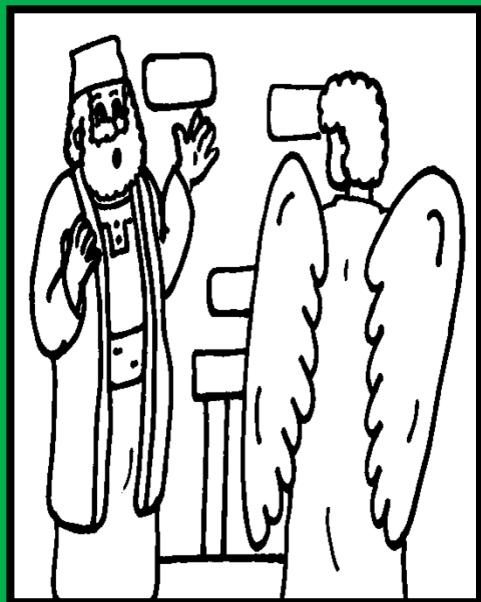


Christmas Stories with Jolly

by Jill Crowder

Zacharias
and
Elisabeth



For grades 3-5

Zacharias and Elisabeth

There once was a priest named Zacharias. Zacharias and his wife, Elisabeth, lived in Jerusalem. They were very old but had no children. Elisabeth was barren, which means she was unable to have a baby. This was very sad for them because they had no one to take care of them in their old age, but they trusted God and always tried to live their lives the way God wanted them to live.

Zacharias worked in the temple in Jerusalem. There were many priests working in the temple, and they shared all the temple jobs. One of the jobs in the temple was to burn incense. This was a very special job. Whoever burned the incense had to go into a very special room all by themselves. There, they would light the incense and as it burned it made smoke that people could see all over Jerusalem. When the people of Jerusalem saw the smoke, they knew it was time for them to pray. This happened two times every day. So, every day, the priest would roll dice to see which of them would get to go into the sacred room of the temple for this very special job. One day when Zacharias was working at the temple, something wonderful happened. The dice landed on him. He would be the one to go into the sacred room. When Zacharias entered the sacred room, an angel named Gabriel appeared to him. Gabriel had a very special message for Zacharias. Gabriel told Zacharias that God had heard his prayers and he and Elisabeth were going to have a baby. They were going to have a baby boy, and they were to name him John. John was going to be a very special baby. He would be filled with the Holy Spirit even while he was in his mother's tummy. John would grow up to have a very special job, but his job would not be in the temple like his father's. His job would be to prepare the

world for the Messiah. Zacharias had heard of the Messiah. He knew God was going to send someone very special to save the whole world, but he didn't know when the Messiah would be coming. No one knew. Someone needed to tell the world he would be coming soon, and Gabriel told Zacharias that John would be that person. John would tell the people to stop doing things that God didn't like and to get their hearts ready to meet Jesus, the Messiah.

Zacharias doubted the angel. He didn't think Elisabeth would be able to have a baby because she was too old. Gabriel told Zacharias that because he doubted the message God had sent, he wouldn't be able to speak until the baby was born. Instantly, Zacharias was no longer able to speak.

When Zacharias came out of the sacred room, all the other priests were waiting to see why he had been in there for so long. When they saw that he could no longer speak, they knew something special had happened to Zacharias while he was in the room.

Later, when it was time for Zacharias to go home, he found out that Gabriel was right, Elisabeth was going to have a baby. Elisabeth praised God for hearing their prayers. Not only were they going to have a baby, but that baby would grow up to be a very special part of God's plan.

1. What was Zacharias's job?
2. Where did he work?
3. What was his wife's name?
4. What did they want but couldn't have?
5. What did Zacharias see when he went in the sacred room?
6. What was the angel's name?
7. What did the angel tell Zacharias was going to happen?
8. What was the special baby going to do?
9. Why didn't Zacharias believe the angel?
10. What happened to Zacharias when he doubted the angel?

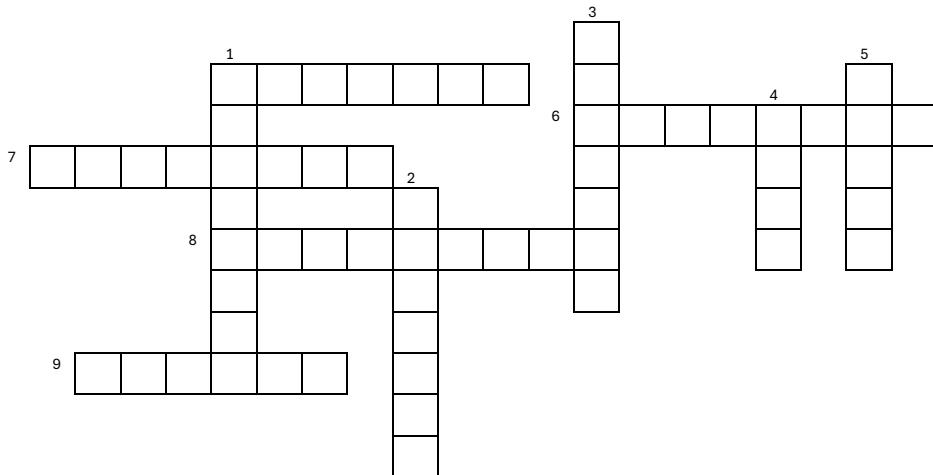
Look it Up! (All answers are KJV specific.)

Down

1. Luke 1:12 – And when Zacharias saw him, he was _____
2. Luke 1:14 - ...and many shall _____ at his birth
3. Luke 1:11 – And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of _____
4. Luke 1:20 – And behold, thou shalt be _____.
5. Luke 1:18 - ...and my wife well stricken in _____

Across

1. Luke 1:21 – And the people waited for Zacharias and marvelled that he _____ so long in the temple.
6. Luke 1:16 – And many of the _____ of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God.
7. Luke 1:25 - ...to take away my _____ among men.
8. Luke 1:6 – And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord _____.
9. Luke 1:17 - ...and the disobedient to the _____ of the just



In My World

When the angel told Zacharias he was going to be a father, Zacharias doubted it would be possible. Zacharias thought he and Elizabeth were too old to be parents. He had put a time limit on when his prayer could be answered. He and Elisabeth assumed their time was up and God was not going to answer their prayers the way they wanted Him to. God is limitless. He doesn't have to follow the rules that anyone else sets for how or when things should happen. God specializes in the impossible and He is the only one who can do that. When impossible things happen, we can be sure that God is the one making them happen. Had Zacharias and Elisabeth been able to have a baby when they thought the time was right, the world wouldn't have been able to see how special this baby was or how he would fit into God's plan. Not only do we need to trust God's plan for our lives, but we also need to trust His timing.

Reflection Questions

1. Have you ever doubted that something would work out just to see that God had the situation under control the whole time?
2. Has anyone ever doubted you when you were telling the truth about something? How did that make you feel?

My Prayer for You

My prayer for you that you never doubt that God has your best interest at hand. Sometimes when we pray God answers our prayers with a "yes", sometimes with a "no", and sometimes we have to wait. I pray that you trust Him however He sees fit to respond to every situation. I pray that you never doubt God's plan for your life because His plan may not fit the limitations you have put on a situation. Never forget that God specializes in the impossible.

And thou shalt have joy and gladness, and many shall rejoice at his birth. Luke 1:14



Answer Key

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1. Priest
2. The temple
3. Elisabeth
4. A baby
5. An angel
6. Gabriel
7. Elisabeth was going to have a baby
8. Prepare the way for the Messiah
9. Elisabeth was too old
10. He couldn't speak

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Down

1. Troubled
2. Rejoice
3. Incense
4. Dumb
5. Years

Across

1. Tarried
6. Children
7. Reproach
8. Blameless
9. Wisdom