



The Birth of John

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Long before Jesus was born, God promised, "Someday I will send a messenger. He will get people ready for the Savior." God picked Zechariah and Elizabeth to be the parents of this baby who would grow up to be God's messenger.

Zechariah and Elizabeth were very old. They did not have any children. They thought they never would have children.

Zechariah was a priest. One day he went into the temple to pray. Suddenly Zechariah saw an angel standing in the temple.

The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. Soon your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby boy. Name the baby John. He will tell people that the Savior is coming."

"How do I know this will happen?" Zechariah asked.

"My wife and I are both very old."

The angel answered, "Because you do not believe me, you won't be able to talk until the baby is born." Then the angel left.

Zechariah went outside. People were waiting for him. Zechariah tried to talk, but he could not say a word.

Later, Zechariah and Elizabeth had a baby boy. How happy they were! When the baby was eight days old, friends came to visit them. They asked Zechariah, "What do you want to name the baby?" Zechariah still could not talk. So he asked for a writing pad. Then Zechariah wrote, "His name is John." Just then Zechariah began to speak. He praised God and said, "Soon God will send the Savior. This child, John, will tell people to get ready for the Savior."

Jesus is coming!



Parents: Tell your child the story of how you named him or her. Have the child practice writing his or her name and Jesus' name. Explain that the name *Jesus* means "He will take away our sins."