Mary Visited Elizabeth

BIBLE PASSAGE
Luke 1:39-56

CHRIST FOCUS
Jesus was the promised Savior, sent by God.

LIFE ACTION
Talk with your child about different ways to worship God. Each day choose a different way, and worship God together, thanking Him for sending Jesus.

LIFE VERSE
Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.
2 Corinthians 9:15 (KJV)

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.
2 Corinthians 9:15 (HCSB)

LEADER BIBLE STUDY

Have you ever gotten some really good news? Life-changing news? Was your first reaction to share that news with friends and family?

After hearing Gabriel’s explanation, Mary humbly submitted to God’s will for her. Mary chose to visit her cousin Elizabeth. Elizabeth lived in the hill country of Judea, miles from Mary’s home in Nazareth. We are not told how Mary traveled there or if anyone traveled with her. But God knew of Mary’s need for human companionship.

Mary could not have anticipated Elizabeth’s reaction when she arrived. Mary greeted Elizabeth as she entered the house. Instantly, Elizabeth felt her unborn child move; she knew that he moved with joy at the sound of Mary’s voice. Just as in adulthood Elizabeth’s son, John, would announce the coming Messiah, he “announced” the Messiah by leaping at Mary’s greeting. The Holy Spirit revealed to Elizabeth the divinity of Mary’s child, and Elizabeth loudly proclaimed God’s blessing on Mary.

God continued to reveal His plan. Mary’s heart and spirit were filled with glorious praise for God’s rich blessing on her life. Her song abounds with reasons to praise God. God’s choosing her did not bring an egotistical attitude but an incredible sense of honor and praise. What statements of praise are found in Mary’s song? Mary’s expression of praise is one of the most beautiful hymns in all Scripture. Reality began to permeate Mary’s heart. God had chosen her to be the mother of His Son. No other woman, before or since, has been so blessed.

We too can praise God for His Son too. What praise words or song can you offer God today? How can you encourage children to praise God for sending Jesus? In a world that focuses on other things during this time of year, help your kids praise and worship God for sending His Son.

LEVEL OF BIBLICAL LEARNING
Jesus
MARY VISITED ELIZABETH

After the angel Gabriel visited Mary, she went to the hill country to see her relative, Elizabeth, and Elizabeth’s husband, Zacharias. Elizabeth was also expecting a baby.

When Mary went into Zacharias’ house, she greeted Elizabeth. Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, and Elizabeth’s baby leaped inside her. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

She exclaimed to Mary: “You are the most blessed of women. Your child also will be blessed.” She was glad that Mary had come to visit her.

Elizabeth told Mary: “When I heard your greeting, my baby inside me leaped for joy.” She said that Mary was blessed because she had believed what the angel Gabriel told her. Mary had faith that God would fulfill what He had promised.

Mary was very happy. She joyfully praised God, saying, “My soul praises the greatness of God. The Mighty One has done great things for me. His name is holy.”

Mary visited Elizabeth for about three months. Then Mary went back to Nazareth to her own home.

—BASED ON LUKE 1:39-56
PRACTICE BIBLE SKILLS

GRADES 1–3

• Use the list of Bible books in the front of your Bible to read the Bible book names. Lead the children to stand in the middle of the room.

• Read a Bible book name. Instruct the children to move to the left side of the room if the book is in the Old Testament. If the book is in the New Testament, lead the children to move to the right side of the room. Play as time allows. To make the game more challenging, you may choose to use different actions for Old and New Testament books. You also can add actions for division names.

GRADES 4–6

• Show the cups, and encourage the boys and girls to stack the cups in order of the books of the New Testament.

• If the children need help, distribute Bibles, and instruct them to look at the list of books.

• Talk about the divisions in the New Testament.

• If there is time, form teams, and allow them to stack cups by division. To make this game more challenging, lead the teams to stack the cups so the first book is on the top of the stack. You may want to include cups for the Old Testament.

Notes

Grades 1–3

Bibles

Grades 4–6

27 foam cups and a ballpoint pen


Extra Christmas Session 2
INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY

GRADES 1–3
• Play an instrumental Christmas song.
• Instruct the kids to move around the room while the music plays and to stop when the music pauses.
• Periodically pause the music.
• Encourage the kids to guess the title of the Christmas song that was playing.
• When the children guess the song, start the music and movement again. Give suggestions for different ways to move to the music, such as hopping, walking backwards, tiptoeing, and so forth.
• Talk to the boys and girls about the importance of music in praising God. Ask them to name other ways to praise God.
• Ask why we should praise God. (sending Jesus, God’s being with me, God gave me my family, and so forth)

GRADES 4–6
• Form two teams, and play a game of praise charades.
• Give a card to one member of a team. Encourage that member to act out the form of praise on the card. Keep playing until someone on the team guesses the action.
• When a child makes a correct guess, give the next card to a member of the other team, and continue playing.
• Remark that God created us to praise him. Ask the kids to name different ways to praise God.
• Share that we can praise God for sending the Savior.
• Tell the kids to listen to today’s Bible story to learn how Mary praised God for keeping His promises.

Notes

Grades 1–3
➤ A CD digital album of instrumental Christmas music

Grades 4–6
➤ 7 index cards and a marker
➤ On a separate index card, write each of these phrases: Sing, Pray, Help others, Play drums, Play trumpet, Clap your hands, Read the Bible.
STUDY THE BIBLE

Notes

GRADES 1–3

► TELL THE BIBLE STORY
• Talk about promises for which we can praise God. Explain that the Bible records promises that God has made. One of God’s promises was to send Jesus to be our Savior.
• Remark that we can praise God for keeping His promise. Tell the kids to listen to find out how Mary praised God.
• Open your Bible to Luke 1:39-56.
• Tell the Bible story in your own words.
• Call attention to the Teaching Picture. Ask what part of the story is shown.

► REVIEW
• Lead the children to play a game of musical chairs to review the lesson.
• Play a Christmas song. Pause the music at random intervals.
• When the music stops, the child without a chair will answer a review question.
• If a child correctly answers, he may stay in the game.
• Continue until all the review questions are answered.

► LEARN A LIFE VERSE
• Form two teams.
• Mix up each set of Life Verse cards.

Distribute the cards randomly among each team’s players.
• Instruct each team to work together to put the verse in the correct order.
• To play the game again, place both sets of card facedown on the floor. Challenge the boys and girls to turn over two cards at a time to find matching words.
• When all the words are matched, put them in order.
• Lead the kids to say 2 Corinthians 9:15 together.

► EXPLORE THE LIFE ACTION AND CHRIST FOCUS
• Complete “Ways to Praise” on the Kids Activity Page.
• For each activity, instruct boys and girls to work in different groups.
• Share the Christ Focus: explain that just as we can praise God for sending Jesus, we also can praise God for keeping His promises.
**LIFE POINT**

*I can praise God for sending the Savior, Jesus.*

**GRADES 4–6**

► **TELL THE BIBLE STORY**
- Talk about the promises the Bible teaches God has made. Name ways we can praise God.
- Explain that one promise God made was to send Jesus to be our Savior.
- Tell the kids that they can praise God for keeping His promises.
- Remind the kids about the previous story. The angels helped Mary and Joseph understand that they were part of God’s plan.
- Display the Teaching Picture as you tell the story.

► **REVIEW**
- Create two teams: X and O.
- Use the review questions to play human tic-tac-toe. When a team gives a correct answer, a player from that team stands in the grid. The team who has three teammates standing in a row will win the game.
- Play additional rounds as time allows.

► **LEARN A LIFE VERSE**
- Keep the same teams (or form two new ones) to pass a foam ball while learning the Life Verse, 2 Corinthians 9:15. As the kids say each word, the team members to pass the ball over their heads until they say the entire verse.
- Encourage the teams to repeat this relay with different actions such as passing the ball from side to side or from left hand to right hand.
- Lead the entire class to say the verse together.

► **EXPLORE THE LIFE ACTION**
- Guide each child to complete “Many Ways to Praise” on the Kids Activity Page.
- Use the same two teams, and assign each a color of “Life Action Strips” to find. When a team finds all its strips, instruct them to put the sentence in order and to call out, “We will praise God!”
- Talk about ways boys and girls can praise God for sending Jesus.
- Lead the kids to name ways they will praise God during the Christmas season.
- Encourage the kids to spend quiet time at home praising God for His faithfulness in keeping His promise to send Jesus.
- Lead the kids in prayer, praising and thanking God for sending Jesus.

**Notes**

**Grades 4–6**
- Kids Activity Pages
- CD Music and Print Extras: Teaching Picture “Mary Visited Elizabeth,” “Review Questions,” and “Life Action Strips”
- 2 foam balls (or balloons), painter’s tape, scissors, and pencils
- Print the “Life Action Strips” onto 2 different colors of paper, and cut apart the strips. Hide them around the room. Option: Hide some strips outside the room!
- Use painter’s tape to create a human-size tic-tac-toe grid on the floor.
- Encourage the kids to spend quiet time at home praising God for His faithfulness in keeping His promise to send Jesus.
- Lead the kids in prayer, praising and thanking God for sending Jesus.

**2 foam balls (or balloons), painter’s tape, scissors, and pencils**
**GRADES 1–3**

**CHOICE 1: PRAISE POSTERS**
- Kids Activity Page: Review “Ways to Praise.” Discuss the kids’ favorite ways to praise God.
- Make Praise Posters: Each child will . . .
  - Draw on a piece of poster board seven squares, one for each day of the week.
  - In each square write a way to praise God.
  - Cut construction paper squares to cover each space on the poster board.
  - Label each paper square using the days of the week or numbers 1 through 7.
  - Use tape to secure the top edge of each construction paper square to the poster.
  - Decorate the poster.
- Explain that every day this week each child will uncover one square and praise God in the way indicated for that day.
- Remind the kids that God sent Jesus to save people from their sins. Tell them they can use their posters to remind them to praise God for sending Jesus.
- Say a prayer of praise to God for keeping His promise to send Jesus.

**CHOICE 2: CALL TO PRAISE**
- Kids Activity Page: Review “Ways to Praise.” Discuss the kids’ favorite ways to praise God.
- Choose two or more praise songs to play for the children.
- Form teams of two or three to create actions for a song.
- Encourage each team to demonstrate its actions for the entire group. **Option:** Children who are reluctant to create actions may play rhythm instruments instead.
- Sing the songs together, using actions from the groups.
- Talk with the kids about ways we can praise God.
- Explain that we can praise God for keeping His promise to send Jesus.
- Say a prayer of praise to God for keeping His promise to send Jesus.
LIFE POINT

GRADES 4–6

▶ CHOICE 1: NAME DESIGN
- Kids Activity Page: Review “Many Ways to Praise,” and discuss the kids’ favorite ways to praise God.
- Remind the kids about God’s promise to send the Savior and that God’s keeping His promise is one of many reasons they can, and should, praise Him.
- Guide the kids to find Isaiah 9:6 in their Bibles. Read this verse and recall the promise Isaiah wrote.
- Create nameplates. Each child will . . .
  ★ Write God sent the Savior for and his name on his craft foam rectangle.
  ★ Use glitter glue, stickers, and other materials to decorate the nameplates.
- Ask what other promises God has kept.
- Pray, thanking God for keeping His promise to send the Savior.

▶ CHOICE 2: WAYS TO PRAISE
- Kids Activity Page: Review “Many Ways to Praise,” and discuss the kids’ favorite ways to praise God.
- Remind the kids about God’s promise to send the Savior and that God’s keeping His promise is one of many reasons they can, and should, praise Him.
- Create three discovery areas:
  ★ Area 1: Provide instruments. The kids can create rhythms to praise God.
  ★ Area 2: Supply pencils and paper. Instruct the kids to write praises to God. Their writings could be poems, songs, or prayers.
  ★ Area 3: Provide clay or play dough for the children to use to praise God through sculptures.
- Allow time for the kids to experience at least two areas. Lead the boys and girls to share what they discovered.
- Remind the kids that one way to praise God is by praying. People can express their praise by writing down words or creating art. The kids can praise God for keeping His promise to send Jesus.
- Lead the children to say prayers of praise.

Notes

Grades 4–6
Choice 1
- Kids Activity Pages
- 5-by-16-inch rectangles of craft foam, stickers, glitter glue, ballpoint pen, and other decorating materials as desired

Choice 2
- Kids Activity Pages
- Rhythm instruments, modeling clay or play dough, paper, and pencils
- Option: In a Bible, bookmark examples of written praise, and place the Bible in area 2.
WAYS TO PRAISE
Interview others in your group. Record their answers.

What is your favorite praise song?

What do you praise God for?

What is your favorite verse of praise in the Bible? Find it.

This week how will you praise God for sending Jesus?

LIFE VERSE
Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.
2 Corinthians 9:15 (KJV)
Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.
2 Corinthians 9:15 (HCSB)
LIFE VERSE

Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15 (KJV)

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:15 (HCSB)

MANY WAYS TO PRAISE

Look at the pictures below and identify different ways to praise God.

How can you praise God this week?
REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Who visited Elizabeth and Zacharias?
   (Mary, Luke 1:39-40.)

2. What was special about Elizabeth?
   (She too was expecting a baby, Luke 1:41.)

3. What happened when Mary greeted Elizabeth?
   (Elizabeth’s baby leaped, Luke 1:41.)

4. What did Elizabeth say to Mary?
   (You are blessed, Luke 1:41-42.)

5. What did Mary do in response to God’s blessing?
   (Sang a song of praise, Luke 1:46-55.)

6. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth?
   (About three months, Luke 1:56.)
I can praise and thank God for sending the Savior, Jesus.
TEACHING PICTURE “MARY VISITED ELIZABETH”
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