



**Mustard Seed Children's Summary for December 2, 2007  
Released on November 28, 2007**

**"Called to Believe"**

**MEMORY VERSE: "And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words" (Luke 1:20).**

**SCRIPTURE LESSON TEXT: Luke 1:8-23**

**Luke 1:8-23**

**8 And it came to pass, that, while he executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course,**

**9 According to the custom of the priest's office, his lot was to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.**

**10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.**

**11 And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.**

**12 And when Zechariah saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.**

**13 But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zechariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John.**

**14 And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth.**

**15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.**

**16 And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.**

**17 And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.**

**18 And Zechariah said unto the angel, Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years.**

**19 And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to show thee these glad tidings.**

**20 And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season.**

**21 And the people waited for Zechariah, and marveled that he tarried so long in the temple.**

**22 And when he came out, he could not speak unto them: and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple; for he beckoned unto them, and remained speechless.**

**23 And it came to pass, that, as soon as the days of his ministration were accomplished, he departed to his own house.**

### **THE OBJECT IN VIEW:**

Encourage the children to believe what God has said, for He is trustworthy.

### **TRUTHS TO STRESS:**

1. God will never lie; it is always safe to believe anything He tells us.
2. It is important to God that people believe His promises.
3. We please God when we believe what He says.

### **PLANNING LESSON AIDS:**

For Beginning the Lesson, make a sign reading "BELIEVE" in large letters. For Telling the Lesson, find a picture of Zacharias and Elisabeth and one of the Jerusalem temple. You will also need a sign reading "JESUS" and a picture of a crowd from Luke's time.

For Helping to Remember, each student will need crayons and half a sheet of construction paper. Make several colors available so that the children can choose a favorite.

### **TEACHER'S NOTES**

Luke's Gospel shows special interest in events surrounding the birth and early life of Jesus. Whereas Matthew's Gospel begins with the angel's appearance to Joseph, Luke's account starts even further back with the birth of Jesus' forerunner, John the Baptist. A priest, Zacharias, and his wife, Elisabeth, would become John's parents.

Luke's narrative provides bits and pieces of information here and there that make the incident come alive. Both Zacharias and Elisabeth were righteous. They were careful to obey the Lord's commandments. In spite of the fact that they were keepers of the law, God had never blessed them with children. They prayed for a child, but none had been given. Elisabeth came to look upon her barrenness as a reproach, as other Jewish women of the time would have.

Eventually, the couple could be described as "well stricken in years" (Luke 1:7). They were now beyond childbearing age. It appears they had settled into hopelessness regarding having a child.

Though Zacharias looked on himself as an old man, he still functioned as a priest in the temple. (Elisabeth had been born into the priestly line as well.) One day he went into the temple to carry out his priestly responsibilities, and that is where Luke's account starts.

According to custom, the congregation of worshipers waited outside the temple doors while the priest performed his office within. As they waited, they prayed.

Zacharias's duty was to burn incense on the altar that stood before the most holy place, where the ark of God was. Suddenly, he realized he was not alone. Someone was standing beside the altar of incense. The priest was startled—and then afraid.

Luke identified the visitor as an angel. He told Zacharias that there was nothing to fear and that his prayer for a child had been heard. The angel then gave detailed information about the baby to come and his future ministry.

Zacharias considered this news too good to be true under the circumstances, and the angel rebuked him. Zacharias was refusing to believe a message that came from God Himself. Therefore he would lose his ability to speak until what had been promised came to pass.

God is sensitive about human reaction to His words. He speaks truth, and He wants to be believed. Eve did not believe Him. She (and later Adam) believed Satan's lie instead and plunged the world into sin and death. God's remedy is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation comes by His grace and our believing the gospel. His call to His anxious children is to believe and trust. With Him as our great Shepherd, we "shall not want" (Ps. 23:1).

### **BEGINNING THE LESSON:**

Did you ever hear someone say, "That is just too good to be true"?

Sometimes people who are not very polite will even say, "I do not believe you," when what they were told was really true. (Display the "BELIEVE" sign in a prominent place, and leave it there.)

I am sorry to tell you that sometimes people say that to God. Listen to our Bible lesson to find out what happened one time.

### **TELLING THE LESSON:**

Back in Bible times there lived an old man and an old woman named Zacharias and Elisabeth. (Show Zacharias and Elisabeth.) They both loved the Lord. They both tried to please Him. But there was a kind of sadness in their house. You see, Zacharias and Elisabeth had never had any children. They asked God for children, but now they were too old to have any. We do not know whether they were even praying for children anymore. They knew they were just too old.

Now it happened that Zacharias was one of the workers in the temple, where the people worshiped God. (Show temple.) One day he went in to do his work. All the people stood outside, praying and waiting for him to come out.

As Zacharias was working, all at once an angel was standing in the room with him! Zacharias did not know what to think. He probably had never seen an angel before. The first thing he did was be afraid.

But the angel said, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias. God has heard your prayer."

Now, what had Zacharias and Elisabeth been praying for? (Accept answers.)

"Your wife, Elisabeth, is going to have a baby boy," the angel went on. "You will name him John, and many people will be happy when he is born."

What exciting news that was! But the angel was not finished. He said, "When he grows up, John will get people ready for the Lord to come."

And we know who the Lord would be. (Show the "JESUS" sign.)

That was more exciting news. God was giving them a baby boy, even though they were very old. And their boy would grow up to do important work for God.

Do you think Zacharias said, "Oh, that is wonderful! The Lord is answering our prayer"?

Well, that is not what Zacharias said. Instead, he made a big mistake. Zacharias did not believe what God's angel told him. (Point to "BELIEVE.")

He said, "How can I know that? Both my wife and I are very old."  
The angel was not happy. He said, "I am Gabriel. I stand by God in heaven, ready to do what He tells me. He sent me to tell you this good news. And now, because you do not believe (point to "BELIEVE") what God told me to tell you, you will not be able to talk until the baby is here."

While this was going on inside the temple, all the people were still waiting outside. (Show crowd.) They kept wondering why Zacharias was taking so long.  
Then they saw him coming out. He tried to say something, but he did not seem able to speak. At last he just motioned to them with his hand. The people decided he must have seen something special in the temple. And we know what that special something was.

When Zacharias's work in the temple was done, he went home. He still could not talk. When he wanted to tell Elisabeth something, he had to write it down.  
After a while, God did give Zacharias and Elisabeth a baby boy. All the neighbors and the relatives were happy about the baby, just as the angel had said they would be.  
When they named the baby, Zacharias wrote, "His name is John" (Luke 1:63). All at once, he was able to talk again.

What a wonderful piece of news, and it is right here in the Bible for you to read someday! But God never meant the Bible to just show us what happened to people long ago. Everything in the Bible is there to tell us important things God wants us to know for our lives. This lesson is one of them.

What happened to Zacharias and Elisabeth tells us that God very much wants people to believe Him. (Point to "BELIEVE.") And why should we not believe God? He always tells the truth. He cannot lie. So we can be sure He will always do just what He says He will do.

### **TELLING HOW TO LIVE:**

People today do not have trouble talking when they do not believe God. But the Lord still wants us to believe Him. (Point to "BELIEVE.") He says in His letter, the Bible, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to be the Saviour of the world. That is true. What God says is always true. So let us believe Him.

God says that if you believe the Lord Jesus died to take your sins away, He will make you His child. So let us believe what He says. (Point to "BELIEVE.")  
God says to the people who do believe, "I will never leave you" (cf. Heb. 13:5). Let us believe that too and thank Him right now. (Point to "BELIEVE.")

### **HELPING TO REMEMBER:**

Have the children fold their construction paper in half crosswise to form a stand-up display. On one side they should print "I will believe God" and draw several smiling faces. On the other side, have them draw Zacharias and unhappy faces and print the word "NO" many times.

### **EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:**

**"Thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou believest not my words" (Luke 1:20).**

Long ago the word "dumb" just meant "not able to talk," and that is what this verse says. God's angel said Zacharias and Elisabeth would have a baby boy who would grow up to do important things for God. But Zacharias did not believe him. So the angel said, "You will not be able to talk until this happens, because you do not believe what God sent me to tell you."

**ANTICIPATING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON:**

Next week's lesson is "Called to Serve." Study Luke 1:26-28.

**Lesson Summarized By:**

Willie Ferrell

Jesus Is All Ministries

[www.jesusisall.com](http://www.jesusisall.com)

**TRUE OR FALSE:**

1. "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth." **LUKE 1:5 TRUE OR FALSE**

2. But they had many children, because Elizabeth was not barren, and they were both well advanced in years. **LUKE 1:7 TRUE OR FALSE**

**CIRCLE THE CORRECT WORDS:**

3. "So it was, that while he was serving as (**PRIEST, KING**) before God in the order of his division, according to the custom of the (**PRIESTHOOD, KINGDOM**), his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple." **LUKE 1:8-9**

**TRUE OR FALSE:**

4. Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense." **LUKE 1:11 TRUE OR FALSE**

**FILL IN THE BLANKS:**

5. "But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your \_\_\_\_\_ is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.' "**LUKE 1:13**

6. "And Zacharias said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an \_\_\_\_\_ man, and my wife is well advanced in years.' "**LUKE 1:18**

**TRUE OR FALSE:**

7. "But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time." **LUKE 1:20 TRUE OR FALSE**

8. "But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless." **LUKE 1:22 TRUE OR FALSE**

**CROSSWORD PUZZLE**

**ZACHARIAS AND ELIZABETH (LUKE 1:8-23)**

L E S N E C N I Y G G Z K X K  
E O D T F A O P P Y Z N H O J  
J I R F P Z J J Z P J F C A P  
Z O J D V R J H W Y P P U C Z  
Z T S A I R A H C A Z G M W Y  
K A T N B S E Y B B N K D J Y  
B N Q E O H A G E D U B L U O  
A R R A M S W E M R O U S K J  
R T I R I P S Y L O H L V O F  
R E T U M M L U W R L E G N A  
E P I Y S B L E U C F I R I A  
N I L Y V S Z W F G L R C T H  
E L I Z A B E T H R L B M E A  
C Q S O M V B D I G M A L J H  
T T S E I R P W B N S G B K Z

**ANGEL INCENSE PRIEST JOHN SON ELIZABETH**

**LORD TEMPLE GABRIEL ZACHARIAS HOLY SPIRIT**

**PRAYER**