



Jesus  
came to give us  
peace.

THE GOSPEL  
of LUKE

## CURRENT THEME:

**Characters at the Cradle**

## MEMORY VERSE

"...Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." **Luke 2:10,11 NIV**

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**DECEMBER 21 | LIFE APPLICATION**

**Jesus came to give us peace!**

## Today's Scripture: **Luke 1:57-66**

### Characters at the Cradle: "The Way of Peace"

#### Review

- Gabriel appears to Zechariah (the promise of a son named John)
- Gabriel appears to Mary (the promise of a son supernaturally conceived in her by the Holy Spirit)
- Gabriel appears to Joseph and assures him Mary's child is conceived by the Holy Spirit
- Mary's response to this amazing news: a song of praise, often called the Magnificat
- John the Baptist is born, the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth
- **This week:** Zechariah prophesies over the life of John and the coming of Jesus.

#### Read and discuss **Luke 1:63-68**

*"63 And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, 'His name is John.' And they all wondered. 64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. 65 And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, 66 and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, 'What then will this child be?' For the hand of the Lord was with him."*

1. **What happened after Zechariah wrote, "His name is John?"** (Zechariah was able to speak!)
2. **What was the first thing John said after nine months?** (He blessed God.)
3. **How did the neighbors react?** (They were fearful, and they wondered who this child would be.) **Why did they think John must be special?** (Because of Elizabeth's older age at her child's birth, which was a miracle, and Zechariah being able to talk as soon as he pronounced his child's name.)

#### Read and discuss **Luke 1:67-69**

*"67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, 68 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,'"*

1. **In verse 67, what then happened to Zechariah?** (He was filled with the Holy

Spirit, as Mary had been.) He also began to prophesy. **Did you know that there were prophets and prophecies throughout the Old Testament, but that Zechariah was the first to prophesy about the Lord in 400 years?**

2. **In verse 68, for what did Zechariah bless the Lord God of Israel?** (*Because He had visited and redeemed the people of Israel.*)
3. **And, in verse 69, what did Zechariah say the Lord had raised up?** (*He had raised up a horn of salvation in the house of David.*) **What do you think “horn of salvation” means?** (*Discuss.*) Jesus would be this horn and he would come through the house of David. **See Psalm 18:2:**

*“The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”*

### **Read and discuss Luke 1:70-75**

*“70 as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, 71 that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; 72 to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, 73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us 74 that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, 75 in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.”*

1. **In verse 70, who foretold the coming of the Messiah?** (*The holy prophets.*)

Jesus is the one spoken about by the Old Testament prophets! The Prophet Isaiah wrote this prophecy 700 years before Zechariah's prophecy:

*“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.”*  
**Isaiah 9:6-7**

2. **What did the Jews believe the Messiah would do for them?** (*That he would rescue them from their enemies and establish a new kingdom, where they could serve him in holiness and righteousness.*) The Jews believed that the Messiah would come to fight their enemies and be their king. But Jesus came to give us peace:

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”* **John 14:27**

## Read and discuss **Luke 1:76-77**

*“76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,”*

1. Here Zechariah turns and speaks to his son, John. **What did he prophesy about his son?** *(That he would be called the prophet of the Most High, and would go before the Lord to prepare hearts to receive Him. He would give knowledge of salvation to his people about the Messiah’s forgiveness of their sins.)*

## Read and discuss **Luke 1:78-79**

*“78 because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”*

1. **Why would God send the Messiah?** *(Because of His tender mercy.)* **What did Zechariah call Jesus?** *(The sunrise that would visit us from on high.)*
2. **And what would the Messiah, Jesus, do?** *(He would give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death and guide our feet into the way of peace.)* **See Romans 6:23:**

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

## Read and discuss **Luke 1:80**

*“And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.”*

1. This verse talks about John as he grew up and became strong in spirit. **What did he do until he began preaching to the people of Israel?** *(Discuss.)*  
John was in the wilderness, becoming strong so that he could do what God had planned for him to do: prepare the way of the Lord, Jesus! It was in the wilderness that God taught John how to abide in Him.
2. **How can we prepare ourselves to be strong in the Lord?** *(Discuss together. Guide your children to understand that they must prepare themselves to serve the Lord by growing in their faith and in their knowledge of the Lord.)*

## **A note from Michael Chadwick:**

The mission continues today!

We are to put on these same shoes of the gospel of peace:

- Stand firm
- Be ready
- Walk with authority

During this Christmas season, we celebrate the greatest miracle in human history. God kept his promise and gave us a way to redemption and restoration! **What's stopping you from rising out of darkness and giving your life to Jesus?**

### Family Challenge

This week, prepare your family to celebrate Christmas together — play Christmas worship music, and read books (children's books but also the Bible) telling the story of the coming of Jesus into the world to give us peace and to save us from our sins.

On Christmas Eve, go to church together, and then have a special meal and gather around your Christmas tree to have time together. If possible, have an ornament (that will remind them of God's gift of Jesus) to give to each child to place on the tree. Christmas Eve can be your time of worship, a time of peace, a time of closeness, before the chaos of opening presents on Christmas day!

**Prayer:** *Jesus, We know that You came to the world to give us peace and the joy of knowing You and living our lives for You. Help us to bring peace into the world as we serve You with our lives. In Your Name we pray, Amen.*