



UNIT 17 | SESSION 4 | JANUARY 25-26, 2020

2nd-3rd Lesson

Zechariah the Prophet

Bible Passage: Zechariah

Story Point: Zechariah said the Messiah is coming.

Key Passage: “I know the plans I have for you”- this is the Lord’s declaration- “Plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope” Jeremiah 29:11.

Christ Connection: Because Zechariah’s prophecy came true in Jesus, we can have hope and forgiveness of sins when we trust in Jesus.

Big Picture Question: How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

**KID CONNECT:
10 MINUTES**

**LARGE GROUP:
30 MINUTES**

**SMALL GROUP:
20 MINUTES**

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Zechariah was a priest who had been born in Babylon. He had returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel. At this time, the prophet Haggai was bringing God’s message to His people. God’s people were struggling to finish rebuilding God’s temple. In fact, several years had passed without progress on the temple when God called Zechariah to speak to His people.

Zechariah set out to encourage the people. His message was twofold: First, look back and remember the past. Second, look forward and prepare for the future. God wanted His people to learn from the mistakes of their parents and grandparents who had ignored the prophets’ warnings.

The Book of Zechariah is organized into eight visions, four messages, and two oracles. The visions Zechariah saw each symbolized something God would do—rebuild Jerusalem, judge Israel’s enemies, and remove national sin. (See Zech. 1-6.) A couple of years later, God spoke to Zechariah again. This time, God spoke four messages in response to a question the people had about fasting. (Zech. 7:3)

In the last six chapters, Zechariah changed the subject to the future of God's kingdom. Chapters 9–12 are rich with prophecy about the Messiah; the words are quoted often in the New Testament. Compare Zechariah 9:9 with John 12:15, Zechariah 11:13 with Matthew 27:9, and Zechariah 12:10 with John 19:37.

As you teach kids about Zechariah, emphasize God's promise: "A king is coming." Zechariah's visions were significant to the reality of God's people at that time, but a greater reality awaited. Zechariah pointed to Jesus, the coming deliverer who would be struck and pierced to take away sin. God would deal with His people's enemies. He would cleanse His people. "They will call on my name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is our God'" (Zech. 13:9). Under the rule of King Jesus, our future is incredibly bright.

KID CONNECT

WELCOME TIME

(VIDEO: INTRO MUSIC)

Play intro music and greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. Prompt kids to think of someone they'd like to come visit them at home.

SAY • How exciting it is when someone special in our life comes for a visit! Just the news of his or her upcoming arrival is enough to keep us thinking about it for days. In today's Bible story, the prophet Zechariah had some great news: someone was coming. We'll find out more soon.

LARGE GROUP

COUNTDOWN

(VIDEO: COUNTDOWN)

Show the countdown video as you transition to Large Group. Set it to end as the session begins.

LARGE GROUP GAME

(SFX: GAME INTRO MUSIC, SFX: RETRO MUSIC)

DONKEY, CROWN, KING

(No Supplies Needed)

Instruct kids to stand. Help them form groups of two. Lead them to play a version of *Rock, Paper, Scissors* called *Donkey, Crown, King*. Donkey "kicks" crown to win, crown "covers" king to win, and king "rides" donkey to win. Kids will stand back-to-back. A leader will say "one two three shoot." On "shoot," all pairs of kids should turn around and do a motion to represent their choice of *Donkey, Crown, or King*. Whoever "wins" the round remains standing and finds a new partner.

The losing kid in each pair will sit out. If both kids in the pair pick the same object, they both sit out. Play continues until you have just one kid standing.

- *Donkey*—Kids hold two fingers on either side of their head, like donkey ears.
- *Crown*—Kids make circle shapes with their hands and rest their “crowns” on their own heads.
- *King*—Kids touch their chins as though stroking beards, deep in thought.

SAY • Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. But the Messiah wasn’t going to be a king the way the people expected a king to be. Zechariah said He would be humble and ride a donkey rather than a powerful warhorse. When Jesus first came, He was not like a conquering king. Jesus was humble and rode a donkey into Jerusalem. He came to serve us, not be served.

WORSHIP

(VIDEO: THIS IS LIVING NOW, VIDEO: GOD IS ON THE MOVE)

SAY • Let’s worship God!

INTRODUCE THE SESSION

(CG: THEME BACKGROUND)

(No Supplies Needed)

Leader enters

SAY • Hey, friends! Wow, it’s great to see you all again. I’ve been traveling so much these last few weeks, and it’s always so great to know I’ll have some familiar faces waiting to greet me when I get home. I have just returned from visiting my grandparents. I always love going to their house. I have so many memories from my childhood about that place. While I was there, my grandma pulled out some old family photo albums and showed me pictures of her when she was a little girl. She told me lots of stories from long ago. Sometimes it’s really neat to look back on where you’ve come from and think forward to where you’re heading.

That actually reminds me of our Bible story today. It’s about a prophet named Zechariah. He helped remind the Israelites of their history; how they had forsaken God and God had punished them by sending them into exile in Babylon. But Zechariah also encouraged God’s people by sharing with them the hope they had in the coming Messiah. Let’s hear more!

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

(CG: BIG PICTURE QUESTION)

SAY • We’ve been talking about our big picture question these past few weeks, and I bet everyone knows the answer by now. *How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.* Zechariah prophesied about the coming Messiah, Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate fulfillment of everything that we read about in the Old Testament. He is a perfect Prophet for us because He shows us what God the Father is like.

GIANT TIMELINE

(CG: GIANT TIMELINE)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY • God's people had been taken captive by the nation of Babylon for 70 years as punishment for their sin. The people had turned their backs on God, but God hadn't turned His back on them. God remained faithful even when Israel was unfaithful to Him. At the end of the 70 years God kept His promise to bring His people home with instructions to rebuild the temple. God's people rebuilt the temple to glorify God. Building wasn't always easy and sometimes the people needed to be encouraged. God sent them Zechariah, a prophet who heard the word of the Lord and shared it with the people. Today we'll learn that Zechariah said the Messiah is coming.

WATCH THE BIBLE STORY

(VIDEO: ZECHARIAH THE PROPHET, CG: BIBLE STORY PICTURE, CG: STORY POINT)

(Bible)

Show the Bible story video "Zechariah the Prophet."

SAY • Have you ever felt something was impossible? God's people felt that way about finishing the temple. They'd been away from their home for 70 years and now they were back in Jerusalem with this huge construction project. It was really hard work, and their enemies didn't want them to succeed. Life had been hard for the people for a long time, so Zechariah's message of encouragement came at just the right time.

Zechariah reminded the Israelites of the sin that led to their exile in the first place. He also encouraged the people to not be like their ancestors who turned away from God. Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. God's people had been waiting for generations for the promised Savior to come.

In fact, God's promise to send the Messiah goes all the way back to the garden of Eden. As the Lord was sending Adam and Eve away after they sinned, He promised that one day a Savior would come to destroy the serpent. This was the same Savior that Zechariah said was coming. This message gave the people great hope. Have you ever been discouraged and needed to hear some good news? That's just what Zechariah did for the Israelites.

CHRIST CONNECTION

(CG: CHRIST CONNECTION)

Note: You may use this opportunity to use Scripture and the guide provided to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

SAY • The people may have thought that the Savior was coming right away, but it would actually be another 400 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem. When Jesus came to earth, He

wasn't the kind of king the people expected. They thought the promised Messiah would be a strong political leader. Instead Jesus was a humble King riding on a donkey.

God was going to help His people and give them a different kind of king. Jesus is the King who came and rode humbly on a donkey, just as Zechariah said. Because Zechariah's prophecy came true in Jesus, we can have hope and forgiveness of sins when we trust in Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE

(CG: KEY PASSAGE)

(Bible)

Show the key passage slide. Open Bible and lead the kids to read together Jeremiah 29:11.

SAY • Sometimes we need God to remind us of His promises. Our key passage reminds us that His plans are good. He keeps all of His promises, including the promise to bring us hope through our Savior Jesus.

BAPTISM ANNOUNCEMENT!

(CG: BAPTISM SLIDE)

SAY • Before we head to small groups, I want to let everyone know that this weekend we are having baptisms. Baptism is a celebration when a person shares that they have decided to follow Jesus. Do we have any kids in here getting baptized today? (*If so, celebrate with kids*) I want to encourage everyone to go outside and cheer on all our friends getting baptized today right after service.

JERSEY DAY ANNOUNCEMENT!

Before we head to Small Group, I have a quick announcement. Next Sunday is the Super Bowl, which, for a lot of people, is a big deal. There are parties and food and hilarious commercials. So, to help keep the party going—or rather, to kick it off—we're going to have Jersey Day in KidCity next weekend!

(CG: JERSEY WEEKEND SLIDE)

It doesn't matter what jersey you wear; it can be soccer, basketball, baseball, softball...anything that is about team sports. And if you don't have a jersey, just put on some fun team colors. Of course, all of this is optional. We just want to have a fun day that gets us in the mood for chips and dip and yelling at a TV screen. I look forward to seeing what you wear next weekend!

PRAY AND DISMISS TO SMALL GROUPS

SMALL GROUP

Bible Passage: Zechariah

Story Point: Zechariah said the Messiah is coming.

Key Passage: “I know the plans I have for you”- this is the Lord’s declaration- “Plans for your well-being, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope” Jeremiah 29:11.

Christ Connection: Because Zechariah’s prophecy came true in Jesus, we can have hope and forgiveness of sins when we trust in Jesus.

Big Picture Question: How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.

KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY

(1 key passage poster per group, 1 “Key Passage Phrase” printable per group, 1 roll of tape per group)

Display the key passage poster and lead the kids to read Jeremiah 29:11 aloud. Ask for volunteers to try to say the whole verse from memory. Tape one phrase from the key passage on each kid’s back. Challenge the group to put themselves in order by working together.

SAY • You have done a wonderful job memorizing this key passage. It is a great reminder of God’s care for us. God doesn’t promise us that life will be easy or that things will always go how we plan. We know that things always go according to God’s plan. We can trust Him because He always keeps His promises.

CATEGORIES GAME

(1 piece of paper and 1 pen per kid)

Form small groups of kids and give each group a piece of paper and a pen. Invite kids to play a category game. Call out a category (food, animals, states, and so on). Challenge kids to list as many items from the category as they can in 30 seconds. Play several rounds. The final category should be “things that will happen in the future.”

SAY • Which category was hardest? Do you know what will happen in the future? We can’t predict the future with certainty, but God gave the prophet Zechariah eight visions to explain what would happen in Israel’s future.

DISCUSSION

(Bibles)

Distribute Bibles. Guide kids to open their Bibles to the Book of Zechariah. Remind kids that Zechariah was sent to encourage the people to finish rebuilding the temple, but he also encouraged the people to rebuild their relationship with God and truly worship Him. Choose a volunteer to read aloud Zechariah 9:9.

SAY • Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. This was great news for God’s people but bad news for God’s enemies. If you were expecting a king to arrive, what would you look for? [*Allow kids to respond.*] We may have certain ideas about how a king should arrive, but this king—the promised Messiah—was not like other kings. King Jesus would come on a donkey, and He would reign forever.

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss:

What was the main message Zechariah came to deliver? *Guide kids to recall that Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. Jesus was coming to be the King of kings, Lord of lords, and Prince of peace.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 9:6.)

Describe a time when you tried to do the right thing when everyone around you was doing the wrong thing. *Invite kids to share. Point out that Zechariah had some stern messages for those who disobeyed God. God told the people to return to Him. God calls us today to come near to Him and turn away from sin.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Jas. 4:8.)

How can we be encouraged to obey God even when it’s hard? *Affirm that obeying God may not always be the popular choice, but it is always the right choice. We show we love God when we obey His commands.*

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 15:14.)

REFLECTION AND PRAYER

(Journal Page - 1 per kid, pencils)

Ask the kids the following questions:

What does this story teach me about God?

What does this story teach me about myself?

Who can I tell about this story?

Make time for prayer requests and pray for your group. If time allows, have kids to complete the Bible story coloring page provided with this session.

“I HAD A DREAM THAT I COULD...” – ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY

(no supplies needed)

Invite the kids to sit in a circle with one kid in the middle. The middle kid will say, “I had a dream that I could _____,” and state something that she is able to do, tie her shoe, play an instrument, or another activity. The kids around the circle who are able to do that activity will move to swap seats with someone who can also do that activity. The kid in the middle must sit in a space that becomes empty. Whoever is the last left standing will be the next “dreamer” in the middle of the circle.

SAY • Sometimes we have strange dreams about things that are impossible to actually do. Other times dreams are very realistic. Our story today includes some visions that Zechariah the prophet had. His visions seemed really bizarre, but they actually pointed to future events.

CONNECT WITH PARENTS/INFLUENCERS

(Older Kids Activity Page, 1 per kid)

Hand each 2nd-3rd grade kid an Older Kids Activity Page and encourage them to do it at home with their family this week.

BAPTISM

(Baptism Discussion Guide, Baptism stickers)

This weekend, Hope is celebrating baptisms. If you need to get out early or come late in order to be a part of or see the baptisms happening today, talk with your coach and other leaders in your room about how your group can be covered. Baptism is a once-in-someone's-lifetime experience, and we want to do everything we can to be sure you don't miss it.

Also, don't forget to talk with your group about baptism – celebrate those who are being baptized, and talk about how everyone can celebrate their relationship with Jesus by being baptized themselves. Use the Small Group Baptism Discussion page for questions, talking points, and ideas on sparking the conversation.