) Jesus said, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

(Joshua 1:9) "Have I not commanded you? Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go."

(Romans 8:28) And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

(Hebrews 13:5) Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

Hymn

Look at the Lutheran Hymnal 91, 1-4. Find at least three ways it applies to today's lesson.

Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, We have learned that You keep all Your promises to us. When our reason would make us doubt Your Word and our patience wears thin, overcome our doubt and strengthen our faith to believe Your promises will be fulfilled according to Your wise plans. Send Your Holy Spirit on us that we may be bold in believing Your promises of forgiveness, of life and salvation in Jesus and so reach the home You have promised to all who believe in Jesus. Amen.