

Hopeful Anticipation

***Luke 1:5–7, 11–13, 16–17,
39–45, 67–75***

Around the time of Jesus' birth God sent another important child into the world. His parents were a very old couple from priestly families. They were godly people, but they had never been able to have children. In their old age, God promised them the gift of a son, much like he had done for Abraham and Sarah in their old age. This son was to become John the Baptist.



When he grew up, John's ministry would prepare the way for Jesus' message and works of salvation.

Before either John or Jesus were born, their mothers visited with each other. Mary and Elizabeth greeted each other gladly. But Mary's visit prompted prophecies from both of John's parents. Even though John wasn't born yet, he jumped inside his mother, because the Holy Spirit had come to Elizabeth so she would prophesy. She prophesied that Mary would forever be a blessed mother, because her baby Jesus would bring salvation to Israel.

When the Holy Spirit came to Zechariah, he prophesied that Mary's baby Jesus was the mighty Savior from David's royal family. Because of the Holy Spirit, John's parents knew that the branch from Jesse's tree was finally coming. It was the baby boy who was still inside his mother Mary. We are hanging a picture of Zechariah and Elizabeth today to remind us of their hope.

Questions:

1. What gift did God promise Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age?
2. What did Zechariah prophesy about Mary's baby?