



The Priest

Who Didn't Believe

Track 54



What a special day! Today the priest Zechariah would enter into God's temple for an important job. He had waited so long to be chosen for this job. Finally, it was *his* turn.

Zechariah got ready. Soon, he would go all by himself into a room called the "Holy Place." He would burn sweet-smelling spices, called incense, for the Lord.

What an honor! Zechariah would say prayers for God's people, the Israelites.

Zechariah stepped into the room. It was time to begin his special job.

All of a sudden, Zechariah froze like a statue. Someone stood in the room with him. It was an angel!

Zechariah felt frightened. *Would the angel bring bad news? Had he done something wrong?*

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah," said the angel. "Your prayer has been heard. Your wife, Elizabeth, will have a son. And you shall name him John."

Zechariah stared at the angel. A SON? He and Elizabeth had always prayed for a baby. But now they were too old to be parents. This seemed impossible!

"God will be with your son," said the angel. "And he will become a mighty prophet like Elijah. He will tell God's people that the Savior is coming."



Zechariah, shook his head. This was too hard to believe.

“How can I know this will REALLY happen?” he asked.

“I am Gabriel,” the angel said. “God sent me to tell you this good news. But because you don’t believe me, you will be silent. You won’t be able to say a word until your son is born.”

Zechariah stepped out of the holy place. All the people were praying and waiting for him outside in the temple courts.

“What took you so long?” they worried. “Are you OK?”

Zechariah opened his mouth to answer, but no words came out. The only thing the people heard was –

Silence.



Then Zechariah pointed and waved and moved his hands in the air. But still nothing came out. The only thing that came out was –

Silence.

No matter what Zechariah did – he couldn't say a word. Because he had not believed, he would stay silent, just like the angel said.

But Zechariah would not always be silent.

One day God would suddenly open his mouth again.



“Blessed be the Lord!” Zechariah would shout. “For the Lord has kept His promise to send us a Savior.”

Then Zechariah would look down at his newborn son. “My child!” he would declare. “You will be the prophet of the Most High God. You will tell people about the coming Savior, the one who will save them from sin forever.”

But the day of baby John’s birth was several months away. For now, Zechariah had no choice. Today he would have to stay –

Silent.

Learn from Zechariah’s biography:

- What God says always comes true – even if it seems impossible!
- God wants you to believe what He says in the Bible right away. Don’t be like Zechariah.

F A I T H

Parent Ideas

The Priest Who Didn't Believe

Scripture: Luke 1:5-25, 67-80

KEY LEARNING POINTS

- What God says always comes true – even if it seems impossible!
- God wants you to believe what He says in the Bible right away. Don't be like Zechariah.

1. Read-together activity – Ask your child to read the dialogue for Zechariah while you read the dialogue for the angel. Also, when you read the word *silent* or *silence* at key points in the biography, add a long, silent pause for dramatic effect.

Zechariah was chosen by lot to burn incense in the Holy Place and pray for the people. He probably had waited a long time for this job since, as a priest, many only got this privilege once in their lifetime – sometimes never.

2. Discussion activity – Ask your child to tell you what the biography is all about in a sentence or two. See if he mentions any of the key learning points above.

Then ask these questions:

- Why did Zechariah become silent?
- What did the angel say about Zechariah's son? (What would he be named? What prophet would he be like? What would he do?)
- When would Zechariah be able to speak again?
- Why is it best to always believe what God says?

Parents, emphasize the importance of believing what God says in His Word. God tells us to believe Him, and we can be sure that what He says is true.

3. Application activity – Present a puzzling experiment to your child. For example, fill a glass or pitcher with equal parts of white vinegar and water. Then hold up the mixture and ask your child what she thinks it is. (She will probably say water.) Then ask her if she believes you can make it fizz up. After her curiosity grows, hold the glass or pitcher over a large bowl (to catch overflow) and pour in some baking soda. Watch the fizzing together.

Then say something like the following: "When the angel told Zechariah he would have a son, Zechariah thought it was impossible – just like you thought the fizzing would be impossible. But God made what the angel said happen! God can do anything."

Then review a few verses from your child's *HangGlider* and *WingRunner* handbooks, and ask her if each verse is hard or easy for her to believe and why. Then ask: "Why should we believe it? Why is it an important verse?" (Good

verses to review are the verses in the beginning Rank sections, as well as 1 Peter 1:25, 1 Peter 5:7, John 17:17, John 14:6, Romans 3:23, 1 John 4:19, Genesis 1:1.)

4. Application activity – To remember Zechariah, play a game where you must act without speaking. On several slips of paper, write various verses from the *WingRunner* handbook. These should be verses that are generally easy to act out. Then put the slips into a container. Take turns pulling out a slip, acting out the verse and guessing which verse is being portrayed. To make it easier for your child, pull out two verses at a time and let the child look at the verses while you act out **one** of them. Your child can guess which one you are acting. Or instead of acting, you may choose to write on a board only the first letters of the words in a verse. Keep filling in letters until your child guesses the verse.

End your activity by talking about why it's easy or hard for you to believe one of the verses, and why it's an important verse to believe.