

Birth of John the Baptist_Family Bible Time



A priest and his wife were well beyond the years when it is possible to give birth to a child. The angel, Gabriel, gave Zechariah the incredible news that his wife, Elizabeth, would give birth to a son who would become a great preacher. They were to name the baby John.



Scripture Reference: [Luke 1:5-25, 36-37](#)

Suggested Emphasis: God can make things happen that are impossible to man.

Group Share Time

Have a contest of strength such as arm-wrestling or a [thumb war](#). Talk about people who are very strong. This may be someone in the group or someone known to them. Ask if there was a time when they wished they had had more power.

Story from the Bible

An adult or young reader can read the words below as the slides are shown.

1. Cover: Birth of John the Baptist. Today we are going to learn about a time when something seemed impossible but God made it happen because of his power.
2. Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were two old people—like grandparents—except that Zechariah and Elizabeth were not grandparents. They weren't even parents. They had no children, and that made them sad. But all their lives they had followed God's commands, and that had made their lives happy.
3. Zechariah was a priest who helped in God's temple. One day a very special thing happened to him. He was chosen to be the one priest to go inside the temple and burn incense while the people stood outside and prayed. Zechariah must have felt especially happy as he entered the temple.
Suddenly an angel appeared in front of him! Zechariah was terrified. The angel comforted him, "don't be afraid, Zechariah. God has heard your prayer. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son. You will name him John. He will help people follow God's chosen leader."
4. That seems impossible doesn't it? Can old people have babies? Only God could make that happen! Zechariah should have believed the angel and rejoiced. But he didn't. "How can this happen?" he asked. "My wife and I are old."
"I am the angel Gabriel. God sent me to deliver this good news to you. But now, since you did not believe my news, you will not be able to talk until my words come true."
5. Outside the temple the crowd was getting impatient. They wondered why Zechariah was taking so long inside the temple. But when he did come out, he couldn't tell them. The angel's words had come true: Zechariah couldn't talk.
6. And more of the angel's words came true. Zechariah and Elizabeth soon discovered that they were going to have a baby. The

neighbours and relatives rejoiced along with the parents. And when the baby was born, it was a boy, just as the angel had said.

7. When the baby was eight days old, many friends and relatives of Zechariah and Elizabeth came for a party to give the baby his name. As people gathered for the party, they talked about how the baby would be named Zechariah after his father. But Elizabeth heard them and said, "No, his name will be John!"
The guests were surprised. "But none of your relatives have that name."
8. They turned to Zechariah and gestured for him to show what he wanted the baby to be named—he still could not talk. He asked for a writing tablet and on it wrote, "His name is John."
All of the sudden Zechariah realized that he could talk! He began praising God for the wonderful way He had kept His promises. He explained to the people that John indeed was a special baby, and God had a special plan for him: John would prepare people to follow Jesus (who would soon be born.)
9. Zechariah and Elizabeth were excited to have a son after all these years. But they were even happier that God had chosen them as the parents of a boy who would grow up and help others follow God's own Son.

Verse to Think About

Oh, Lord God, you made the skies and the earth. You made them with your very great power. There is nothing too wonderful for you to do.
Jeremiah 32:17

Choose Activities and Learn Together

Select activities that suit your family or group. Consider ages and abilities and how to involve everyone present in at least one of the activities.

- **AT HOME** Look in family albums to see the ages of people in your family when they had children. Who were the oldest parents? Talk about Zechariah and Elizabeth and what their ages would have meant for John growing up.
- **EXPLORE:** Zechariah served in the temple. Watch an online video depicting the temple.
 - [3D aerial tour of the temple as built by King Herod circa 70 AD \(53 seconds\) from youtube](#)
 - [Virtual Reconstruction Of Second Temple Temple Mount \(7 minutes 46 seconds\) from youtube](#)
- **IN THE WORD:** Read [Luke 1:5-25, 36-37](#) once again. What attributes did Zechariah and Elizabeth have that made them good parents to John? How does this relate to parenting among the group members? Do you have those qualities?
- **GAME/ACTIVITY:** If you are at home count how many items relating to babies that you have in your home. What baby items would Zechariah and Elizabeth have had for their son? What is different about taking care of babies then and now? What is the same?
- **GAME/ACTIVITY:** Play charades. Players will act out scenes from the Bible where God's power was displayed. Make up your own clues or [print out this set of cards](#).
- **GAME/ACTIVITY:** Make a list of amazing attributes of God. Circle the attributes that have to do with his power.
- **CREATIVE:** Team up children and adults to draw and colour a family portrait of John the Baptist and his parents.
- **LIFE APPLICATION:** Talk about a time when something in your life seemed impossible but God made it happen anyway. How does this relate to difficult situations you may face now or in the future?
- **LITTLE ONES:** Allow very young children to play with a "baby John" doll and take care of him.
- **LITTLE ONES:** [A page to colour.](#) [Click here for new ways to use colouring pictures.](#)
- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Use small spoons and serve items that babies like to eat. Applesauce, bananas, teething crackers or actual baby food.

Song Suggestions:

Singing does not have to be a performance. Don't take yourself too seriously. In the privacy of your own home or within a small group allow yourself to just be genuine and enjoy the experience together.

Singing songs yourself is more reliable than viewing them online. If you are viewing published videos online on forums such as YouTube be sure and preview them first to make sure there are not unhelpful advertisements. To avoid long pauses due to internet speed issues play the song through once before you begin and then hold it paused and ready to go at the beginning of the song.

- [My God is So Big Song](#)

- [He's Got the Whole World in His Hands Song](#)
- [How Great is Our God](#)
- [How Great Thou Art \(link to video\)](#)
- [In Christ Alone \(link to video\)](#)
- [More songs to choose from](#)

Additional Mission Bible Class Resources

- [Instructions for Family Bible Time and Intergenerational Groups here.](#)
- [More teacher information and additional ideas for today's lesson here.](#)
- [How to Plan a Bible Class for Children](#)
- [How to Teach Children at Various Ages](#)
- [Ideas for Teachers](#)
- [Songs for Bible Class](#)
- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Movement and Dance](#)



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