

## **Additional Family Activities**

### **Zechariah the Prophet**

Dear Parents,

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. The Judean exiles were struggling to finish rebuilding God's temple. In fact, several years had passed without progress on the temple when God called Zechariah to prophesy to His people.

Zechariah's 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. Zechariah set out to encourage the people.

The Book of Zechariah is organized into eight visions, four messages, and two oracles. The visions Zechariah saw each symbolized something God would do—such as 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 to respond 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 Messianic prophecy; 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 talk with your 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.

**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.**

Check this session's Activity Page and Big Picture Card as well as the Gospel Project for Kids Family App for ways to interact with the Bible content this week.

#### FAMILY STARTING POINTS

- **Babies and Toddlers**
  - The prophets told about Jesus.
  - God kept His promise to send Jesus.
  - Zechariah said that God would send a special King.
  - Jesus is the special King whom God promised to send.
  - One day, Jesus will live with His people forever.
- **Preschool**

- How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? God speaks to us through Jesus.
- Zechariah said the Messiah is coming.
- **Kids**
  - How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.
  - Zechariah said the Messiah is coming.

UNIT KEY PASSAGE

- **Jeremiah 29:11**

NEXT WEEK

- **“Esther Saved Her People”** (Esther)

**Additional Activities**

**Babies**

- Shout for Joy
  - Ask the story point as a question. Ask the toddlers in a whisper, “Whom did the prophets tell about?” Toddlers will whisper, “Jesus!” Repeat, each time asking them to speak louder until they joyfully shout the answer.
  - S AY• THE PROPHETS TOLD ABOUT JESUS. Jesus is the special King God promised to send. God kept His promise to send Jesus!

**PreK**

- Go and come back
  - Use painter’s tape to make a triangle on the floor. Stand in the triangle. Direct the preschoolers to spread out around the room. When you say “Come back to me,” preschoolers should come back to you in the triangle. When you say “Spread out,” preschoolers should spread back out around the room. Play several rounds. Consider allowing children a turn at saying come back and spread out.
  - S AY• God told Zechariah to say to His people, “Come back to Me, and I will come back to you.” We are sinners. We do things that make God sad, but when we do, we can come back to God. We can tell Him we are sorry. He will always forgive us, not because we say we are sorry, but because of Jesus. Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. Jesus is the Messiah who died on the cross to rescue us from sin.

**K-1<sup>st</sup> Grade**

- Roller races
  - Use a piece of cardboard or wood to form a ramp from the table to the floor. Provide a variety of objects for the kids to try rolling down the ramp. Let the kids make predictions about which items will get to the bottom of the ramp the fastest.
  - Say: Some of these items rolled much slower than others. Sometimes it was easy to guess which things would get to the bottom first, but did any of the items surprise you? Sometimes we think we know exactly how God is going to make

things work out. Sometimes He surprises us. God always keeps His promises, but we don't always know when those promises will be fulfilled. God is infinitely wiser than we are. His timing is perfect. We can trust God in all things.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

- Prophecies fulfilled
  - Before the session, write the following references on separate paper plates: Genesis 3:15; 1 John 3:8; Genesis 12:3; Acts 3:25-26; 2 Samuel 7:12-13; Matthew 1:1; Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2:14-15; Isaiah 40:3-4; John 1:23; Zechariah 9:9; Matthew 21:8-10.
  - Arrange the plates in a circle. Provide string, tape, scissors, and Bibles. Challenge kids to work together to match each prophecy from the Old Testament with the passage in the New Testament that describes the prophecy's fulfillment. Kids should cut lengths of string to stretch between the prophecy and its fulfillment, taping the ends of the string to the paper plates.
  - Say: More than 500 years before Jesus was born, Zechariah gave God's people a message of hope. God was going to help His people and give them a different kind of king. But Zechariah's messages were not just for the people of that day, they were also for us. Zechariah said the Messiah is coming. 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. Jesus is the perfect Prophet! How is Jesus the perfect Prophet? Jesus perfectly reveals God the Father and fulfills what the prophets spoke.