



God Began to Fulfill His Promises Concerning John and Jesus

OVERVIEW

This lesson shows that God fulfilled His promise through the birth of John. Through Zacharias' prophecy, we are told that his son would prepare the way for the Deliverer. Also through his prophecy, we are given many insights regarding the Deliverer, Jesus Christ:

- He would be the One through whom God would fulfill His promise to Abraham.
- He would be God Himself.
- He would explain how men could be saved.
- He alone would be the Saviour for the whole world; there would be only one Saviour for all men.

The prophecy chart is put into use in this lesson.

Jesus is announced as God's Anointed One — Prophet, Priest, and King.



LESSON PREPARATION

This section is for you, the teacher.

The passages in the Scripture Reference column are for your own study in preparing for this lesson. Since they may contain concepts that run ahead of the lesson, they are not to be taught at this point.

Note: If you have not taught previously from this series of lessons, please read carefully the note to teachers in the front of this book.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:1,2; Luke 1:57,67-80

LESSON GOALS:

- To show that God keeps His promises.
- To show that Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.

THIS LESSON SHOULD HELP THE STUDENTS:

- To see that there is only one Saviour for the whole world.

PERSPECTIVE FOR THE TEACHER:

In our time, many false prophets have been given extensive coverage by the news media. People like to talk about the prophecies made by these impostors and speculate on whether or not the things predicted will really happen. Then the same people like to look back and laugh when the things prophesied fail to come true.

It is very natural for people to form ideas based on what they see in men and transfer these ideas to their view of God and His Word. Even though they are hearing the Word spoken, they may not really be understanding and believing in their hearts. As we teach, we need to emphasize that God's promises **always** come true. We need to emphasize that **everything** in His Word is true.

Pray that the Holy Spirit will work in the hearts of your students to cause them to hear and understand and believe!

VISUALS:

- PROPHECY CHART — A large prophecy chart is included (and also a small visual so you may make copies or an overhead transparency if you wish). You will use this chart in many of the lessons ahead. An effective way to show this is to keep the prophecies covered until they are announced in the lessons. Then, as you study the fulfillment of each prophecy, uncover that prophecy and write in the verse reference of the fulfillment. Your students will see how God gradually fulfilled all these Old Testament prophecies through the life of Jesus Christ. If possible, leave the chart on the wall as a constant reminder to your students of God's faithfulness.
- Visual, "Jesus — Prophet, Priest, King"
- Poster 1, "Learning About God" — Use this to emphasize themes.
- Poster 10, "Some of God's Promises to Abraham"
- Poster 12, "Prophets"

SPECIAL PREPARATION:

- Make copies for your class of the **Lesson 31 Review Sheet** and **Skit 31** (at the end of this lesson). Provide pencils for the children.
 - Photocopy **visual** (at end of lesson) — use as small poster or for overhead transparencies.
 - Prepare for any activity you select from the **Suggestions for Activities** (at the end of this lesson). As you select activities, remember to allow sufficient time to teach the outlined lesson material.
-

ON TEACHING THIS LESSON:

You are carefully laying a scriptural foundation on which the Gospel will later be presented. Each lesson builds on previous lessons, so be sure to cover each point carefully.

DON'T COMPLICATE THE MESSAGE!

As you teach, keep in mind that this is a directed study — not an exhaustive survey of the Bible. Keep your lesson on track and moving ahead by limiting and directing any discussion.

Carefully follow the outline. Emphasize the doctrinal themes.

LESSON FORMAT: The **center column** below contains the lesson material to be taught to the students. The **bold outline headings** are only for reference and need not be spoken, as they are incorporated into the outlined material that follows. The material in the **side columns** is for the teacher's own reference and is not intended to be included in the lesson.

TO BE TAUGHT TO THE STUDENTS (Center Column Only)

LESSON OUTLINE:

REVIEW Lesson 30, using Lesson 31 Review Sheet.

PERFORM Skit 31. Note: "Uncle Don's" part should be read by an adult.

A. Introduction

When God makes a promise, He will fulfill it.

- No matter how difficult, no matter how impossible it may seem
- No matter if it takes thousands of years to bring it to pass
- God will fulfill every promise, right down to the very last detail.

B. John was born.

Theme: God is faithful; He always does what says; He never changes.



READ Luke 1:57.

God did what He had promised Zacharias.

Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth, had a son, and they named him John, just as the angel had instructed.

Can you remember some other promises God made and fulfilled? ¹

C. Zacharias believed that God's promises concerning the Deliverer would soon be fulfilled.



Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.



READ Luke 1:67-79. [The teacher or another adult should read this long passage.]

- Zacharias knew that, very soon, God's promised Saviour was coming to deliver mankind from Satan, sin, and death.
- Zacharias believed the promises which God had given to the prophets.
- God the Holy Spirit used Zacharias' knowledge of the Old Testament to bring this message that these promises were, at last, about to be fulfilled!
- Consider:

Every one of us needs to be delivered from Satan, from the sinful things that control our lives, and from death and separation from God. That is why God planned to send the Saviour into the world.



Theme: God is faithful; He always does what He says; He never changes.



READ again Luke 1:72-75.

Abraham was the father of the nation of Israel.

Do you remember that before Abraham went to live in Canaan, God had promised him that one of his descendants would be the Saviour?



READ Genesis 12:3, "*And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: **and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.***" ²

POINT TO THIS PROMISE ON THE POSTER, "SOME OF GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM."

Even though thousands of years had passed since God made that promise to Abraham, God had not forgotten.

God always does exactly what He says.

D. John was to prepare Israel to believe on the Deliverer.



Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.



Theme: God communicates with man.



READ again Luke 1:76.

God the Holy Spirit gave this message to Zacharias, and Zacharias believed Him.

¹ Give your students time to answer. See if they can remember some of the promises which God made and fulfilled.

Here are a few:

- His warnings to Adam and Eve
- His warnings to the people in Noah's day
- His promises to Abraham to give him descendants
- His promises to Joseph through dreams that Joseph would be a ruler
- His promise to Moses to bring the Israelites out of Egypt and to bring them back to Mount Sinai
- His promise to the Israelites to preserve them through the final plague if they carried out His instructions concerning the Passover
- His promise to bring Israel back to the promised land
- His warnings to Israel and Judah that they would be taken captive if they did not repent of their sins. □

² You are discussing only the boldfaced portion of this verse. Do not get sidetracked into discussion about the rest of the verse. □

³ Reviews like this are important. Students need to keep in mind the continuity of Biblical themes — they need to be reminded that God does not change. He is still the same God today as He was in the Old Testament and always will be.

Hopefully, one day, as believers, they will trust in God's unchanging character and attributes and be reminded by His Holy Spirit of these very passages of Scripture as they face the pressures and circumstances of their own lives. □

⁴ Do not be in a hurry to give the Gospel, but be alert to your students and be ready to explain the Gospel fully to anyone who seems to have a prepared heart. □

- Through the Holy Spirit, Zacharias was speaking about his son, John.
- John was going to be the prophet who would prepare the way for the coming Saviour.
- He would announce to Israel that the Saviour would soon come to them.



Theme: Jesus Christ is God.

The Deliverer, the Saviour, for whom John was to prepare the way, was to be the Lord Himself.

- No ordinary man could deliver us from Satan, sin, and death.
- The Lord is the great Deliverer of all who trust in Him.
- Recall:³

Who delivered Noah and his family from the flood? Who delivered Isaac from death and provided a ram to die in his place? Who delivered Lot from the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah? Who delivered Joseph from prison in Egypt? Who delivered the Israelites from slavery in Egypt? Who saved the Israelites from Pharaoh's army at the Red Sea? Who delivered the Israelites from death by providing them with water and food in the desert? The Lord alone is the great Deliverer.

There is no other Saviour but the Lord.



READ Isaiah 43:11.



Theme: God is loving, merciful, and gracious.



Theme: God is holy and righteous. He demands death as the payment for sin.



READ again Luke 1:77.

Zacharias said that when the Saviour came, He would show His people how their sins could be forgiven.

God cannot and will not forgive sins unless the full price for sin is paid.

- The punishment for sin is separation from God forever.
- How then could sin be paid for?⁴
- How can sinners be forgiven and saved from everlasting punishment?

Zacharias said that the Saviour would make all of that clear.



READ again Luke 1:78,79.

The Deliverer would come like the sun rising in the morning.

- Compare:

How would you feel if you went for a walk in the woods and got lost? When the sun went down, you would not only be lost, but you wouldn't even be able to see where you were. You would be very eager for the sun to rise in the morning so you could find your way back.

Isaiah
45:22

Acts
4:12

In a similar way, Adam and Eve's sin put all of us into darkness. They had been very safe in the garden of Eden because they depended on God for everything and He gave them all they needed. But when they sinned, their sin separated them from God. They were cast out of the garden. Now they were in the dark, so to speak, in constant danger of Satan's attack.

All of their children and all of their descendants, including you and me, were born in the darkness of sin.

But God was making a way out of that darkness!

- Zacharias said that the Deliverer would come into this world to be the light to all people.
- The Deliverer would come just as the sun rises after a dark night and gives light to all people everywhere.



Theme: Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.

- Compare:

How many suns give light to this earth? Only one. The same sun gives light all over the world.

How many Deliverers did God promise to send into the world?

Only one.

God did not promise to send different Deliverers, one for us and another for people in other parts of the world.

- God only promised one Deliverer who would make it possible for us to come to God.⁵
- He would bring “light” to the whole world, like the rising sun!



READ Luke 1:80.

John lived in the desert until it was God's time for him to begin giving God's message to Israel to prepare them to trust in the coming Deliverer.



Theme: Man must have faith in order to please God and be saved.



Theme: Man can come to God only according to God's will and plan.

John believed God.

He knew that he was a sinner, but he came to God bringing animals and their blood as sacrifices.

- He trusted God to save him from everlasting punishment.
- John trusted in the coming Deliverer.
- John was going to be the final prophet to announce to Israel the coming of Jesus Christ.

⁵ This is important. Many people think that it is bigoted to suggest that Jesus Christ is the only way to God. They argue that there are many ways and it doesn't matter as long as you are “religious.”

Don't make an issue of it at this point. Just tell them that the Bible says that God promised only one Deliverer for the whole world. Tell them that we will talk more about this in later lessons. □

Isaiah
43:10,11;
44:6;
45:5,6,
21,22

John
3:16

Acts
4:12

Romans
3:22,23,
29,30

I Timothy
2:5

Revelation
5:9

E. God fulfilled His promises concerning Jesus, the Deliverer.



Theme: God is faithful; He always does what He says; He never changes.



READ Matthew 1:1,2.

Jesus, the coming Deliverer, was to be a descendant of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David.

For hundreds of years, God had given His prophets messages about this coming Saviour.

SHOW POSTER, "PROPHETS."

POINT TO THE PROPHECY CHART, UNCOVERING ONLY THE TITLE.

We are going to use this chart to record the fulfillment of some of these things which God said would happen to the Deliverer.

God planned everything that would happen to the Saviour even before He came into the world.

— Explain:

As we look at these Old Testament prophecies about the Deliverer, we see that many of them are also about something else, too. Very often, prophecies referred to an event that would take place immediately as well as to an event that was to take place hundreds of years later. The first fulfillment often came to pass in the lifetime of the prophet, showing the people of his day that the prophet was truly of God, because what he had said came true, just as he had prophesied.

The prophets themselves did not know exactly how these prophecies would be fulfilled. They simply spoke and wrote down the messages God gave them.

But looking back, we can see that particular details of these prophecies had their complete fulfillment in Jesus Christ.



READ Isaiah 9:7.

POINT TO THE PROPHECY CHART. Uncover the first prophecy, "Will be David's descendant," and write Matthew 1:1 opposite Isaiah 9:7. Read the prophecy and the fulfillment.

This is the fulfillment of God's promise to David and the fulfillment of the words God spoke to Isaiah.



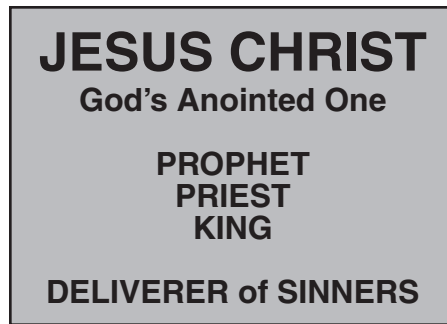
Theme: Jesus Christ is the only Saviour.

Jesus was also to be called the Christ.

- "Christ" is a Greek word meaning "Anointed One" — one set apart by God for special duties.
- "Christ" is also the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah."
- He was God's Anointed One, set apart for three special duties, or high offices.
- He was to be God's **Prophet, Priest, and King.**

I Peter
1:10-12

Suggested Visual:



As God's **Prophet**, Jesus was going to be sent into the world to tell God's way for all people to be delivered from Satan, sin, and everlasting punishment.

God was also sending Jesus to be the final, great **High Priest**. Remember that the high priest took the blood of animals into the inner room of the temple once a year so the sins of the people could be forgiven.

Furthermore, Jesus was to become the ruling **King**, the descendant of King David.

Only Jesus was promised by God to be the Christ, the Anointed One.

- No one else can rightfully claim this position.
- Jesus Christ was promised by God to be the only Deliverer of sinners.
- God was going to send only one Saviour for the whole world.

F. Conclusion

God keeps His promises.

Only He is God.

Only He can deliver men from their sins.

QUESTIONS:

1. What work did God plan for John to do? *God planned for John to go ahead of the Deliverer to prepare the people to receive and trust in Him.*
2. What did Zacharias say the coming Saviour would do? *Zacharias said that the Deliverer would:*
 - a. *Fulfill God's promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well as those made through the prophets.*
 - b. *Teach His people the way of deliverance from Satan, sin, and everlasting punishment of sin.*
 - c. *Be like the rising sun. He would give light to those who were in darkness. This meant that the Saviour would guide people in the way of deliverance from fear and death.*

3. How did Zacharias know what the Saviour would do? *Zacharias read and believed what God had said through the prophets.*
4. Are there many different saviours for people in different parts of the world? *No. God sent one Saviour for the whole world.*
5. What does Jesus' name "the Christ" mean? *It means "Anointed One," one set apart for special duties.*
6. Jesus was set apart by God for what three special duties? *Jesus was being sent by God to be His greatest prophet, the final, great High Priest, and King forever.*
7. What great Jewish king was a forefather of Jesus? *David.*
8. What does the word Messiah mean? *It means the same as the word "Christ." "Messiah" is the Hebrew word; "Christ" is the Greek word.*

LESSON 31 — Suggestions for Activities

Be sure to allow time to teach the lesson first!

Listed below are carefully designed activities which will help reinforce and focus on the themes you have taught in the lesson. Choose from this list whatever best suits your students and prepare ahead accordingly. The children may participate in these activities during the time remaining after the lesson has been taught.

1. **Memory Verse — Isaiah 9:6**

Provide the children with art supplies to make their own decorated verse reminder. You might suggest that they make this one to give as a present to someone they love.

Call their attention to the many names given here to the Promised Deliverer, Jesus Christ. Also remind them that this prophecy was given 700 years before Jesus was born!

2. **Books of the Bible**

Continue to review the Old Testament books, using the suggestions in Lesson 24. Some of the children who have already memorized these books may want to help others. And some of them may want to do another activity while others are memorizing. Always be considerate of those children who require more time and help in order to learn; and, at the same time, try to provide worthwhile activity for those who learn more quickly.

3. **Remembering God's Fulfillment of His Promises**

Give the children paper and pencil. Ask them to write down promises we have studied that God fulfilled. (At the beginning of this lesson outline is a suggested list.)

Give them several minutes. Then call on various ones to read one promise each (a promise that no one else has yet read). Keep asking until all the promises they have recorded are read. If the list is short, give them some more suggestions.

Talk about the fact that God always keeps His promises. He is always faithful.

4. **Look What the Deliverer Will Do!**

Tell the children:

We use special "action words" to tell what is happening or to tell what a person is doing. These are called "verbs," but we will just call them "action words."

Look in your Bibles at Luke 1:67-79. God the Holy Spirit spoke these words through Zacharias. This message is full of the wonderful things that the Deliverer would do. Let's look together and find those action words that tell us about what the Deliverer was going to do.

Assign verses to the children, then call on them so they can say the "action words" in that passage. They will need some help with this, but it will be worth the effort.

Here are the verses:

Luke 1:68 (**visited and redeemed his people** — redeemed means bought back out of slavery; in this case, slavery to Satan and sin.)

Luke 1:69 (**raised up a horn of salvation** — "horn" is the Jewish way of saying a source of power; therefore, a source of salvation — a way to be saved.)

Luke 1:70 (**spoke** by the mouth of His prophets — God communicated with us from the beginning that He would send this Deliverer.)

Luke 1:72 (**perform** the **mercy** promised to our fathers — God was now performing or doing what He had promised long ago.)

Luke 1:77 (**to give knowledge of salvation** — He was going to tell the people how they could be saved.)

Luke 1:78 (**visited us** — God Himself was coming to visit His people!)

Luke 1:79 (**to give light** to those in darkness and in the shadow of death — the Deliverer would bring light and would rescue people from sin and Satan and death!)

Luke 1:79 (**to guide our feet** into the way of peace — the Deliverer was going to make peace once again between sinful man and holy God!)

Think of how much God was telling Zacharias and us by these wonderful words! God was about to fulfill promises that were first given in the Garden of Eden.

Reinforce that God always keeps His promises. Jesus Christ is God.

5. **The Highest Office**

Provide materials for the children to make copies of the visual, "Jesus Christ, Prophet, Priest, King."

Discuss: Always before, men had been chosen by God to do these special jobs — to be His **prophets** to tell men God's words, to be His **priests** to do God's special work, and to be **kings** over His people.

Now, God Himself was coming — Jesus Christ would be **the greatest of all — the greatest Prophet, the great High Priest, and the greatest King!**

GOD Foretold the Birth of John and Jesus



Use this WORD BANK to help you fill in the answers to the questions below:

DELIVERER JESUS PREPARE THE WAY GOD SIN GOD ALL-POWERFUL

1. John would be the one who would _____ for the Deliverer.
2. The Deliverer had to be born of a virgin so that He would not inherit Adam's _____.
3. Mary's son was to be given the name _____, which means "God saves" or "Saviour" or "Deliverer."
4. Jesus was fully man and fully _____. He truly was God, come down from Heaven.
5. Jesus could be given life without a human father because God is _____
Nothing is impossible for God.
6. Jesus was to be the promised _____, whom God first promised in the Garden of Eden.
7. Who is the author of the New Testament? _____

Look up Luke 1:37 and write it here. Memorize this verse and write it from memory on the back of this sheet. _____

Travis:

Uncle Don, I have a question.

Uncle Don:

What's that, Travis?

Travis:

Well, today a lady came during our library hour and showed us a film on religions of the world. She had some great pictures. She told us that not everyone believes in the same kind of God.

Jessica:

But she said that was all right. She said that God accepts everyone, all around the world, just the same, any way they decide to come to Him.

Travis:

She said we are all God's children. Is that true?

Uncle Don:

Sounds very nice, doesn't it.

Travis:

Actually, it does. I really wanted to believe it, especially seeing all those good pictures.

Jessica:

But the Bible doesn't say that, does it?

Uncle Don:

No, kids, the Bible does not say that at all. As a matter of fact, the Bible says just the opposite. It says that all have sinned. Sin separates us from God. We are not "all God's children."

Travis:

And there is only one way to come to God, and that's God's way, not our way.

Uncle Don:

Travis, you are exactly right.

Jessica:

I don't know why, but the way she said it, I almost believed her. I **would have** believed her if we hadn't been having this Bible study!

Travis:

I hate to admit it, but I felt the same way.

Uncle Don:

This lady was no doubt sincere, but she was also sincerely wrong. She did not know the truth of God's Word. Probably without realizing it, she was speaking one of Satan's favorite lies.

Jessica:

Is that why it sounded so good?

Uncle Don:

I'm afraid so, Jessica. Remember, Satan shows himself like an angel of light sometimes.

Travis:

I really got confused just listening.

Uncle Don:

That's why it's so important to know exactly what the Bible says. God tells us in His Word that no one can come to God unless God makes a way for him to come. God is the only one who can deliver man from Satan and sin and death.

Jessica:

But what about all those people in other countries who have other religions?

Uncle Don:

Jessica, remember it was God who created all men. All of the people in the whole world were descended from the one man, Adam.

Travis:

So God knows about everyone. He hasn't made different ways for different people.

Uncle Don:

That's exactly right, Travis. He promised to send one Deliverer for the whole world. There is no other way anyone, anywhere can be saved.

Jessica:

But why are there so many religions?

Uncle Don:

Do you remember what happened after man sinned? Sin just increased on the earth. Do you remember what happened at the tower of Babel?

Travis:

God gave people all kinds of different languages.

Uncle Don:

People not only spoke different languages, they also had their own ideas. And besides that, Satan deceived them so that they worshiped the things which God created, instead of worshiping God, the Creator.

Jessica:

Uncle Don! I just remembered a verse we learned about Abraham! God said that **all nations** would be blessed through him.

Travis:

And the Deliverer was going to be his descendant!

Uncle Don:

Kids, you're right on target. One Saviour, for the whole world. God hasn't forgotten anyone. He has missionaries in places all over the world right now, telling people about His way of saving people from their sins!





JESUS CHRIST

God's Anointed One

PROPHET

PRIEST

KING

DELIVERER of SINNERS

