

Adventure

5-1s

Leader's manual

AD9

Responding to God from A to Z

Angels' announcement to zealous Zacchaeus

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How it works

How the sessions are structured

Bible passage: All sessions are Bible-focused

Aim

This is the 'big idea' to be taught during this session. It is child-oriented.

Outcomes

These statements break down the aim into 'do-able' chunks. There are generally only three, so that the leader can keep them in mind and check up later whether or not they were achieved. They are broken up into:

- knowledge – information, concepts, beliefs
- understanding – more personal ways of grasping the concepts in the session
- life application – ways of making links between knowledge and children's lives, and reflecting on what kind of change might happen in response to God's word.

Memory verse

This verse is usually based on the CEV Bible and will be taught during the session.

Notes

These notes for the leader give Bible context and background. There are hints regarding the theology of the passage, where it fits in salvation history and how it may properly be applied to both leader and child. There might also be comments about the management of the session content and special comments when needed about visual aids and activities.

Leader's prayer

This section links to the aim and outcomes, mentioning the way this session will actually call for a response from the child and make a difference in their lives.

Gear

A summary is given at the beginning of the session of all the equipment needed by the leader and when it will be used. Some items will be given as optional. The gear needed for the **Start up** and concluding **Activities** is given with the particular activity. Leaders should choose these in advance to ensure that they have all that is needed. It is advisable to try out any unfamiliar activity before the session to make sure it works.

Get ready

This section gives hints about important preparation to be done before the session starts.

Start up

During this time activities occur that introduce the theme, aim and ideas of the session. There may be a few activities to choose from. Each activity has a specific purpose.

Your choice of activities will often depend on the children in your group and the space available.

Chat time

This short section is when the activities are over and the leader and children reflect on what the activities were about and how they lead into the **Bible focus** time. This will often involve a few open-ended questions.

Bible focus

Links



Links are made with the previous sessions.



Connections with life are raised and the children are encouraged to discuss 'real life' situations they face. We will raise the issue here and it will be drawn to a conclusion during **Bringing it together**.

Teaching time

This is the body of the session. It involves teaching and learning activities. The story time has as its central focus the explanation of the Bible text in an age-appropriate way so that the aim of the session is reached. The activities ensure that all the session outcomes are achieved.

What the leader actually says to the children is presented in bold text. Directions to the leader are in normal type.

In this part of the session the children are helped to understand the Bible. Concepts and activities are designed to be age-appropriate. The activities are designed to reinforce this by enabling the teacher to revise the main concepts and test the children's recall.

Application is an important part of this section and it is done carefully, while being true to the passage and to the developmental needs of the children. *Adventure 5-7s* builds on what the child has learnt in *Serious play 3-5s* as well as at home and in school Religious Education classes. Foundations continue to be laid for further knowledge and understanding.

Regardless of the stage of their faith, they can be called on to respond and can be encouraged to know how God's word challenges them to love and trust Jesus as their Saviour and Lord.



This icon shows where in the session the Bible will be read to the children so they can listen to and interact with the word of God.



Music spot

Various songs on readily available CDs are suggested to link into the session and to provide a high-interest flow to the activities.

NOTE: Sometimes during **Bible focus** time there will be a special comment to the leader about an issue that may come up during the session.

Bringing it together

This section is really important. The leader is encouraged to allow enough time for this as connections are discussed that impact the children's lives.

There may be open-ended questions that encourage children to respond in their own terms. We are aiming for honest responses from the children.

The Memory verse is often taught during this part of the session.

Prayer

This will normally follow **Bringing it together** and allows time to pray for the issues highlighted by the children. Leaders will model prayer and also teach children how to pray – both for themselves and for others, and for the issues in the wider world.

Activities

After the more formal learning time the leader is encouraged to choose one or more of the activities included in each session as a way of reinforcing the main learning ideas. This also allows the children to interact with the adult leaders and their fellow group members. It provides time for the leader to talk informally with the children to hear their responses to the learning.

NOTE: The **Links** in each session help children to recall what they have already learnt. Leaders may wish to include a reflective session also.

Think about it

Here the leader is encouraged to think through issues that occurred in the session and reflect on possible strategies for the future.

Think ahead

This is a very brief indication of what the leader will need to plan ahead for next session. It may involve equipment, people and so on.

Unit introduction

Responding to God from A to Z

Angels' announcement to zealous Zacchaeus

Unit aim

To encourage the children to grow in faith as they learn about how people responded to who Jesus was and what he taught and did.

Unit outcomes

By the end of this unit the children will:

- know that Jesus is the Son of God who came to earth as a man to live with his people and to die on the cross for our salvation
- understand that God's plan of salvation is for all who respond to Jesus in faith
- understand that people responded differently to Jesus and his call to follow him
- make links with their own lives by being encouraged to trust and love Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.

Memory verses

Session 1

I'm sending my messenger ahead of you to get things ready for you. **Luke 7:27 (CEV)**

Sessions 2–4

Jesus ... will save his people from their sins. **Matthew 1:21 (CEV)**

Sessions 5–7

Lord, there is no one else that we can go to! Your words give eternal life. **John 6:68 (CEV)**

Sessions 8,9

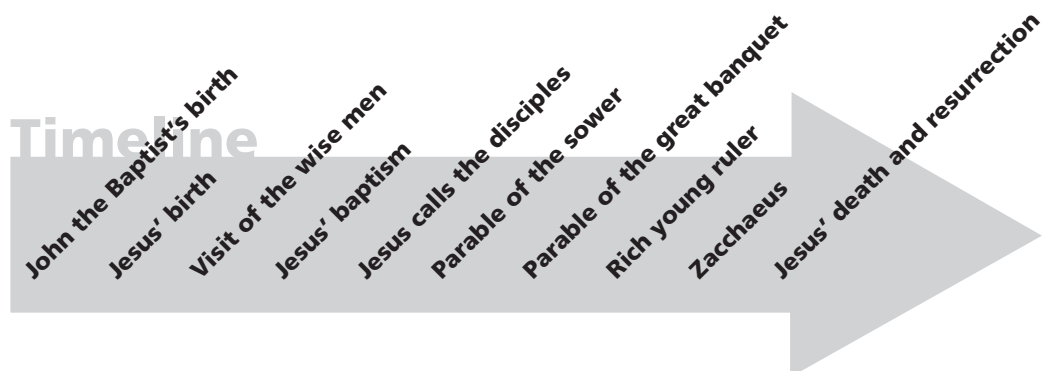
Jesus said: 'the people who are really blessed are the ones who hear and obey God's message!'

Luke 11:28 (CEV)

Sessions 10,11

Thomas replied, 'You are my Lord and my God!' **John 20:28 (CEV)**

Where this
fits in
Jesus'
ministry



We encourage the children to understand that Jesus is the 'centre-piece' of God's plan and that we can also be part of the plan by having faith in Jesus ourselves.

Notes

Bible background

These ten sessions concentrate on the fulfillment of God's promises made first to Abraham (**Genesis 12:1–3**) and reaffirmed throughout the Old Testament. The focus is on Jesus, the Son of God, as presented in the Gospels. With his birth the day of redemption dawned. His public ministry is seen to be the fulfillment of prophecy (**Luke 4:16–21**). His message is one of seeking and saving the lost (**Luke 19:10**). Those around him saw in what he said and did that he was 'the Messiah sent from God' (**Luke 9:20**). Jesus was Messiah for Israel and for foreigners (**Luke 2:25–38**).

At its heart is the cross, first predicted in **Luke 9:22** and the focus of Jesus' actions from **Luke 13:33** onwards. His resurrection and ascension reveal God's glory in the finished work of salvation (**Luke 24:50–53**). His followers are commanded to preach this good news to all nations (**Luke 24:47**).

The sessions look at how people responded, first to the angelic announcements, then to the person and teaching of Jesus, and finally to his death and resurrection. The children are challenged to consider their own responses to who Jesus is and what he has done for them.

These sessions build respect for the Bible as God's word to us. Children will be encouraged to speak to God in prayer and to think of themselves as God's people in God's place under God's rule.

Faith development

Children grow and develop physically, emotionally, cognitively and spiritually at different rates and in different ways. This unit aims to encourage growth in their relationship with Jesus the Son of God. No matter what the stage of their faith development, they can be challenged to respond to God in Christ and to live in the way he wants us to.

Faith has been described as having four aspects: believing, imagining, trusting and doing. (See *Children Finding Faith* by Francis Bridger, SU, England, 2000, available from CEP.) Believing involves having faith in the truth of the gospel and a reliance on the promises of God in Christ. Imagining involves creatively exploring our beliefs. Trusting involves the relational side of faith. Doing is the way we act as an outworking of our faith. Children, like adults, benefit from learning approaches that involve exploring faith from each of these four aspects. These sessions have been written with this in mind.

Special features

The Leader's pack includes:

- the Leader's manual with nine sessions plus two Easter sessions
- a full-colour 'Super star challenge adventure game' board game with quiz cards
- a sample set of Children's swap cards. Extra sets may be purchased from CEP so that every child receives a card each session
- a set of photocopiable masters to cover the topic of each session.

Super star challenge adventure game

The 'Super star challenge adventure game' needs to be prepared in advance. You may wish to laminate it or cover it with clear plastic to prolong its life.

Cut out the quiz cards, rules and spinner, and assemble the spinner before the session. (Alternatively, use dice.) Familiarise yourself with the game and rules before you explain them to the children.

Children's components

The Children's swap cards are related to the session. Each child should receive the appropriate card at the end of the session to take home and build up a collection. Photocopiable masters are also provided to enable copies of other activities to be made for the children.

Activities

Children all learn in a variety of ways. *Adventure 5–7s* is for five to seven year olds who are beginner readers and actively learn through a range of activities. These have been selected to provide variety and to cater for the preferred learning styles of all children.

When choosing the activities you will include in each session, consider the number of children in your group, their individual skills and the space you have available. Try to encourage a wide range of activities so that the different learning skills of the children will be catered for.

At this stage children are learning how to relate to God through his word, the Bible, and also through prayer. It is important that the leaders model this behaviour and encourage the children to follow their example.

A Memory verse activity is included in each session and presented in an interactive way so that the children will begin to build their personal store of Bible verses.



Music spot

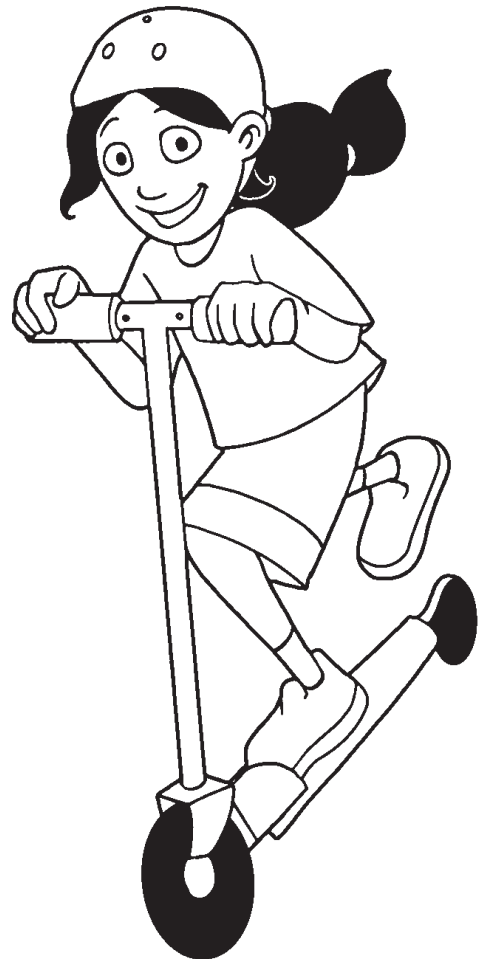
Often the music helps children to remember the significant learning that has taken place in the session. CDs that will appeal to children include:

- *Promises, promises*, CEP
- *Earth movers*, CEP
- *Best news!*, Tony Jones & Mountain feet
- *Jesus rocks the world*, Colin Buchanan
- *How cool is that!*, Johnny Burns
- *Praise crazy*, Johnny Burns
- *10,9,8 ... God is great*, Colin Buchanan
- *Remember the Lord*, Colin Buchanan
- *Practise being godly*, Colin Buchanan
- *The King, the snake and the promise*, Emu Music

These CDs are available from CEP.

Easter

Two supplementary Easter sessions are provided in this unit. They cover Jesus' death and resurrection (from **Isaiah 53** and **Matthew 27,28**) and also the Emmaus road (**Luke 24:1–35**). You may choose to use one or both of these, depending on the number of sessions in the term.





John getting things ready

Luke 1:5–25,57–64; Malachi 4:5–6

Aim

To teach children that John the Baptist's role in God's unfolding plan was to prepare people for the coming of the Jesus.

Outcomes

By the end of this session the children will:

- know that God chose John for a special job
- understand that God kept his promise in sending John to get people ready for Jesus
- appreciate that the time was getting close when God would keep his promise and send a saviour.

Memory verse

I'm sending my messenger ahead of you to get things ready for you. **Luke 7:27 (CEV)**

Notes

Read **Luke 1:5–25,57–64**

Elizabeth, the kinswoman of Mary (mother of Jesus), and Zechariah were godly people who had been unable to have a child. We are told that they were both elderly when an angel appeared to Zechariah as he was working in the temple. The angel told Zechariah that Elizabeth would have a son. This boy was to be the promised Elijah who would prepare Israel for the coming of the Messiah:

I, the Lord, promise to send the prophet Elijah before that great and terrible day comes. He will lead children and parents to love each other more, so that when I come, I won't bring doom to the land. **Malachi 4:5,6 (CEV).**

Zechariah's song in **Luke 1:68–79** shows that he recognised the significance of John's birth. He knew it meant that Jesus was coming. His son was going to be the one to prepare the way for this Lord who would save his people. This session aims to show John's significant role in God's plan for salvation. The children should gain a sense of the excitement and anticipation conveyed in the Bible verses.

Today the children will read what happened to Zechariah in the temple (**Luke 1:5–25**) and then, as villagers, will visit Zechariah and Elizabeth in their home just after the birth of John. They will be read a newspaper report before they have a chance to ask questions of Zechariah and Elizabeth to find out more about what happened to Zechariah and what special role their son John would play in God's plan of salvation.

The children will examine the response of Zechariah and Elizabeth to the news they received.

Leader's prayer

Thank God for choosing John the Baptist to prepare the way for the Saviour. Pray that the children will experience excitement and joy in knowing that God's promises are true and that Jesus came to save his people.

Gear

- ❑ A CEV Bible marked at **Luke 1:13**
- ❑ Question mark poster (see **Get ready**)
- ❑ Simple costumes for Zechariah and Elizabeth (see **Get ready**)
- ❑ Props to create a New Testament room
- ❑ A scroll with the following invitation:
Dear friends, please come and visit us. We have some amazing news to tell you all.
Your friends,
Zechariah and Elizabeth
P.S. We live in a town in the hill country of Judea.
- ❑ A baby card to welcome baby John (this card may be homemade)
- ❑ A photocopy of the Village News (page 14) and The Lord is coming (page 15) for each child and coloured pencils
- ❑ CD player and CD of choice
- ❑ **Children's swap card number 1** for each child
- ❑ Gear for chosen activities in **Start up** and **Activities** sections

Get ready

Draw a large question mark on a sheet of brightly coloured cardboard. Also write the words 'who', 'when' and 'why' on the poster. Display the poster prominently in your area.

Decorate one part of the room as the inside of a New Testament house.

You will need helpers dressed to play the part of Zechariah and Elizabeth. The session will still work if there is only one person to be interviewed. If necessary, you may have to play the part of Elizabeth or Zechariah yourself by having some simple props (clothes, head-dress and so on) to use in this part of the session.

If you are using the CD make sure it is ready.

For extra impact

Draw a life-size outline of a person on a large sheet of paper. Cut out the outline and display it next to the question mark.

Start up

Choose from the following warm-up activities to suit your group and the time you have available. Please note that **Chat time** is an important component of the session and should be completed immediately before moving into the **Bible focus**. It is designed to introduce content and concepts used in the session.

Pass the parcel

Purpose: *To introduce the idea of waiting for something good to happen.*

Gear

- ❑ Music on CD and CD player
- ❑ A parcel wrapped with several layers of paper
- ❑ Cards in each layer that say things such as: 'Who could it be?'; 'Is he here?'; 'When will he come?'; 'Will we get to see him?' and so on
- ❑ A doll or picture of a baby labelled 'Jesus' as the parcel goal

Ask the children to sit in a circle. Explain to the children that everyone will get to pass the parcel but some people may miss out on getting to unwrap a layer. As the music plays invite them to pass around the parcel. When the music stops, the child holding the parcel should unwrap a layer. The child should read the card to the class. If the child is not a confident reader, you may read it for them. Continue until the last layer is opened to reveal the doll or the picture.

Who am I?

Purpose: *To introduce the idea of finding out an object's or person's identity.*

Give clues to see if the students can guess what object or person is being described.

For example:

I am red. I have wheels. I have an engine. I have a ladder. I have a hose. What am I? (A fire engine.)

I help people. I wear a white coat. I use a stethoscope. I help people to stay healthy. I work in a hospital. Who am I? (A doctor.)

I come in packets. I can be chocolate coated. I can be different shapes. I can be 'sweet' or 'dry'. People eat me for a snack. What am I? (A biscuit.)

End the game by giving clues that lead to you yourself being the person to identify.

The right tool for the job

Purpose: *To introduce the idea of objects (and people) having different roles.*

Gear

- ❑ A variety of tools and equipment used for different jobs, such as a hammer, spanner, pliers, torch, spoon, can opener, eggwhisk, pencil, bowl, ruler, dictionary, TV guide, Bible, paper clip, stapler, bike helmet, gardening gloves, watch, remote control and so on

Place the equipment in a pile in the middle of your area. Describe a task and ask the children to select the right object for the job from the collection.

For example:

I want to make an omelette. (The children could select the eggwhisk and the bowl.)

I want to join two pieces of wood. (Hammer.)

Blindfold pathways

Purpose: *To introduce the idea of needing someone to show the way. The activity also develops the concept of placing your trust in someone.*

Gear

- ☐ Blindfold
- ☐ Chairs, books and so on to provide obstacles

Invite a child to stand and put on a blindfold. Place obstacles in your area. Holding the child's hand for safety, lead the child through the obstacle course taking care not to run into any objects. Allow a child to lead another child through the course. To avoid any injury, stop the game if the children do not play sensibly.

Chat time

Have you ever had to wait for someone you love to visit you? If they are going to stay at your house you need to get things ready for them. Perhaps Mum or Dad will put fresh sheets on a spare bed or you might put some flowers on the table. Someone in your family might even cook a special meal.

Often before the person comes there is a lot of excitement.

God's people had been waiting for someone special to come to them.

But before he came, God chose someone to prepare the way and help people to be ready to meet him. It was a very exciting time!

Bible focus

Links



Allow children to respond to the following:

Tell about a time you were waiting for a special visitor.

What did you do to get ready for their visit?

How did you find out your visitor was coming to your house?

Teaching time

Open the invitation and hold it for the children to read it with you.

Great, I'd love to visit them. They really love God.

For many years Zechariah and Elizabeth had wanted a baby but they weren't able to have one ... until now that is! And what makes it really amazing is that they are not young people. They are old enough to be grandparents!

Zechariah was a priest working in the temple when an angel from God came to tell him something.

An angel appeared to Zechariah.

This is what happened.



Read **Luke 1:13** from a CEV Bible. A capable and willing child may read this.

What did the angel tell Zechariah? (Accept responses. Don't be afraid. God has heard your prayers. Elizabeth will have a baby. You must call the baby John.)

Let's go and visit Zechariah and Elizabeth. Let's take a card to welcome their baby.

Allow the children to sign the card. Hand the baby card to a child to give to 'Zechariah' and 'Elizabeth'. Go for a walk through the 'village' until you reach the chair where 'Elizabeth' and 'Zechariah' are sitting.

'Elizabeth' and 'Zechariah' should invite the children in. The child with the card gives it to the happy parent(s) who look over it and thank the children for their kind thoughts.

'Elizabeth' and 'Zechariah' ask the children to sit and then tell their story.

Hello everyone. It's lovely to have you come and visit. I suppose you read about us in the Village News. It's all very exciting being in the paper.

Take out a copy of the Village News (page 14).

I'll read it to you.

Read the news report titled 'It's a miracle!'

It's so good that Zechariah got his voice back. He lost his voice when the angel told him we would have a son. Zechariah didn't believe him, the angel told Zechariah he wouldn't be able to speak until everything came true. Poor Zechariah couldn't speak for months.

I'm sure you would like to find out more. You can ask me anything about what happened and I will try to answer you.

Invite the children to ask questions. Make sure that the following questions are asked: 'How did



Zechariah get his voice back?', 'Why did you choose the name John?', 'How did you feel when you heard the message from the angel?', 'What special job does God have for your baby?'. Make sure the children understand that John would grow up to get people ready for someone greater: Jesus.

Thank the children for their questions.

Before you go, I just want to tell you one more amazing thing. Did you know that God promised hundreds of years ago that John, our baby, would be born to get people ready for the Lord?

Thank the children for visiting.



Music spot

Jesus is the Saviour, track 5 of Colin Buchanan's *Follow the Saviour* CD

The Day, track 20 of *The King, the snake and the promise* CD.

Are you ready?, track 7 of CEP's *Promises, promises* CD.

Activities

Headlines

This activity should be completed first by the children as it is a Take home sheet.

Gear

- ☐ A photocopy of the Village News (page 14) and The Lord is coming (page 15) for each child
- ☐ Coloured pencils

Give each child a copy of the Village News (page 14) and The Lord is coming (page 15). Explain that they need to complete the headline for the paper now that they know what John came to do. Encourage the children to join the dots, draw faces on the people and colour the picture.

Getting ready

Ask the children how we get ready for the following:

- going to the beach (towel, hat, sunglasses, bathers, sun-cream and so on)
- going to school
- going to church
- going to bed

What do you think people might do today to get ready for the Lord? (Accept responses.)

Great news

Gear

- ☐ Drawing paper and pencils

- ☐ An envelope for each child

Ask the children to write the great news, 'Get ready for the Lord' on a piece of paper.

Decorate it, place it in an envelope and encourage the children to give it to one of their family.

Bringing it together

Gather around the question mark and the silhouette posters.

Accept responses to the following questions:

What is the most exciting news that you have ever heard?

What was the exciting news Zechariah and Elizabeth received?

Our poster says 'why?'

John is getting people ready for Jesus the Lord. Why is Jesus coming? (Accept responses. The Lord is coming to save his people. People will be able to live as God's friends.)

Our poster says 'when?'

When do you think Jesus the Lord came to save his people? (Accept responses. It may be soon because John has been born to get people ready.)

God kept his promise to send someone to get people ready for the Lord.

Next week we will find out more about 'who?'

Prayer

Give children the opportunity to repeat the following prayer.

Dear God, thank you that you sent John to get people ready for the Lord.

Help us to be ready for the Lord too. Amen.

Invite two or three children to pray aloud if there are those who desire to.

Take home

Distribute **Children's swap card number 1**. Explain to the children how to complete the card. Point out that the man is Zechariah and his son, John, will 'get people ready for the Lord.'

Encourage the children to take home their swap card and copy of the Village News and The Lord is coming, and show it to their family and tell them about these events.

Teaching songs

For many of us, the thought of teaching songs to children can be quite daunting. Listed below are some practical tips that will help make singing in children's ministry a rewarding experience both for the children and the leaders.

Practical tips for teaching songs:

- Ensure you know the song well before attempting to teach it.
- Placing the words on a chart or overhead will enable the children's attention to be focused towards the words. This allows you to maintain eye contact.
- Allow the children to listen to the songs while they look at the words.
- The chorus is often the best part of the song to learn first.
- Play the CD loudly enough so that the children feel comfortable singing along. Often they don't want to be 'heard' while they sing.
- Have the children 'whisper' sing the song when it is new.
- Encourage children to sing along but don't force them.
- Often there are children who love to sing in a small group leading the rest of the group. Perhaps these children would like to have a CD to listen to at home.
- Sing a favourite song before starting a new song.
- Play the song while the children are working on other activities such as craft or worksheets. This will help them to become more familiar with the songs.
- Vary the approach. Why not have half the group clap hands while the other sings, and then swap over? Why not introduce some percussion instruments?
- And finally, make this an enjoyable time of singing praise to the Lord!



1

Think about it

Which activities did the children prefer?

Could you improve on the visit part of the session (see **Session 2**, pages 19,20)?

Did the children appreciate why John was sent to prepare the way of the Lord?

Think ahead

You will need: the Question mark poster from this session; to make a scroll (see page 18); have some basic carpentry tools and **Children's swap card number 2**.

You may wish to ask someone to come and play the part of Joseph for you and provide a simple costume.

Refer to **Gear** for Session 2 (page 18).

It's a miracle!

After months of being unable to speak, Zechariah the temple priest got his voice back late last night.



He lost his voice some months ago, at around the same time his wife Elizabeth became pregnant. Many people wondered if he would ever speak again.

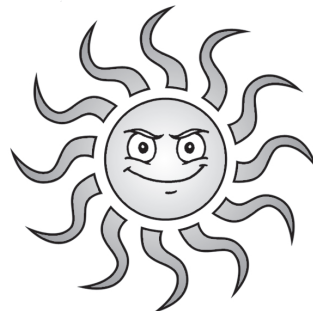
Zechariah and Elizabeth were so happy last night, with their son John.

Some people say Zechariah saw an angel in the temple, shortly before Elizabeth found out she was expecting John.

Others say that John is a 'special' child sent by God. Let's wait to see what happens!



Today's weather



Very hot, very dry weather expected throughout the day.

The Lord Jesus is Coming Baby _____ to Show the _____

John, born to Elizabeth and Zechariah is getting people ready for the Lord.



Join the dots around Zechariah and Elizabeth. Draw faces on the people and colour in.

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