

Script – John is a Special Messenger

Narrator: Zechariah was a priest. Every six months he served God in the temple in Jerusalem. Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth were very old. They did not have any children. One day, it was his turn to offer incense on the golden altar. The angel Gabriel appeared to him. Zechariah was startled and very afraid.

Gabriel: Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous--to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

Zechariah: How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.

Gabriel: I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time.

Narrator: Zechariah could not speak. He went to the people waiting outside the temple, but could not speak to them. Zechariah went home. Some time later, Elizabeth had a son, and they called him John.

Zechariah: [excited] Praise God! I can speak again. John will be a special messenger.

Elizabeth: We must take good care of him so that he will grow up and serve God.

Narrator: When John grew up, he lived in the desert and became a preacher. Even though he lived in the wilderness, people came from distant cities to hear him tell about God.

John: [to the crowds] Be sorry for your wrongdoing. Ask God to forgive you. Then begin to do what is right. God will help you.

Narrator: When someone asked God to forgive them, John would baptize them in the Jordan River. Many people were sorry for their sins and asked for God's help. John baptized them because they understood that they had done wrong and had changed. Now, they would do what God wanted.

John: Repent! Be sorry for your sins! Ask God to forgive you! Begin now to obey God.

Person 1: What shall I do to obey God?

John: If you have an extra shirt, give it to someone who needs it. Give some of your food to the poor people that have nothing to eat.

Tax Collector: I'm a tax collector. How can I obey God?

John: Do your job well. Do not overcharge the people. Do not ask the people for more tax money than they owe. Be fair and stop cheating the people.

Soldier: How can a soldier obey God? I must do what my commander says.

John: Don't lie about people. Don't tell people that you will hurt them to give you things. Be happy with the pay you get.

Narrator: John answered hard questions. Soon people began to wonder who John really was.

Person 2: Do you think John is the Messiah, the person God promised to send?

Person 3: He does speak words of God.

John: I am not the Messiah. The Savior is greater than I am. I am not worthy to unfasten His shoes. The Messiah will come very soon.

Narrator: Sometime later, Jesus was teaching the people when two messengers came.

Messenger: John wants to know if you are the Savior God promised to send?

Jesus: You have seen sick people become well, blind people see, the dead are raised. Go and tell John what you have seen.

Narrator: When the messengers had gone, Jesus spoke to the people about John.

Jesus: There is no person greater than John. He came ahead of Me to tell people to stop doing wrong things and to obey God.

The End