



**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Series:** God gives the Best Gifts  
Winter Year 2, Lesson 29

# John the Baptist is Born

**Take Home Point:** \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS  
*...Surprise! God gives us gifts!*

\*Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson. The leader will say the first part of the phrase (CAPS). The children respond with the second part of the phrase (*italics*).

**Bible Event:** Luke 1:5-25, 57-66

**We will help children know:**

- The Bible Event of John the Baptist's birth.
- John the Baptist was a surprise gift to Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth.
- God gave us a wonderful surprise gift, Jesus, and he is the best gift of all.




**We will help the children feel:**

- Surprise that Jesus is the best gift of all.
- Anticipation for Jesus' birth.
- Excitement that Jesus is coming.

**We will help the children do:**

- Interact with puppet presentation to introduce the Bible Event.
- Participate in the Bible event.
- Craft: Surprise Gift Picture!
- Snack: Pretzel Angel.
- Game: Surprise Charades.
- Teach Albie the Take Home Point: GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...*Surprise! God gives us gifts!*
- Sing and Pray.

# THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

DESTINATION	PAGE #	DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY	SUPPLIES NEEDED
<b>Large Group Opening</b> 	3  5	Puppet Presentation  Bible Event	<i>Puppet Presentation:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Judy puppet</li> <li>Advent wreath with four candles of four different colors</li> <li>matches</li> <li>Optional: candle snuffer</li> <li>Bible</li> </ul> <i>Bible Event:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>large gift wrapped box with lid wrapped separately, containing:</li> <li>Bible</li> <li>gray wig or mask of old person or pictures of Zechariah</li> <li>incense and a holder and matches</li> <li>white robe</li> <li>baby blanket</li> <li>scroll</li> </ul>
<b>Small Group Application</b> 	8 9 10 12	Activity 1: Craft-Surprise Gift Picture! Activity 2: Snack- Pretzel Angel Activity 3: Game-Surprise Charades. Prayer Time	<i>Activity 1: Craft</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>copies of Appendix A on cardstock, one per child; cut off bottom portion before class</li> <li>crayons or markers</li> <li>one stick-on-bow per child</li> <li>removable tape</li> </ul> <i>Activity 2: Snack</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>napkins, cups, water or juice</li> <li>traditional shape mini pretzels</li> <li>mini Ritz Bits with cheese in middle or grapes, one per child</li> <li>Bugle snacks or celery stick, one per child</li> </ul> <i>Activity 3: Game</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>room divider or sheet rigged up to hide behind</li> </ul>
<b>Large Group Wrap-up</b> 	13 13	Singing (Optional) Lesson Review with Puppet Skit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>your choice of music</li> <li>Albie puppet</li> <li>Example of craft</li> <li>Example of snack</li> </ul>

## Pre-Session Singing (10 minutes)

**Purpose:** *When all children are in one group singing, it is easy for children arriving later to join the group and immediately get involved.*

## Large Group Opening (15 minutes)



**Purpose:** *The puppet demonstrates today's lesson. The children are introduced to the take home point and experience the Bible event.*

## Puppet Presentation

*Supplies: Judy puppet, Advent wreath with four different colored candles; matches; optional, candle snuffer; Presenter holds a Bible*

**Presenter:** Boys and girls, let's call Judy. (Children call "Judy".)

Judy: Hi everyone.

**Presenter:** Hello, Judy.

Judy: Wow, what's that?

**Presenter:** This is an Advent wreath.

Judy: What is it for?

**Presenter:** 'Advent' means coming.

Judy: What's coming?

**Presenter:** The church is in the season in which we are waiting for the coming of the birth of baby Jesus.

Judy: I still don't see why you have a wreath with candles.

**Presenter:** Each week we will light a different candle to help us countdown to Jesus' birth and remember a part of the Christmas story.

Judy: Which candle are you going to light today?

**Presenter:** Today we will light the angel candle. (Light candle; make sure it is away from anything flammable.)

Judy: Why is it called the angel candle?

**Presenter:** In parts of the Christmas story, there are angels that tell some important news.

Judy: What did they tell this time?

**Presenter:** In our Bible event this week, an angel told a man named Zechariah that his wife would have a baby.

Judy: My aunt is going to have a baby. I don't think an angel told her.

**Presenter:** Well, Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were very, very old, past the age of having babies. God wanted them to have a very special baby.

Judy: Was it Jesus?

**Presenter:** No. The angel told Zechariah to name the baby John. His job would be to tell everyone that Jesus is God's son and he was coming soon.

Judy: That sounds like an important job.

**Presenter:** It was. The angel told Zechariah that the Holy Spirit would be with John from the moment he was born.

**Presenter:** Would you like to learn more about this Bible event?

Judy: Yes I would.

**Presenter:** First, let's practice the take home point. I'll say the first part and you say the second part.

Judy: OK

**Presenter:** \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS... now you say, "Surprise! God gives us gifts!"

Judy: Surprise! God gives us gifts!

**Presenter:** Do you think you can teach the boys and girls?

Judy: Sure.

**Presenter:** Okay everybody, \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...

Judy: (and everyone): Surprise! God gives us gifts!

**Presenter:** One more time. \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...

Judy: (and everyone): Surprise! God gives us gifts!

**Presenter:**    **Wonderful. Say “goodbye” Judy.** (Snuff out candle.)

**Judy:**            Bye everyone!

## **Bible Event:** Mystery Box

*Supplies: Gift-wrapped mystery box with removable lid, containing Bible; gray wig or mask of an older person or pictures of Zechariah; incense, incense holder and matches; white robe; baby blanket; scroll*

The presenter comes on stage with the gift-wrapped mystery box. He begins:

**Boys and girls, raise your hands if you like presents! We all love presents, don't we? As Christmas comes closer, we know that we will soon be getting some gifts. As you can see, I have with me today a gift box. Inside this gift box are some surprises that will help us tell our Bible events as we wait for Jesus to come. Each week the gift box will hold some new surprises. Let's take a look inside and see what surprises it holds for us this week.**

Make a big deal of taking the lid off the gift box and peeking inside to see what surprises it holds. Bring out the Bible. Say:

**Look, boys and girls, there is a Bible inside my gift box. I wonder why there is a Bible in the box. Looks puzzled. Hmmm... Well, I know that we are learning that God gives the best gifts. And the Bible is God's word. God's word is one of the best gifts we can have. Face brightens. I know why this Bible was in the gift box! Today's Bible event is true. It really happened. And it tells about it right here in the Bible.**

Take out the wig, mask or picture of Zechariah. Say:

**A long time ago, right around the time Jesus was born, there was a man named Zechariah. He and his wife Elizabeth had never been able to have children. Now they were too old to have children.**

Take out the incense, put in holder and light it. Say:

**This is incense. Zechariah was a priest. That means he was like a pastor and did God's work in the temple, the church. One of his jobs was to go into a special room where only the priest could go. He lit some incense while the people prayed. Set incense down, away from anything flammable.**

Take out the white robe and say:

**While Zechariah burned the incense, an angel suddenly appeared. Zechariah was very scared. The angel said, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer.”**

Take out the baby blanket and say:

**The angel told Zechariah, “Your wife, Elizabeth, will have a baby. You are to name him John. He will give you joy. Many people will be glad he was born. His job will be to point people to God and show them the Savior, Jesus.”**

**Because he was old, Zechariah had a hard time believing the angel. “He said, “I am old and Elizabeth is past the age of having children. How can you prove this to me?”**

**The angel answered him. “My name is Gabriel! I see God’s face. God sent me to tell you this good news. But, because you didn’t believe me, you will no longer be able to speak until the baby is born.”**

**This is what happened to Zechariah. Mouth some words without speaking. He could no longer talk.**

Pick up the baby blanket again and say:

**After some time had passed, Elizabeth did have a baby. Her friends and relatives were happy for her and Zechariah. On the day the parents were to name the baby, they had a lot of visitors. The people asked Elizabeth if she would name the baby Zechariah. She answered, “No. His name is to be John.” They didn’t believe Elizabeth, so they asked Zechariah what he wanted to name the baby.**

Take out the scroll and say:

**Zechariah wrote, “His name will be John!” As Zechariah wrote, he also spoke the words. Surprise! God gave him his voice back! He began to praise God, singing:**

**“Praise be to God!  
He has come to take care of his people.  
He will set them free from sin!  
He has sent a Savior!  
And this baby will point the way to the Savior!”**

**God sent Zechariah and Elizabeth a wonderful surprise. And he sends us a wonderful surprise too. Jesus, our Savior!**

Boys and girls, let's practice the take home point together. I will say the first part and you repeat the last part. **\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...*Surprise! God gives us gifts!***

Let's fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.

Dear God,  
We love you.  
Thank you for sending Jesus.  
He is the best gift.  
Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen.

**Song:**

**Let's sing our song of the week.** (To the tune of *London Bridge*)

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

**GOD gives US the BE-st GIFTS.  
BE-st GIFTS. BE-st GIFTS.  
GOD gives US the BE-st GIFTS.  
GOD is SO good!**

# Small Group Application (30 minutes)



**Purpose:** *Children will break into small groups. Smaller groups enable children to develop closer relationships with adults and peers in the church. In your small groups you will reinforce the take home point with a fun hands-on activity and discuss the Bible event. Review questions help kids apply the take home point to their daily lives.*

## Activity 1: Craft “Surprise Gift Picture!”

*Supplies: Copies of Appendix A on cardstock, one per child and cut off bottom portion before class; crayons or markers one stick-on bow per child; removable tape*

**Boys and girls, today we are going to make a surprise gift.**

**First, color the angel. Next I will help you fold it so that the corners of the paper are in the center (covering up the angel).**

**I will tape (with removable tape) down the folded paper and you may color the outside of the picture to look like a gift.**

**I will give all of you a bow to put on your surprise gift.**

**Open it and say, “Surprise!”**

**Zechariah received a lot of surprises. The best surprise God gave us was Jesus. It is a surprise that a tiny baby could be the Savior of the whole world. Jesus grew up to die on the cross and take away our sins so we can be with God forever. What a wonderful gift! What a wonderful surprise!**

**Review the Bible Event.**

**What are some surprises you have received?** *(Answers will vary but may include a special toy, a treat, a special visitor, or a trip.)*

**Let’s practice the take home point. \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS....*Surprise! God gives us gifts!***

**Let’s fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.**

**Dear God,  
We love you.  
Thank you for sending Jesus.  
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Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
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## **Song:**

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## **Activity 2: Snack "Pretzel Angel"**

*Supplies: napkins, cups, water or juice; traditional shaped mini pretzels; Mini Ritz Bits crackers with cheese in middle or grapes, one per child; Bugle snacks or celery sticks, one per child*

<b>***CAUTION: Be aware of food allergies children may have, before you give them anything to eat.</b>
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**Before we eat our snack, let's fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.**

**Dear God,  
We love you.  
Thank you for sending Jesus.  
He is the best gift.  
Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen.**

**Boys and girls, today we are going to put together some food for a surprise snack.**

**First, I will give everyone a pretzel. Do not eat it yet.**

**Next, put the Ritz Bits cracker (or grape) at the top, middle of the pretzel for a head. Don't eat it yet.**

**Now take the Bugle and lay it in the middle of the pretzel, point up.** (If using celery stick, lay it in the middle under the head.) **Don't eat it yet.**

**Now look at your snack. Does it remind you of anything from our lesson today?** (If children cannot guess it looks like an angel, tell them.) **Now you may eat your angel.**

Review the Bible event.

**What surprises did Zechariah receive?** (*An angel came and surprised him; he received a surprise baby; and he was surprised when he lost his voice and when he got his voice back.*)

Let's practice the take home point. **\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...*Surprise! God gives us gifts!***

**Song:**

Let's sing our song of the week. (To the tune of *London Bridge*)

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

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GOD is SO good!**

**Activity 3: Game "Surprise Charades"**

*Supplies: Room divider or sheet rigged up to hide behind*

**Boys and girls, today we are going to play Surprise Charades. You will take turns pretending to be Zechariah doing an action from today's Bible event. I hope you were listening closely. Remember that the angel took away his voice, so no talking.**

To play:

1. Pretend to be Zechariah going into the room in the temple by taking turns going behind the divider with the shepherd.
2. The shepherd must whisper a charade (from list below) to the child (Zechariah) and show how to act out without making a noise, like Zechariah.
3. The child and shepherd come out from behind the divider and the shepherd gives the children a clue to what "Zechariah" will be acting out for them.
4. Zechariah acts out the charade and the children guess.
5. The child who guesses gets to be Zechariah next, unless he has already been Zechariah. In that case, a child who has not had a turn gets to be Zechariah.

**Charade:** Baby

**Action:** Rocking folded arms

**Clue:** This was one of Zechariah's surprises

**Charade:** Older man

**Action:** Walking hunched over

**Clue:** Why Zechariah thought he couldn't have a baby

**Charade:** Pray

**Action:** Fold hands

**Clue:** What the people were doing when Zechariah was burning incense

**Charade:** Singing  
**Action:** Cup hands to mouth and sing  
**Clue:** What Zechariah did after he could talk

**Charade:** Angel  
**Action:** Flap arms  
**Clue:** Someone who appeared to Zechariah

**Charade:** Afraid, fear  
**Action:** Cross arms over chest and shiver, look scared  
**Clue:** How Zechariah felt when he saw the angel Gabriel

**Charade:** Couldn't talk  
**Action:** Open and close mouth, without speaking  
**Clue:** What happened to Zechariah when he didn't believe Gabriel

**Charade:** Walked  
**Action:** Walk in place  
**Clue:** What Zechariah did to go inside the temple

**Charade:** Surprises  
**Action:** Throw out arms and open mouth wide  
**Clue:** God gives the best gifts...

Review the Bible event.

**What is the best gift God gives us? Why?** *(Jesus, because he came to set us free from sin and die on the cross so we can be forgiven. He is our Savior.)*

**Let's practice the take home point. \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...*Surprise! God gives us gifts!***

**Let's fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.**

**Dear God,  
We love you.  
Thank you for sending Jesus.  
He is the best gift.  
Thank you, thank you, thank you.  
In Jesus' name.  
Amen.**

## **Song:**

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**GOD is SO good!**

## **Prayer Time:**

**How does the gift of Jesus make you feel?** (*Happy, joyful, excited, thankful, etc.*)

Ask children for prayer requests and pray as a group for child's request.

**Let's practice the take home point. \*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...*Surprise! God gives us gifts!***

**Let's fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.**

**Dear God,**  
**We love you.**  
**Thank you for sending Jesus.**  
**He is the best gift.**  
**Thank you, thank you, thank you.**  
**In Jesus' name.**  
**Amen.**

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**GOD is SO good!**

**Safety and Security:** Safety and security procedures are important for each church to carefully define and implement according to their unique needs. The security, safety, illness and accident procedures described in this curriculum are provided for example purposes only and may not be appropriate, applicable or adequate for every situation. Each church is responsible for determining whether any security, safety, illness and accident procedures contained in the curriculum are appropriate, applicable or adequate for its unique situation. The activities described in this curriculum require adult supervision and may not be suitable for each child and each situation. Each church is responsible for ensuring that adequate adult supervision is provided for all activities and for determining whether an activity is appropriate for each child and each situation. Kids Kount Publishing disclaims all liability for the implementation of any procedures or the performance of any activities described in this curriculum.

# Large Group Wrap-Up (10 minutes)



**Purpose:** *The crazy bird puppet, Albie, struggles with learning the take home point. We try to teach him the take home point, but each time he confuses words or concepts. After three attempts, he finally gets it right.*

**Singing:** (Optional, two or three songs, as time allows)

*Supplies: Albie the puppet, sample of today's craft and snack.*

## Lesson Review with Puppet Skit

Presenter shows Albie an example of each of the Activities done in small group. Then the kids attempt to teach Albie the take home point.

**Presenter:** **We want to welcome all our guests today and thank them for coming.**

*(If you give guests a gift for coming, do it now.)*

**Presenter:** **Albie, look at the craft the children made today. It is a Surprise Gift Picture! The children are going to teach you our take home point. Listen carefully.**

**Presenter:** (says to kids):  
Kids say:

**Presenter:** (says to Albie):  
*Albie says:*

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
...Surprise! God gives us gifts!  
**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
*Surprise! I like to wear bows in my hair!*



**Presenter:** **Albie, look at the snack we ate. It looks like an angel. Now listen carefully to the take home point.**

**Presenter:** (says to kids):  
Kids say:

**Presenter:** (says to Albie):  
*Albie says:*

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
...Surprise! God gives us gifts!  
**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
*Surprise! Monkeys drool on you when you kiss them!*

**Presenter:** **Albie, today we played a game called Surprise Charades. Now, please listen closely to the take home point.**

**Presenter:** (says to kids):  
Kids say:

**Presenter:** (says to Albie):  
*Albie says:*

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
...Surprise! God gives us gifts!  
**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**  
*Surprise! I could never be quiet for very long!*

**Presenter says:**

**“Albie, listen one last time.**

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**

Kids response:

...Surprise! God gives us gifts!

**Presenter:** (says to Albie):

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...**

*Albie’s response:*

(Warms up his singing voice with “*Mee, mee, mee, mee...*” and sings in a silly dramatic opera-like voice)

**\*GOD GIVES THE BEST GIFTS...Surprise! God gives us gifts!**

**Presenter says to Albie:**

**Good job, Albie!**

Albie can leave stage or join in the prayer and song.

**Let’s fold our hands and pray. Repeat after me.**

**Dear God,**

**We love you.**

**Thank you for sending Jesus.**

**He is the best gift.**

**Thank you, thank you, thank you.**

**In Jesus’ name.**

**Amen.**

**Song:**

**Let’s sing our song of the week.** (To the tune of *London Bridge*)

Capitalized letters indicate emphasis on that syllable when the rhyme is sung.

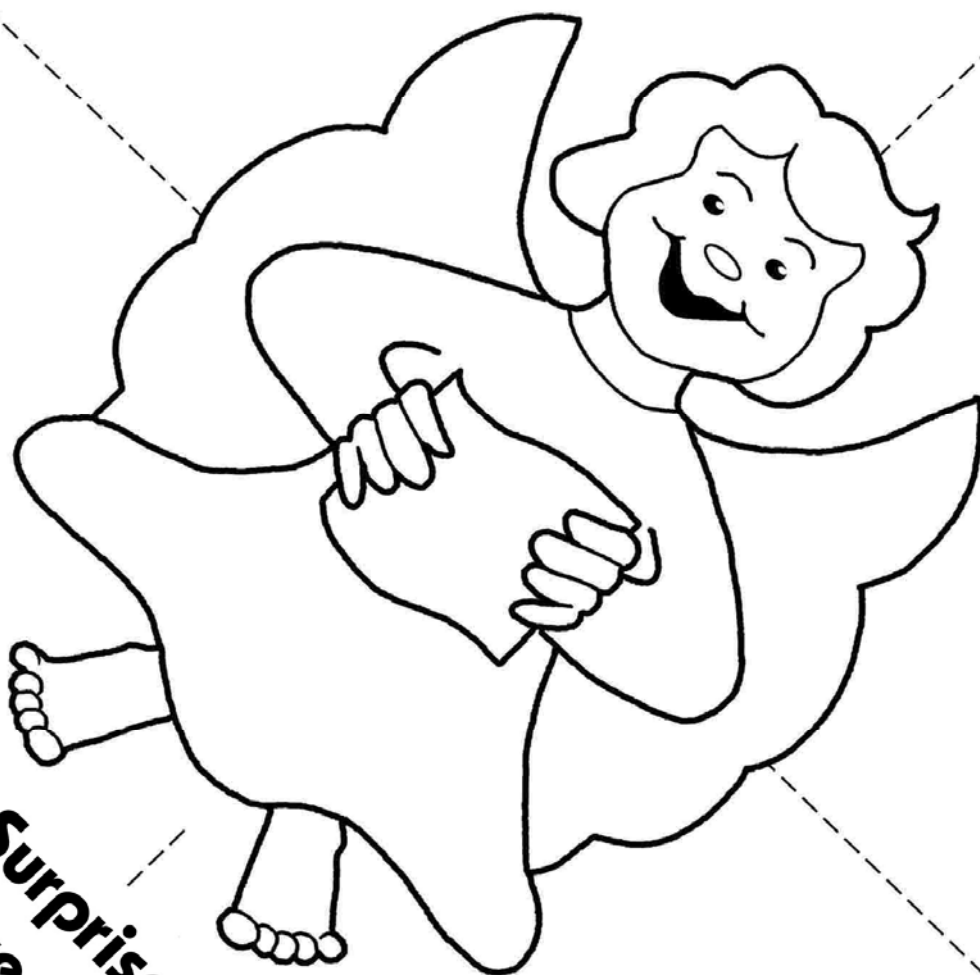
**GOD gives US the BE-st GIFTS.**

**BE-st GIFTS. BE-st GIFTS.**

**GOD gives US the BE-st GIFTS.**

**GOD is SO good!**

**Goodbye boys and girls. Remember that God loves you and he gives us the best gifts.**



**Surprise!**  
**God gives us gifts!**