

Lesson 66

TEXT Luke 1:5-25,57-66

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Jeremiah 32:17,27; Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to relate how a miracle took place in the lives of Elisabeth and Zacharias, and how this miracle was used to enlighten others.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER With God all things are possible. — Matthew 19:26

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. — Luke 18:27

**ANSWER
TITLE:**

It Took a Miracle

**SEARCH
TITLE:**

Elisabeth and Zacharias

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Zacharias was of the tribe of Levi, of the lineage of Aaron. He was a priest of the course of Abia. During King David's reign the priests were divided into twenty-four courses for their duties in the Temple. The eighth course was given to Abijah, known as Abia. Zacharias served at the Temple in Jerusalem twice a year, for about a week each time. He was unsympathetic to the comfortable, power-loving Sadducee party of priests in Jerusalem.

Elisabeth was the wife of Zacharias, and she, too, was of the lineage of Aaron, the priestly tribe of Levi. They lived in the hill country of Judea. She was a woman of unusual piety, faith, and spiritual gifts. Luke, who alone tells the story, appreciated the significant role of women in the history of redemption, and emphasized the agency of the Holy Spirit in the life of Elisabeth.

YOUR OPENER

Elisabeth and Zacharias

TEXT: Luke 1:5-25,57-66

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Jeremiah 32:17,27; Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27

KEY VERSE: The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. — Luke 18:27

RESPONSES

1. Verse 6 of the text reveals that they were both righteous before God, and blameless. As your students discuss this, bring out why it is important to follow the commandments of God—because that places them in a position to receive the blessings He has promised.

2. He doubted the angel, and because of this his speech was taken from him. Develop this response by asking how the students should respond to instructions or promises from God, and what the consequences might be if they do not obey.

3. Zacharias received his speech. Discuss with your class how Elisabeth wanted the child to be called John. When Zacharias was asked about this, he wrote, saying, "His name is John." Zacharias' speech was restored immediately.

4. He praised God. The point to be developed in this discussion should be the importance of praising God in all things when He does the "impossible," be it salvation, healing, etc.

It was the evident intention of the writers of the Gospels to show that Christianity had a supernatural origin. Heavenly evidence was given to prove that the Event of the Ages was at hand. Jesus was born of a virgin. His forerunner, John, was born of a woman who had been barren and was past the age of childbearing. Both of these events are an impossibility with man, but as the Word declares, "with God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1:37).

1. In reference to our text, what do we know about the spiritual condition of Zacharias and Elisabeth?

2. What was Zacharias' reaction to the message from the angel? Because of this, what happened to Zacharias?

3. What was the miracle that accompanied the birth of John? What brought this miracle about?

4. What was the first thing Zacharias did when his tongue was loosed? How can we follow his example in this?

3

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

5. List some other Biblical instances where God did the impossible.

6. In verse 58, what was the reaction of those around Elisabeth when John was born? Draw a parallel between this verse and the reaction among church friends, families, etc. when God works a miracle among us. Name specific examples if possible.

7. What are some things that might seem "impossible" to man?

8. God works out even the little details in our lives. Describe a situation in your life where God intervened for you.

9. How can recognizing the smaller things that God has done for us help us when the bigger problems come along?

5. This list from your students could include: the closing of mouths of the lions in Daniel's time, helping David fight the lion and the bear, and also fighting Goliath. In the New Testament we could include the healing of the blind, restoring life to the widow's son, healing all that came unto Him. In the discussion it could be brought out that thinking and knowing these, we have a Biblical foundation for believing Jesus can do the impossible in our day also. Some references are Genesis 18:13,14; Mark 9:23; 10:27; Hebrews 13:8.

6. They rejoiced with her. The point of this question is to emphasize how believers rejoice together when they see God work a miracle. Allow students time to cite specific examples of recent answers to prayer.

7. Healing, salvation of a hardened sinner, cure of alcoholism or use of tobacco, and release from drugs, may be some of the answers you will receive. Point out that the instantaneous, miracle-working power of God does bring dramatic changes. This might be a time to bring someone to your class with a true story of God's intervention.

8. Help the students to recognize that even everyday situations in their lives can be miracles, and that God should receive the credit.

9. As your students talk over this question, help them to see how one experience can be a building block for another, increasing their faith.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

How would you feel if an angel appeared to you? How would you know it was an angel?

How are God's promises different from man's?

If we don't believe God's promises, does that mean they won't happen? Explain.

Have you ever had a miracle take place in your life? Tell about it.

In what way are God's promises contingent on faith and obedience?

What was God's purpose for the miracle in the lives of Zacharias and Elisabeth? Why do you suppose God chose them?

What second miracle did God perform at the birth of John—or immediately following?

What other incidents in the Bible can you relate where God did the impossible?

What is the biggest miracle in the life of every Christian?

In our ANSWER story, what was the miracle God performed?

Can you tell of any real-life examples of healing like the girl in our ANSWER story?

THINGS TO DO

Wrap or tie two or three of your fingers together. Then try to use a pencil, tie a shoe, or do some other simple task requiring dexterity of the fingers. Liken your difficulty to unbelief. It is difficult for us to be successful Christians if we are hampered by unbelief.

The Bible tells us that God cares for us. He knows the things we need: food, clothing, a place to live, love, etc. Some things seem impossible for us but with God all things are possible. Using the letters in MIRACLE as beginning letters (or have each student use his own name), list things that we might need that sometimes seem to be out of reach for us. Remember, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

Make a Hero Tree to be used throughout this quarter on Bible Heroes. You can use a real tree or make one from construction paper. Hang symbols on the tree that represent all the heroes you will be studying. You may hang the symbols on all at once and refer each week to the














person you are studying, or you may prefer to hang a new symbol on the tree each week. Suggested symbols:
 Elisabeth and Zacharias — Temple
 Joseph — Hammer
 Jesus — Manger
 John — Dove or locust
 Deborah — Bee (see meaning of name)
 Gideon — Fleece
 Caleb — Grapes
 Widow — Oil and flour containers
 Stephen — Stones
 Woman — White garment
 Ananias — Clean heart
 Elisha — Mantle

Bring a name book to class. Look up the name *John* and tell your students the meaning of that name—"Jehovah has been gracious." Try to find each of your students' names (or their equivalent) in the book and share the meanings with the class. In some cases you may want to expand on the meaning. Tell how their names can have a spiritual meaning. How did the choosing of this name, John, show that God had performed another miracle?

Answers for ANSWER

God Gives Light

God gives us light, or understanding, when we read His Word and follow Him. How much light did you receive from the lesson this week? Read these statements. If the statement is true, circle the lighted bulb; if it is false, circle the dark bulb.

	Herod was king.
	Zacchaeus was the name of the priest.
	Elisabeth was the priest's wife.
	Zacharias burned incense in the Temple.
	The angel of the Lord was standing on the altar.
	The angel told Zacharias to name the baby John the Baptist.
	The baby would be filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb.
	The angel's name was Michael.
	Zacharias could not see because he didn't believe the angel.
	When the baby was born everyone thought his name should be Gabriel.
	Elisabeth said his name was John.
	Zacharias wrote, "His name is John."
	After Zacharias wrote the name he could talk again.