JOHN THE BAPTIST
LESSON 1: THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

In this lesson, children learn about the miracles and events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist. This lesson will also help the children understand that even before they were born, God gave them a purpose in life.

by Kristy Thornton

TOPICS
John the Baptist, Self-Worth, Special

AS KIDS ARRIVE (10 minutes)
Who is John the Baptist? (Puzzle)

OPENING PRAYER AND PRAISE (5 minutes)

MEMORY WORK (5 minutes)
"And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him." Luke 1:76 NIV
Read the verse several times with the children. Then, explain that this verse was part of a song that John’s father sang when he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Discussion questions:
1. What phrase did Zechariah use to describe John? (A prophet of the Most High.)
2. What will John the Baptist need to do? (Go on before the Lord to prepare the way for Him.)
3. How do you think Zechariah felt when the Holy Spirit told him these things about his son? (Allow children to respond.)

SCRIPTURE READING AND DISCUSSION (15 minutes)
Introduction:
Today, we are going to learn about John the Baptist and we will see how God was involved in his birth. Our story starts with Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were married and obeyed all of the Lord’s commands. They had no children. In fact, Elizabeth was way past the age for having children. However, with God, nothing is impossible. One day, while Zechariah was serving in the temple, he had a special visitor. God’s miraculous powers were about to take place.

Read Luke 1:11-25 (The Birth of John the Baptist)

Discussion Questions:
1. What name did the angel tell Zechariah to give his child? (John)
2. Why do you think many rejoiced because of his birth? *(Let children respond. He paved the way for Jesus.)*

3. What was the name of the angel that spoke to Zechariah? *(Gabriel.)*

4. What was John forbidden to drink and why? *(He was never to drink wine or any other fermented drink to show his special dedication to God.)*

5. When was John filled with the Holy Spirit? *(From birth.)*

6. Why did the angel cause Zechariah to become mute? *(Zechariah did not believe what Gabriel told him about having a son.)*

**Read Luke 1:57-66**

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What name did Elizabeth's neighbors and relatives want to give the baby? *(Zechariah, after his father.)*

2. Who insisted that the baby's name would be John? *(Elizabeth, the baby's mother.)*

3. Everyone was shocked that Elizabeth would give the baby such a strange name, so they asked the father. What did Zechariah do? *(He wrote the name "John" on a tablet.)*

4. What happened immediately after Zechariah confirmed that the baby's name would be John? *(He could speak again.)*

5. How did the people react when they witnessed all of these things? *(They were filled with awe, and they wondered.)*

**CLASS EXERCISE (12 minutes)**

**Alternate Class Exercise (15 minutes)**

**Mission Assignment (Game)**

**Application (6 minutes)**

It was quite clear to everyone that God's hand was with John the Baptist, even before his birth. The people saw many miracles unfolding before them. First, they saw and heard how Zechariah was unable to speak when he came out of the temple after speaking with the angel, Gabriel. Next, they rejoiced when Elizabeth miraculously became pregnant in her old age. Then, they witnessed how Zechariah could speak again right after he confirmed the baby's name. All the people in the area were filled with wonder, and they discussed these events with each other. They knew God had some very important plans for this little child named John.

God chose John for a reason. God also chose you for a reason. Like John the Baptist, He knew what your name would be. He knew what color your eyes would be. He knew what color your hair would be. He knew how tall you would become. He even knew who would raise you. God had every day of your life written out before you were born. In one of his psalms, David wrote, "Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!" Psalm 139:16-17 NIV
Discussion Question:
1. Do you think God chose your name and a purpose for your life? *(Allow for responses.)*
2. In what ways has God prepared you to serve Him? *(Allow of discussion, some examples may be attending Sunday school, being raised a Christian, surrounded by non-believers to be a witness, etc.)*

NEXT WEEK
So, how did John get the rest of his name? How did he become John the Baptist? Find out by coming back next week.

CLOSING PRAYER (2 minutes)

TAKE HOME PAGE
Give one copy to each child at the end of the class to take home.
We are all familiar with the name John the Baptist. However, did you know the Bible gives John the Baptist many other names and descriptions. Look up the verses shown and unscramble the words under the lines to discover other names for John the Baptist. (NIV)

A _________ of one calling in the wilderness. (Luke 3:4)
ICOVE

A horn of _______________. (Luke 1:69)
ALASOTVIN

The prophet ___________. (Malachi 4:5)
JELHAI

A ___________ of the Most High. (Luke 1:76)
HTPOPER

A __________ to the light. (John 1:8)
SNEISTW

Great in the _________ of the Lord. (Luke 1:15)
ITSGH
We are all familiar with the name John the Baptist. However, did you know the Bible gives John the Baptist many other names and descriptions. Look up the verses shown and unscramble the words under the lines to discover other names for John the Baptist. (NIV)

**A Voice** of one calling in the wilderness. (Luke 3:4)

A horn of Salvation. (Luke 1:69)

The prophet Elijah. (Malachi 4:5)

A Prophet of the Most High. (Luke 1:76)

A Witness to the light. (John 1:8)

Great in the Sight of the Lord. (Luke 1:15)
## COMPARED TO
### JOHN THE BAPTIST

*Instructions: In the spaces provided, write down how both John the Baptist and you would answer each question.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOHN THE BAPTIST</th>
<th>ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who named you?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the nicknames that you have?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your mother’s name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your father’s name?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was your mother old or young when you were born?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did you first meet Jesus?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who came to see you when you were born?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has God prepared for you to do in your life?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## COMPAARED TO

### JOHN THE BAPTIST

Instructions: In the spaces provided, write down how both John the Baptist and you would answer each question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOHN THE BAPTIST</th>
<th>ME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who named you?</td>
<td>God</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are some of the nicknames that you have?</td>
<td>John the Baptist, Prophet of the most high, Voice in the desert, Elijah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your mother's name?</td>
<td>Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your father's name?</td>
<td>Zechariah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was your mother old or young when you were born?</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When did you first meet Jesus?</td>
<td>Before I was born, while in my mother's womb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who came to see you when you were born?</td>
<td>My neighbors and relatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What has God prepared for you to do in your life?</td>
<td>To prepare the way of the Lord</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mission Assignment
Mission Statement Slips

Instructions: Cut out each mission statement, and give one to each of the five volunteers.

---------------------------------
Turn the hearts of parents to the children

---------------------------------
Turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just and righteous

---------------------------------
Make ready a people prepared for the Lord

---------------------------------
Go before the Lord to prepare the way for Him

---------------------------------
Give knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins
**Mission Assignment**  
**Selection Worksheet**

*Instructions:* Write the number of the drawing that corresponds to each mission. Afterwards, circle each number you guessed correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mission of John the Baptist</th>
<th>Drawing Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Turn the hearts of parents to the children</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just and righteous</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make ready a people prepared for the Lord</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go before the Lord to prepare the way for Him</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of sins</td>
<td>____________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To parents:
This page lets you know what your child learned in Sunday school today. In addition, you will find this week's memory verse, a suggested activity, and a short prayer to reinforce the lesson. Being involved and interacting with your child can be very rewarding for both of you.

What we learned:
Today, the children learned about the miracles and events surrounding the birth of John the Baptist and his mission to prepare the way for Jesus. This lesson also helped the children understand that even before they were born, God gave them a purpose in life. (Scripture used: Luke 1:11-25, 57-66)

Memory Verse:
"And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him." Luke 1:76 NIV
Practice this verse several times with your child during the week. This will help him or her remember the verse and it will also help to reinforce what he or she learned during class.

Suggested Parent/Child Activity:
Look up the following scriptures with your child:

Luke 1:76 - Prophet of the Most High
Luke 3:4 - A voice in the desert
Matthew 17:11-13 and Luke 1:17 - Spirit and power of Elijah
Malachi 3:1 - Messenger
John 1:8 - A witness to the Light
To whom are these scriptures referring? How do they describe John? Discuss how each member of your child's family got his or her name, and if there is any special meaning or purpose behind each name.

Daily Prayer:
Dear Lord, thank You for my name. Help me fulfill the destiny and purpose You have for me. Thank You for sending John the Baptist to prepare the way for Jesus, our Savior. Teach me how I can be a messenger for You. And teach me how to serve You. Amen.