



MIRACLE BABIES

LUKE 1:39—2:7

Big Idea God sent Jesus and John to fulfill His wonderful plan for the world.

Lesson Summary

The Old Testament contains many prophecies concerning the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. God had planned these events since the beginning of time. Both of these births were miraculous—John’s because Elizabeth was old and infertile and Jesus’ because Mary was a virgin. Through these two miracle babies, God continued unfolding His plan for the salvation of mankind.

Children will see that both of these pregnancies were supernatural, but the birth of Jesus Christ was unusually significant, because through Him, God entered the human race. God directly intervened into the world of men. By relating these births to their own, students will become excited about the special plan God has for their lives.

Bible Background

God chose the perfect time to send Jesus to the world. A general feeling of unrest characterized these times, but there was a commonly known language (Greek) and an unprecedented system of roads (Roman). Good news would spread quickly. John and Jesus were born into a world dominated by the Roman Empire.

Herod the Great, appointed by Caesar to rule Palestine, was jealous of Caesar’s authority and never hesitated to wield his own power. Day-to-day life for Jews under Roman control was still heavily influenced by Jewish beliefs and culture. The Temple in Jerusalem was the heart of national life. Synagogues in each city were the center of religious and community life. Many in Israel retained their hope that God would send the Messiah.

Teacher Devotional

You have a crucial and special role in God’s plan. Every single lesson you teach can impact a child’s life forever and have eternal consequences! Take a moment to consider all the ways that God is using your unique gifts and talents to benefit these children and His kingdom. Submit to His will and authority to empower you as you teach.

Lord, the children need to know that absolutely nothing is impossible with You. Bring the children to class eager and ready to find You. As I share the stories of Elizabeth and Mary, help me to convey eternal truths that will find their way into the very core of each child’s heart. Move among us and reveal Yourself as we turn from the distractions of our lives to find You. In Jesus’ name, amen.



DISCIPLE TARGETS In this lesson, your children will...

KNOWLEDGE (truths)

- K** • God used the birth of two babies to launch His plan to save all people. (Luke 1:39-2:7)
- N** • God has a special plan for each person. (Jeremiah 29:11)
- O** • God wants to use His people to fulfill His plan for the world. (Matthew 28:18-20)

CHARACTER (emotions)

- F** • Fascinated by the way God steps into the world of men to work out His plans.
- E** • Expectant that God has a special plan for their lives.
- E** • Thankful that God sent Jesus to save them.

CONDUCT (actions)

- D** • Invite God to change their hearts to prepare them for His special plan.
- O** • Identify important cities on a map of Israel.
- List ways they can use their talents and abilities for God’s purposes.
- Disciple Skill: POWER—Pray to God with confidence.

Make Disciples

Teacher—Decide where to place these elements into this lesson.

Opening Prayer

Thank God for each child in the class, by name if possible. Praise God for His great plan. Thank God that, though He is great and all-powerful, He still cares about our relatively small needs. Thank Him for bringing two special babies—John and Jesus, to change the world.

WorldWatch

Missionary Biography 2 of 12—Hudson Taylor—The Call *Missionary stories can have a profound impact on a child. Take 1-2 minutes to read this brief narrative. Download discussion questions at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.*

When Hudson Taylor was a young teenager, God spoke one single word to him—CHINA. God was calling Hudson to carry His message of salvation to the other side of the world! It seemed impossible—Hudson Taylor was young, frequently sick, and inexperienced. But he had faith, and God uses women and men who are willing to trust Him!

On that day, Hudson Taylor knelt in his room and prayed, “Lord, if You will help me, I will do anything You ask me to do. I will go anywhere You ask me to go.” Suddenly, he felt a great peace; Hudson Taylor knew for certain that God had called him to be a missionary to China, and that God would surely help him.

Missions Education—One Mandate

To add this component to the lesson, download the teacher script at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

DISCIPLESHIP TIP

For most teachers, the toughest part of their job is dealing with discipline issues in the classroom. Although many books have been written on the subject, a few simple steps can help you eliminate the majority of problems. Do you practice these?

- A—Always be prepared
- B—Be positive and respectful
- C—Clearly discuss guidelines for behavior
- D—Deal with disruptive children (gently)

KeyVerse

Topic: Miracle Babies

Reference: *Luke 1:37*

Memorization Activity: Today’s verse is short and easy to memorize. It provides a good opportunity to develop the habit of saying “T-R-V-R” (topic-reference-verse-reference) when reciting verses. Recite the verse and reference together as a class several times, and each time, call out a different way to recite such as softer, louder, higher, lower, whisper, nasal, backwards, and so on.

Bonus Resources

Access free downloads for this lesson at DiscipleLand.com/downloads.

- Dee Cy Paul Chip (discipleship) story
- More activity ideas
- Activity templates and resources
- *Explore Scripture* teacher notecards

SUPPLIES

General Supplies

- Bibles, Disciple Guides (pages 5-8)
- Pencils, markers, crayons
- Paper, notecards, scissors, tape, glue

Make Disciples

None

Spark Interest

- DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES: no additional supplies
- BABY PICTURES: baby pictures of yourself and family
- BABY VISIT: none

Explore Scripture

- Two boy dolls
- Teaching Picture 3A.3—Elizabeth and baby John
- Teaching Picture 3A.4—Mary, Joseph, and Jesus

Inspire Action

- GIVING OUR GIFTS TO GOD: small boxes, wrapping paper and bows
- TALENT SKITS: dice or homemade dice

Spark Interest

Teacher—Choose one activity that will involve students and grab their attention.

Differences and Similarities (10-15 minutes)
This observation activity encourages children to think about comparisons.

Divide the class into pairs. Give each pair a piece of paper and pencils. Invite students to study each other. Have them write down as many differences and as many similarities as they can discover between themselves. Offer a small prize to the pair that lists the most facts. Tell the children, **Today we will look at how John the Baptist and Jesus were different and similar.**

OR

Baby Pictures (10 minutes)
This show-and-tell activity involves children with the teacher and tunes them in to the lesson.
Supplies: baby pictures of yourself or family

Bring in several baby pictures of yourself and members of your family. Show the pictures to students. Can they tell who is pictured? Share a few funny stories about yourself when you were a baby. Invite children to share stories about themselves when they were young. **What were you like? When did you walk? When did you talk?** Emphasize the uniqueness and wonder of every baby. **Jesus did not skip this important part of being human.**

OR

Baby Visit (10-15 minutes)
This object lesson involves students directly with mothers or babies.

Have an expectant mom visit the class and/or have a mom bring her baby to class and talk about babies. You can also find a toy baby doll that is the same size and weight of a real child to pass around the class. Discuss with your children what they know about babies, and talk about why God might have sent Jesus to earth as a baby.

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Discuss how John the Baptist's birth was a miracle. Complete this page at the beginning of class or after a *Spark Interest* activity.

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MIRACLE BABIES

LUKE 1:39—2:7

BETHLEHEM
MAP SITE: 2

God has a plan for everything on earth.
God does special things through ordinary people.

JOHN'S BIRTH

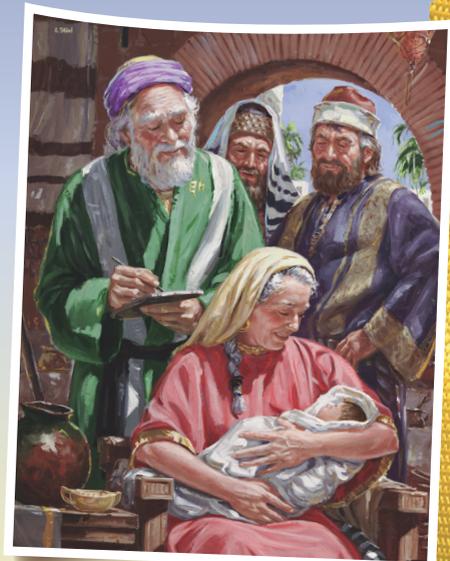
Find words that describe
Zechariah and Elizabeth.
(Luke 1:6-8)

priestly
upright
blameless
old

Why was John a "miracle baby"?

Elizabeth was old
and could not
have children

When these events took place,
the people in Judea all knew that
God had a special plan for John,
the miracle baby. (See Luke 1:66.)



Explore Scripture

Teacher—Teach the Bible lesson. Include Teaching Pictures and exercises from the student Disciple Guides.

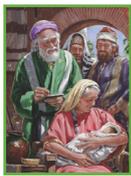
Luke 1:39—2:7

Supplies: two dolls wrapped in blankets (label one of the dolls “Jesus” and the other “John”), a number of sentence strips (strips of paper or cardboard cut approximately 3” x 11”)

Before class, prepare paper strips with the following sentences written on them. Include one sentence on each strip:

- My mother visited her cousin for three months.
- I jumped in my mother’s womb when the Messiah’s mother came to visit.
- My mom sang a song of praise to God when she found out I was going to be born.
- I was almost named after my father. But Mom and Dad gave me the name that the angel told them to give me.
- My mom was pretty old when she gave birth to me.
- My father sang a song of praise to God after I was born.
- When I grow up I will help prepare people for Jesus.
- When I grow up I will save people from their sins.
- My father is Zechariah.
- My Father is God.

Today we are going to learn about the births of John the Baptist and Jesus. Both of these babies were miracles! God was beginning an important new chapter in the future of the world when they were born.



Read Luke 1:39-80 aloud and have your children follow along in their Bibles. Show the Teaching Pictures 3A.3 and 3A.4 of Elizabeth and baby John, and Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus. Discuss Mary and Elizabeth and the babies they were expecting. Be sure to include the following concepts:

- Mary’s visit to Elizabeth’s house.
- John leaping in Elizabeth’s womb, signifying that Mary’s baby was the Messiah.
- Mary’s song.
- The birth of John the Baptist and his naming.
- Zechariah’s speech regained.
- Zechariah’s song.



Now, read Luke 2:1-7. **Just six months after John was born, Jesus was born. These two babies were also born near each other. Let’s see where.**

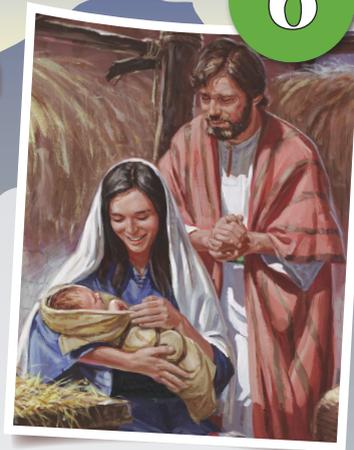
Disciple Guide—page 6

Refer to Luke 2:4 and to Luke 1:39 as the children identify the places mentioned in the passage: the hill country of Judea, Nazareth in Galilee and Bethlehem of Judea. In addition to the map in their workbooks, you might also show a larger map of the Middle East or even the world so the children get a sense of where they are in relation to the Holy Land.

Set up the two dolls representing Jesus and John in front of the class. Take out the strips of paper you prepared ahead of time and allow children to place the sentence strips that tell about Jesus on or near the baby labeled “Jesus.” Place the sentence strips that tell about John on or near the baby labeled “John.” If necessary, review the passages so the children remember the facts. Take a few minutes to emphasize the similarities and differences between these two babies. Be sure to emphasize that Jesus was unique in

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Jesus' Birth!

Read Luke 2:1-7.
Why was Jesus a “miracle baby”?

He was born in Bethlehem in a manger. He is the Son of God.

D Draw the path that Joseph and Mary traveled for the census (Luke 2:4). Put a star ★ where Elizabeth lived (Luke 1:39).

that He was fully God and fully Man. Although John was special, he was only a man.

God helped these special babies grow up and do amazing things! Jesus and John were born to fulfill God's wonderful plan for the world. Although only Jesus can save the world from sin, you have a very special role to play in God's plan too. He made each baby unique and special on purpose, and we can be happy that He made us just the way we are.

Disciple Guide—page 7

Children should draw themselves as babies. Complete the HeartBeat, allowing your students to tell about special gifts and abilities that God has given to each of them. Guide them to think of ways that these abilities can be used to serve God.

Inspire Action

Teacher—Choose one activity that will encourage learners to apply the Bible truth to their lives.

Giving Our Gifts to God (15 minutes)

This craft activity inspires children to give their abilities and talents to God. **Supplies:** paper and pencils, one small box for each student, wrapping paper and bows, offering plate (optional)

Give each child a piece of paper and a pencil. Have children list unique talents or abilities that they would like to give to God for His use and glory. Then give each student a small box. Have children put their lists into the boxes. Allow them to wrap them as gifts symbolizing giving their talents and special abilities to God. Collect the “gifts” in an offering plate and let the students know you will give them to your church leaders as a special class offering.

OR

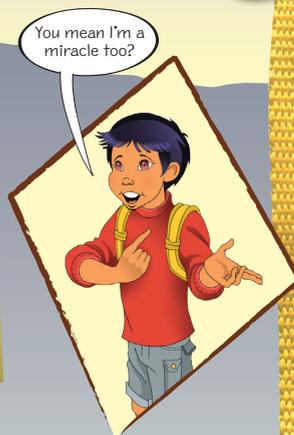
Talent Skits (10-15 minutes)

This drama activity encourages children to think about how they can use their gifts for God. **Supplies:** paper, dice, or homemade dice (see below)

Before class, create a special pair dice made of cardboard or card stock. You can use the template found at DiscipleLand.com/downloads or make your own. On one die, write one occupation on each side: teacher, doctor, athlete, policeman, grocery clerk, etc. On the other die write one location on each side: park, store, beach, hospital, classroom, etc. You can also just make a chart and use regular dice instead.

As a class, list different talents and abilities on separate slips of paper. Place these in a small bag or box. Divide students into groups of two to three. Let each pair choose one paper. Ask each pair to make a short skit demonstrating a way that talent or gift could be used for God. Use the “roll-a-role” dice to give structure to their skits.

Every baby is a special miracle from God. Draw yourself as a baby.



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God sent Jesus and John to fulfill His wonderful plan for the world. God has a special plan for your life, too! List two or three things you can do well.

1. **I can draw pictures**
2. **I can help others**
3. _____



Write one thing God might want to change in you so He can really use you for His plans. Pray about this one thing on your own.

I am scared to talk about Jesus.
God can give me courage.

Closing Prayer

Pray that the Lord will show each child that He has a plan for his or her life. Ask the Lord to draw each one to a closer relationship with Him. Pray that the students will use their special talents to serve God and His church. Pray for the personal requests of students. Encourage children to voice their prayer concerns. Be sure to pray for each one.

Closing Words

Today we learned about Jesus and John as babies. What happens to babies? That's right, they grow! Next time we will learn about Jesus when He was just a little older than you are now!



Teacher—Children should complete this page on their own or at home with a parent.

Disciple Skill *How to Be Jesus' Disciple*

During this quarter, your children will consider “healthy habits for spiritual growth” as outlined in the acrostic P-O-W-E-R. This tool will give them the basics of being a disciple. Review the POWER acrostic weekly so the children learn it by memory.

The P in POWER stands for Pray. As you talk with your students about having confidence in prayer, remind them that fancy words aren't important. God wants to hear their prayers from a sincere heart (Hebrews 10:22).

DiscipleZone.com

Direct children to DiscipleZone.com/3A2 for:

XploreMore *Discover more about God's amazing plan.*

SwordWork *Read Luke 2:21-52.*

WorldWatch *Meet the Hui people of China.*

Dee-Cy-Paul Live! *Dee discovers why plans are important.*

KeyVerse *Memorize Luke 1:37.*

HymnNotes *Meet Thomas Chisolm, author of “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.”*

Disciple SKILL
How to Be Jesus' Disciple

POWER
Pray from your **HEART**.

God hears your prayers!
Read 1 John 5:14-15 and Hebrews 4:16. We can be confident when we talk with God.

Look up the word “confidence” and write the meaning here.
the state or quality of being certain

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Miracle Babies
KeyVerse
Luke 1:37

World Watch
What do the Hui give babies when they are born?
Find the answer at DiscipleZone.com/3A2

honey/brown sugar

Disciple Guide—page 8

Encourage kids to complete DiscipleZone before the next lesson. Explain that activities are available at a special website—

DiscipleZone.com

—where kids go to grow! Children should visit the website with their parents to complete the online activities.