

Story Time - Read the story to the children
Lesson 166: THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST
LUKE 1:39-80

Mary got up and went quickly to a town in the hill country of Judea. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the unborn baby inside her jumped, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she said to Mary, "God has blessed you more than any other woman. And God has blessed the baby you will have. You are the mother of my Lord, and you have come to me! Why has something so good happened to me? When I heard your voice, the baby inside me jumped with joy. Great blessings are yours because you believed what the Lord said to you! You believed this would happen." Then Mary said, "I praise the Lord with all my heart. I am very happy because God is my Savior. I am not important, but he has shown his care for me, his lowly servant. From now until the end of time, people will remember how much God blessed me. Yes, the Powerful One has done great things for me. His name is very holy. He always gives mercy to those who worship him. He reached out his arm and showed his power. He scattered those who are proud and think great things about themselves. He brought down rulers from their thrones and raised up the humble people. He filled the hungry with good things, but he sent the rich away with nothing. God has helped Israel--the people he chose to serve him. He did not forget his promise to give us his mercy. He has done what he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and his children forever." Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then went home. When it was time for Elizabeth to give birth, she had a boy. Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord was very good to her, and they were happy for her. When the baby was eight days old, they came to circumcise him. They wanted to name him Zechariah because this was his father's name. But his mother said, "No, he will be named John." The people said to Elizabeth, "But no one in your family has that name." Then they made signs to his father, "What would you like to name him?" Zechariah asked for something to write on. Then he wrote, "His name is John." Everyone was surprised. Then Zechariah could talk again, and he began praising God. And all their neighbors were afraid. In all the hill country of Judea, people continued talking about these things. Everyone who heard about these things wondered about them. They thought, "What will this child be?" They could see that the Lord was with him. Then Zechariah, John's father, was filled with the Holy Spirit and told the people a

message from God: "Praise to the Lord God of Israel. He has come to help his people and has given them freedom. He has given us a powerful Savior from the family of his servant David. This is what he promised through his holy prophets long ago. He will save us from our enemies and from the power of all those who hate us. God said he would show mercy to our fathers, and he remembered his holy agreement. This was the promise he made to our father Abraham, a promise to free us from the power of our enemies, so that we could serve him without fear in a way that is holy and right for as long as we live. "Now you, little boy, will be called a prophet of the Most High God. You will go first before the Lord to prepare the way for him. You will make his people understand that they will be saved by having their sins forgiven. "With the loving mercy of our God, a new day from heaven will shine on us. It will bring light to those who live in darkness, in the fear of death. It will guide us into the way that brings peace." And so the little boy John grew up and became stronger in spirit. Then he lived in areas away from other people until the time when he came out to tell God's message to the people of Israel.

166. THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST
(LUKE 1:39-80)



"And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation." LUKE 1:50

166. THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

LUKE 1:39-80

MEMORY VERSE:

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

Review Questions

True or False

1. Mary was engaged to a man named Joseph. Luke 1:26-27
2. Mary was married to a man named Joseph. Luke 1:26-27
3. The angel told Mary not to be afraid. Luke 1:30
4. The angel told Mary to name her baby Joseph. Luke 1:31

Questions

1. Is anything impossible for God? Luke 1:37
2. Who else was having a son? Luke 1:36
3. How did God feel about Mary? Luke 1:28
4. How was Mary's baby going to be special? Luke 1:32
5. Did Mary understand everything that the angel had said?
6. What was the name of the angel that spoke to Mary?

LESSON 166 Activity

Peace in a Worried World

Have the entire class sit on the floor fairly close together. Give them directions to act worried by either pretending to cry, or shout various phrases of concern. For example, you could have them say the following: "I'm afraid," "Help, I can't find my way," "Oh no, what am I going to do," etc. (you may want to write some phrases on small pieces of paper for older children). Direct one volunteer to walk carefully through the "worried" group very peacefully. Have the peaceful child tap a "worried" child on the shoulder causing that "worried" child to become a peaceful child also. Now have both peaceful children to continue to tap other until the entire group becomes "peaceful." This is how God's peace is in our lives. The Lord comes to us and reminds us that in Him we have peace and can be peaceful even in hard situations.

We find out in Zacharias' song that Jesus was born to take away our sin, to be our light, and to be our peace.

The Edge Game

Tape or mark a line on the floor, have one or two children stand on one side of the tape/line with their toes on the edge. At your signal have the children fall over onto the other side of the tape (let them be dramatic and silly, but use your attention getting signal to regain control of the class). Explain to the class that John was the last of the Old Testament type prophets who were used by God to communicate to His people. After John the Baptist, God chose to speak to each of His people directly through His Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit. God's old covenant was finished and His new covenant was just beginning with Jesus. John was on "that" side of the tape; we are on "this" side.

PRAYER Lead the children in a prayer of praise and thanksgiving because God is worthy of our praise. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the Gospel, give them opportunity to do so.