

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.

WORD OF WONDER: A child will be born. He will be the Prince of Peace. —from Isaiah 9:6

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
 - Baby Play
 - A-MAZE-ing Ways
 - Elizabeth and Zechariah Coloring Sheet
- Word of Wonder: From Isaiah 9:6
- God's Big Story / Snack
- Circle Time: Avoid the Cups!
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Sign Language
- Craft: Writing Tablets



[Waiting for the King Preschool Spotify playlist](#)



LESSON 2 FOR LEADERS

INVITATION

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

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Prepares the Way for Jesus

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1

WORD OF WONDER: From Isaiah 9:6

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.

—**Michael Rade**

Care & Support Ministry Assistant; Itinerant Preacher
Contributor to Wonder Ink

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.



LESSON 2 EARLY CHILDHOOD

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

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Play Stations

SUPPLIES: baby dolls (2–3), baby doll blankets (2–3), baby doll bottles (2–3), cardboard tubes (several), painter’s tape, basket, table tennis balls (several), paper plates, cup, coloring utensils, play crib or baby bed (optional), scissors (optional)

RESOURCES: [Elizabeth and Zechariah Coloring Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#)

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

"Welcome to church! While we’re getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we’ll be learning about today?"

Play Station: Baby Play

Set-up: Set out baby dolls, baby blankets, baby bottles, play cribs, and other items related to babies.

Play: Encourage kids to set up an area of the room where they can take care of a baby. Once they have the area ready, kids can pretend the baby has arrived and take turns taking care of the baby doll.

Play Station: A-MAZE-ing Ways

Set-up: Set out cardboard tubes of different sizes along with painter’s tape near an empty space on a wall. Set out a basket of table tennis balls nearby. Make sure the balls fit through the available tubes. If the balls don’t fit, cut the tubes in half lengthwise, so they’re open tracks for the balls to travel in. If the balls fall off the tubes or the wall, a few pieces of cut paper plates taped to the tubes works great for keeping the balls on the track. You can set a cup under the bottom tube to catch the ball.

Play: Help the kids how to tape the cardboard tubes on the wall to create a maze that the table tennis balls can travel through. Tell the kids that as they create their mazes, they’re preparing a way for the ball to travel down the path.



Play Station: Elizabeth and Zechariah Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of the Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a baby.

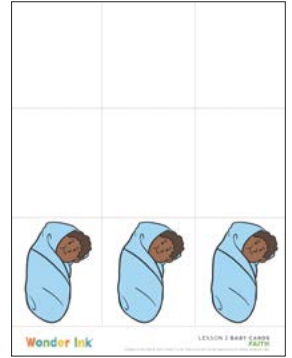
Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, scissors (prep only), cardstock (optional)

RESOURCES: *Baby Cards (1 set/SG)*

Before kids arrive, print the Baby Cards and cut them apart. You can use cardstock for the cards to make them more durable. Place the cards face down on a table in three rows and three columns.

"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 Word of Wonder and play a fun game with a baby to help us remember our verse!"



WORD OF WONDER

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.

Once you have repeated the verse several times with the kids, have them gather around the Baby Cards.

"This game will help us remember our verse! Choose a card to turn over. If you choose a card that has a baby on it, you get to lead the others while we all say our Word of Wonder together. If the card doesn't have a baby, the next person will go."

Let the kids take turns choosing one of the cards from the table and turning it over. If a child chooses a card that has a picture of a baby on it, encourage her to begin saying the verse. If she chooses a blank card, it is the next person's turn.

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?**

God's Big Story / Snack

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.

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? (*Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.*)

God's big story, waiting for me! (*Point to yourself.*)

"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."

Read Luke 1:5–17, 57–59 from an NIV Bible.

***Leader Tip *** Kids can color their Coloring Pages while you read to help with the wiggles!

Circle Time: Avoid the Cups!

SUPPLIES: disposable cups (at least 10), ball

Ahead of time, set up disposable cups on the floor at random and gather the kids to sit in a circle around the cups. **We're going to play a game to help us remember our story. We're going to take turns gently rolling the ball across the circle to someone else. If you knock over a cup or the ball touches a cup, you get to answer a question!** Let kids take turns rolling the ball across the circle to someone else. If the ball knocks over or touches a cup, ask one of the questions below.

Leader Tip: If you don't have disposable cups for this game, use another object that you have! You could use blocks, water bottles, or even small cones! You can use any small objects.

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.

Head to Large Group!

Return and finish the rest of this guide before parents arrive.

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.**

Make It Inclusive!

If you have a child or adult in your ministry who is hearing-impaired, allow that person to share how he communicates. If the person knows sign language, invite him to teach signs to the kids.

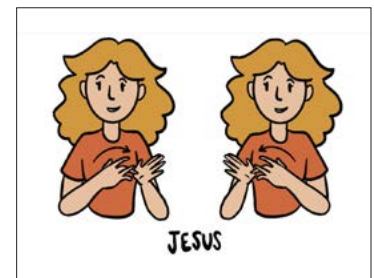
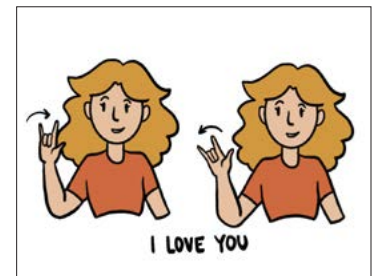
Encourage kids to sit quietly and watch you closely. **The first thing we are going to learn to say is "I love you, Jesus," but remember, we can't use our voices.** Demonstrate the sign for "I love you" to the kids. **To sign "I love you," hold up your pinkie, index finger, and thumb. Keep your ring 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."

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.

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!"

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."



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.

Craft: Writing Tablets

SUPPLIES: black paper (1 sheet per kid), white chalk (1 piece per kid), small chalkboards (1 per kid, optional)

"Zechariah couldn't speak, but he still found a way to tell people what the angel said to name the baby. Do you remember what the baby's name was? Allow the kids time to respond. It was John! Zechariah couldn't use words to tell people the baby's name, but he could write it down. He wrote, "His name is John!" on a tablet (Luke 1:63). Zechariah didn't have paper and pencils like we have today. We are going to use this black paper and chalk to make a tablet like Zechariah may have used to write on.

Hand out a piece of black paper to each kid.

Take your piece of paper and start tearing off little pieces from around the edges. Show kids how to gently tear their sheet of paper into a rough rectangle shape. To make the craft more complex, you can use real miniature chalkboards for each kid. They can write on and decorate the chalkboards.

Once kids have their rectangle shapes created, give each of them a piece of chalk. If you have older kids, you could write the word "John" on a piece of paper and have them copy it onto their paper with chalk. If you have a younger group, you could have them pretend to write a message on their papers with chalk by drawing lines and shapes.

Even though Zechariah couldn't talk, he wanted to make sure people knew that he wanted the baby's name to be John, just like the angel said!"