

3

## A Miracle Baby

The Jews did not forget God's promise of a king. They wanted a king. Hundreds of years had passed since Israel had a king. Because of their sins they had been carried away from the Land of Promise, and that was the end of their kings.

Yes, God had brought them back to their own country, but now the Romans ruled them. That is why they looked forward to the coming of the King whom God had promised. Surely He would free them from the Romans.

Many years passed and the Jews kept looking for the One whom God had promised. But no one knew exactly what kind of person to look for. Would they know Him if they saw Him?

All the time God went ahead with His plans for the kind of Saviour He

had promised Adam and Eve. Now the world was ready for Him. It was almost time for Him to come.

The Lord had one more thing to do. He needed a man to tell the Jews who the Saviour was after He arrived.

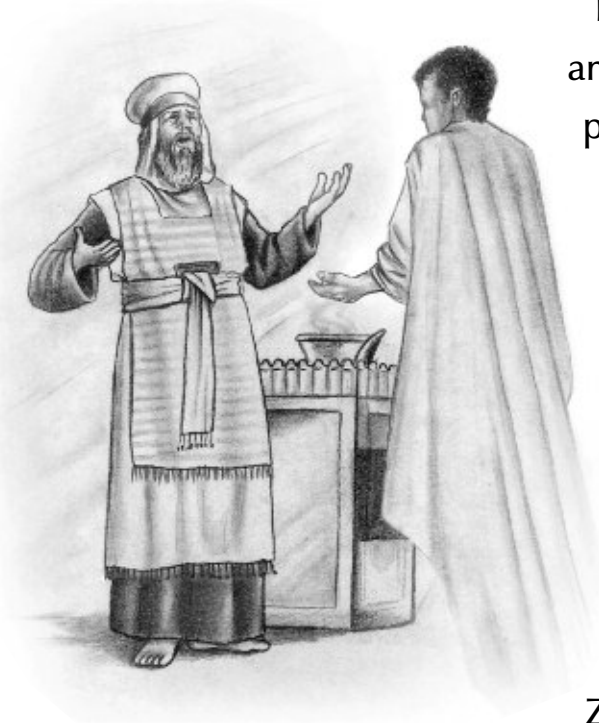
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For years Elisabeth and Zacharias had prayed for a child. Now they were too old to hope for a family. One day an angel appeared to Zacharias. This frightened the old man.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zacharias. God has

heard your prayers. Elisabeth will have a son. You shall name him John. He will be a very special child. When he grows up he will prepare the way for the Saviour who will soon appear."

Zacharias could not believe such wonderful news. As old as they were,



### Lesson 3

if he and Elisabeth had a son at their age, he would be a miracle baby.

Zacharias wanted some kind of sign to prove that the angel spoke the truth. He said, "I am an old man and my wife, too, is old."

The angel replied, "I have come from God to tell you this good news. Since you did not believe what I said, you won't be able to talk until the child is born."

That was not exactly the kind of sign Zacharias had in mind, but it happened just as the angel said. From that moment on, he could not speak a word.

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At last the day came when Elisabeth held her little son in her arms. Her neighbors and cousins came to see the new baby. They started calling him Baby Zacharias.

"No," said Elisabeth, "we are going

to name him John."

"John!" exclaimed the neighbors. "Why John? You have no relatives by that name. Let's ask Zacharias what he wants to name him."

When they asked the baby's father, he motioned for a writing tablet. Then he wrote, "His name is John."

The minute he wrote those words, Zacharias could talk again. And he began praising God.

The people looked at him in amazement. What was going on? This man had not spoken a word for many months. Now suddenly he could talk again!

Little John grew just as all babies grow. It was not until he became a man that the people found out he had a very special place in God's plan. Then they knew that indeed he was a miracle baby.

## From the Story

Circle *T* for *true* or *F* for *false*.

1. T  F The Jews were glad the Romans ruled them.
2.  T F John was an answer to his parents' prayers.
3.  T F John was Zacharias and Elisabeth's first son.
4. T  F Everyone wanted to name the baby "John."

**Underline why Zacharias didn't speak for many months.**

5. He was so surprised at the angel's news.

He agreed not to talk if God would give him a son.

He didn't believe the angel.

Elisabeth asked him not to talk.

## That's Our God

When Zacharias could speak again, he began to praise God.

**Write two things he probably thanked God for at that time.**

△ 6. Teacher Check

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**Underline what God said John would do as a grown-up.**

7. Free the Jews from the Romans.

Prepare the way for the coming Saviour.

Change his name to Zacharias.

Rule in Jerusalem.

## For Me Today

For many months Zacharias could not speak. **Write some sentences telling how your life would be different if you could not talk.**

△ 8. Teacher Check—accept any reasonable answer.

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