

LESSON 2

ELIZABETH AND ZECHARIAH

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Prepares the Way for Jesus

SCRIPTURE: [Luke 1](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY: After centuries of waiting for the King God had promised, Zechariah and Elizabeth have a son who is filled with God's Spirit from a young age and prepares the hearts of God's people for Jesus.

MEMORY VERSE: A child will be born. He will be the Prince of Peace. —from [Isaiah 9:6](#)

CURIOSITY

Four options for interactive hands-on activities to help kids begin thinking about the wonder of God.

- Free Play
- Declaring God's Wonder



BELIEF

A deep and interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

- Prayer of Invitation
- God's Big Story
- Connecting the Wonder Truth
- Memory Verse: [From Isaiah 9:6](#)

FAITH

An intentional interactive discussion that helps kids discover the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own.

- Circle Time: Discussion
- Prayer and Blessing

CLOSING

An interactive activity to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

- Option 1: People Tag
- Option 2: Charades
- Responding in Worship: Sign Language

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

During Advent and Christmas, I usually spend time thinking about what traditions will help my kids understand who Jesus is. Storybook Bibles. Family devotionals. Songs and carols. Wreaths and candles. What will point them to Jesus? If I'm honest, it all makes me a bit anxious. What if I mess it up or say the wrong thing? Sometimes teaching them about God's big story feels daunting.

Read [Luke 1:5–25](#). The story of Elizabeth and Zechariah—and the promised birth of John the Baptist—shows how God was preparing the way for Jesus. He was getting the world ready. Perhaps God's preparations feel as finished to you as the expected conclusion of the Nativity story, but God is still working. He is still preparing people to meet Jesus. He works through all kinds of things to kindle and nurture a person's faith. He might even work through a dad who sometimes says the wrong thing or a kids' ministry volunteer who feels in over her head.

God invites us to be part of His big story as we follow Jesus day by day, year by year. What does God have in store for you this week? How is He preparing you to know Jesus more? And how might He work in you and through you to nurture another person's faith? God prepares the way for Jesus, from ancient days until kingdom come. God is at work. He hasn't stopped.

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Zechariah was a descendant of Aaron and a priest of the division of Abijah. Each division served at the temple for about two weeks every year, so Zechariah probably had another occupation while not serving. Zechariah's wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron, the first high priest and brother of Moses.

WHAT?

The angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the temple to tell him his wife Elizabeth would bear a son, despite her old age. They were to name him John. John would be filled with the Holy Spirit and prepare God's people for the coming Lord.

WHERE?

The angel appeared to Zechariah in God's temple in Jerusalem. He appeared on the right side of the altar of incense, which was located in the part of the temple called the holy place. Zechariah and Elizabeth lived somewhere in the hill country of Judea.

WHEN?

This story takes place in the time of Herod, king of Judea, close to the end of his rule in 4 BC. Elizabeth became pregnant about six months before the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary to tell her she would give birth to Jesus.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Through the birth of John the Baptist, God was preparing the way for Jesus, the everlasting King. John spent his days spiritually preparing people for the appearance of Jesus, who then proclaimed the kingdom of God and defeated the powers of darkness.



Curiosity

LESSON 2 **EARLY CHILDHOOD**

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

Play Stations

As kids arrive...

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and help them find a game or activity to enjoy until the lesson begins.

This is a great opportunity to get to know kids and start building relationships! That happens best when you get on their level and play right along with them.

PRO TIP: This is also a great opportunity for a bathroom reminder!

Worship Playlist

During free play...

Play one of the Spotify playlists as background music while kids arrive.

Clean Up

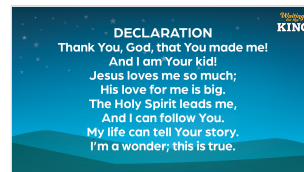
At the end of free play...

Play the Clean Up video to signal time to put away toys and activities. After working together to clean up, gather kids on sit spots, chairs, or benches to begin the lesson.

Declaring God's Wonder

SUPPLIES: Early Childhood Declaration [Slide](#)

Show the Declaration [Slide](#) and encourage the kids to say the statements and do the motions with you.



Hello friends! Welcome to church. I am so glad to be here with all of you today! We like to start our time together with something special called a declaration. These words that we're going to say together remind us of what God says is true about me and you! You can repeat after me:

Thank You, God, that You made me! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Make prayer hands, then point up to God and to yourself.

And I am Your kid! *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Put your hands on your hips.

Jesus loves me so much; *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Spread your arms out wide to your side one at a time, then pull them in for a hug around your chest.

His love for me is big. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your arms up high and wide above your head.

The Holy Spirit leads me, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Bring your arms down from the sky, making a path in front of you.

And I can follow You. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

March like you're following the leader.

My life can tell Your story, *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Hold your hands in front of you like an open book.

I'm a wonder; this is true. *(Kids repeat words and motions.)*

Put your hands up, shaking your fingers, celebrating ("praise hands").



Belief

LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Guide kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Prepares the Way for Jesus

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1

MEMORY VERSE: From Isaiah 9:6

Worship

SUPPLIES: Worship music videos

Today we'll learn about how God prepares the way for Jesus. Let's sing about how God prepares the way for Jesus together!

Play songs and encourage the kids to sing and dance as they praise God.

Prayer of Invitation

Before entering into God's big story, lead kids in a prayer of invitation. Use the prayer here or your own words: **God, thank You for showing us who You are through Your Word. May we have ears and eyes to hear and see the things You want to teach us through Your Spirit. May we see how You prepare the way for Jesus! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

God's Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Luke in the Bible. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Luke in the Bible. Luke is in the New Testament, in the first four books, which are called the gospels.

God's Big STORY SCRIPT: ELIZABETH AND ZECHARIAH

SUPPLIES: Bible, [Puppets](#), [God's Big Story Video](#)

Before kids arrive, print the [Puppets Sheets](#) and cut out each puppet. If you want the puppets to be more durable, you can print them onto cardstock. Tape a craft stick to the back of each picture to create puppets.

Long ago, God's people were taken from their home, and they lived in two kingdoms. They waited for God to save them. God promised to send a king who would rescue them and be in charge forever. A man named Daniel had a dream from God that showed a king who would save God's people.

For many years, God's people waited for this king. Two of those people were Zechariah and Elizabeth. Show the kids the Zechariah and Elizabeth puppets. Choose two kids to come up and hold each of the puppets. **They were married for a long time, but they didn't have children. Some people thought Elizabeth could not have kids because she did wrong things, but that was not true. Elizabeth and Zechariah both loved God. God was going to do something amazing for them.**



Zechariah was a priest, which is a man who worked at God's temple. The temple was like a church. Zechariah worked there for two weeks each year. One day, Zechariah was chosen to go into the temple to worship God. This was a big day for Zechariah. While he was inside, an angel named Gabriel showed up! Show the angel puppet and choose a kid to come up and hold the angel puppet.

Encourage the kid who is holding the angel puppet to pretend to talk to Zechariah. "Do not be afraid, Zechariah," the angel said. "Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will have a child. It will be a boy, and you must call him John" (Luke 1:13). This news was wonderful! But it got even better.

Gabriel told Zechariah that John would have the Holy Spirit, or the presence of God, before he was even born. John was going to get everyone ready for Jesus to come! Was it almost time for God to send the king who would be in charge forever?

Zechariah stared at the angel. He could not believe the angel's words. He said, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife is old too" (Luke 1:18). Gabriel said, "You will not be able to speak until after John is born. That's because you did not believe my words. They will come true at the time God has chosen" (Luke 1:20).

Zechariah could not speak. Not a word! When he came out of the temple, he had to wave his arms around to let the people know what happened. Have the kid who is holding the Zechariah puppet wave it around. **Then his wife, Elizabeth, found out that she was going to have a baby! 'The Lord has done this for me,' she said. 'In these days, he has been kind to me. He has taken away my shame among the people' (Luke 1:25).**

Elizabeth had a baby boy. Her family and neighbors were so happy. They wanted to name the baby Zechariah after his dad. "No!" Elizabeth said. Have the kid who is holding the Elizabeth puppet shake the puppet back and forth as if saying, "No!" **"He must be called John" (Luke 1:60). Her family and**

neighbors were confused. Show the John puppet and choose a kid to come hold it. **They motioned to Zechariah to see what he thought. Zechariah still couldn't speak, so he wrote down his answer: "His name is John" (Luke 1:63). "Right away Zechariah could speak again. Right away he praised God" (Luke 1:64). His neighbors were amazed.**

The Holy Spirit helped Zechariah speak God's message. He told about God's great power to keep His promises and rescue His people. He told about his son, John, who was going to help people get ready for Jesus. John was going to tell them that their sins—the wrong things people do—can be forgiven. Zechariah told about a king who would be in charge forever and bring light to all people. God sent John to get people ready and help prepare the way for Jesus. God prepares the way for Jesus.

Watch God's Big Story

Watch the [Zechariah and Elizabeth God's Big Story!](#)



Connecting the Wonder Truth

Our Wonder Truth today is **GOD PREPARES THE WAY FOR JESUS.**

God prepared the way for Jesus—the everlasting King—through the birth of John the Baptist. When John grew up, he spent his days getting people ready for Jesus' ministry. Then Jesus came and taught about the kingdom of God and bringing light into darkness.

Memory Verse

SUPPLIES: [Memory Verse Slide](#)



Our story was about how God prepared the way for Jesus with a baby named John. Jesus came to earth as a baby. Let's practice our new memory verse together!

MEMORY VERSE

**A child will be born. He will be the
Prince of Peace.**

—from Isaiah 9:6

Encourage the kids to do the motions and say the verse with you.

- **A CHILD WILL BE BORN.**—*Pretend to rock a baby.*
- **HE WILL BE**—*Point up.*
- **THE PRINCE OF PEACE.**—*Pretend to place a crown on your head.*
- **FROM ISAIAH 9:6**—*Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.*

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **How did the prophet Isaiah prepare the way for Jesus to be born long ago? What did God promise through Isaiah's message?**
- **How has Jesus brought peace into your life?**

Help kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own story.

Circle Time: Discussion and Prayer

SUPPLIES: coloring sheets, crayons, prizes

Divide kids into smaller groups, each with a leader. Pass out coloring sheets to keep hands busy while you discuss the Bible story. Don't forget to practice the memory verse and award prizes!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **What did the angel tell Zechariah to name the baby?** (*John*)
- **What happened to Zechariah when he didn't believe what the angel was saying?** (*He couldn't talk.*)
- **Why was John born?** (*To prepare the way for Jesus*)
- **What did Zechariah do as soon as he could talk again?** (*He praised God.*)
- **How would you react if an angel appeared to you to tell you a special message from God?**
- **How can you help prepare the way for Jesus?**

Zechariah and Elizabeth had an important job. They were going to be parents of a special baby. God sent John to prepare the way for Jesus. Let's talk to God now in prayer and thank Him for sending Jesus!

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to thank God that He is the forever King.

Prayer and Blessing

After the kids finish discussion, pray with them, thanking God for preparing the way for Jesus. Encourage them to use the sign language for "Thank You" during the prayer when you say, "Thank You."

Father God, thank You for sending John to prepare the way for Jesus. Thank You for sending Jesus to save us. Thank You for loving us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands out in front of them, with palms up, as if their hands were open to receive something. Tell them to listen and receive the blessing as you speak it over them.

Blessing: Just as Elizabeth and Zechariah waited for a son, just as the world waited for Jesus, may you see God working around you as you wait and prepare this Christmas.

Use the following activity to reinforce the lesson and keep kids engaged during pick up.

The closing activities can be done in small groups or together as a class.

Option 1: People Tag

This game will help kids remember that they can help prepare the way for Jesus just like John did by sharing His love with others. Gather kids together in the middle of a large open space with plenty of room to run and move around.

John helped prepare the way for Jesus by telling people He was coming. We can tell people about Jesus, too! We're going to play a game of tag, but with this game, when you tag someone you can tell him, "Jesus loves you!" If you get tagged, you can help tag others by telling them, "Jesus loves you!"

Begin the game of tag. Let kids take turns being the first tagger as time allows.

Option 2: Charades

In God's big story today, we're going to learn about a man who could not talk for a while! People who can't talk have to communicate in other ways. One of the ways to do that is by acting out what they want to say. We're going to play a game where I will pretend to do something, and you can guess what I'm acting out!

Leader Tip: If time allows, you could have kids take turns acting out situations and letting the other kids guess as well.

Act out the following situations (or make up your own!):

- Eating an ice cream cone
- Reading a book
- Jumping rope
- Catching a fish using a fishing pole
- Riding a bike
- Brushing your teeth
- Talking on the phone

- Sleeping
- Walking a dog
- Taking care of a baby

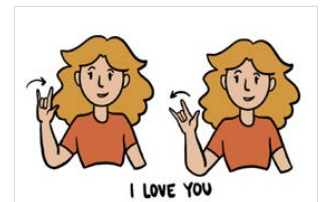
You did a great job figuring out what I was trying to do even though I didn't use any words! Our story today had to do with the last thing that was acted out—a baby! We learned that God worked through a man who couldn't talk for a while—and his family—to help prepare the way for Jesus.

Responding in Worship: Sign Language

One of the ways we worship is by using our voices to sing to God, but did you know you can worship God even if you can't talk? Allow the kids to respond.

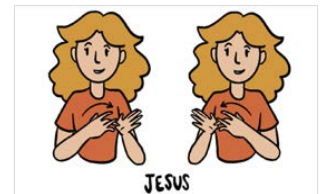
Can you think of some ways we could worship God without using our voices? Allow the kids to respond. If no one suggests it, ask if anyone has ever heard of sign language. **Sign language is used by people who can't talk or who can't hear to communicate. Today we're going to use some sign language to worship God.**

Encourage kids to sit quietly and watch you closely. **The first thing we are going to learn to say is "I love you, Jesus," but remember, we can't use our voices.** Demonstrate the sign for "I love you" to the kids. **To sign "I love you," hold up your pinkie, index finger, and thumb. Keep your ring finger and middle finger down. Hold your hand out facing away from you and move it slightly back and forth.** Have the kids practice making the sign for "I love you."



I LOVE YOU

The last part of our phrase is "Jesus." For "Jesus," you will take the middle finger from each hand touch the palm of the opposite hand and go back and forth. Demonstrate the sign for "Jesus" and have the kids mimic the motion.



JESUS

Invite the kids to sign the whole sentence "I love You, Jesus" together. **We can worship Jesus by telling Him we love Him using sign language!**

We can sign "I love You, God" as well. To sign God, hold your hand up like you want someone to give you a high five. Turn it sideways so that your thumb touches your forehead and then move your hand down toward your chest. Have kids practice signing "God" and then saying, "I love You, God!"



GOD

Let's learn one more sign. Let's learn how to say, "Thank you." To sign thank you, hold your hand up like we did for God, but this time make the palm face you. Take the tips of your fingers and touch your chin and then bring your hand forward ... almost like you're blowing someone a kiss! Lead the kids in practicing saying, "Thank you" and then "Thank You, Jesus" and "Thank You, God."



THANK YOU

Let's use our sign language we learned to worship God. Think about some things in your life that you can thank God for. Remember, we aren't using our voices! Think in your head about something you want to thank God for and then do the signs for "Thank You, God." Give kids a few minutes to think of things they can tell God thank you for and to do the sign language.