

## Reality – Bible Lesson for November 8, 2020 – 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

### Mission – Helping Others to Know God John the Baptist

#### Lesson 2

- 1. Lesson: John the Baptist**
- 2. Scripture:** Isaiah 40:3-5; Matthew 3:1-17, Mark 1:1-11, Luke 3:1-22; John 1:19-34
- 3. Memory Verse:** – “The LORD who rules over all says, ‘I will send my messenger. He will prepare my way for me.’ – Malachi 3:1a
- 4. Mission Story:** Samuel Morris – Part 2
- 5. Bible Skills:** The Books of Major Prophets – Lesson 1
- 6. Materials needed for teaching the lesson** - a Bible; pens and pencils  
**Beginning Activity** – 12 Mystery Man Clues typed up on slips of paper and, **in advance – hide the 12 “Mystery Man” clues around the room** (the clues are in the Beginning Activity Section below **Memory Verse Game: Elementary** – index cards or cardstock – each has one word of the memory verse and reference printed on it, masking tape, at least 2 snap clothespins

#### Missionary Image:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel\\_Kaboo\\_Morris](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Kaboo_Morris)

#### Bible Skills Video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EFjrTX41TY>

#### Instructional Videos:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NMHOLPWeTM>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf\\_ahdSQGtg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uf_ahdSQGtg)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THaAcyLs1OE>

**1. Prayer:** Pray with your children – then introduce the following attention grabber:

In advance hide the 12 Mystery Man clues around the room. These are the clues:

1. Both of my parents were incredibly old when I was born.
2. An angel of the Lord told my parents what to name me.
3. Because my father laughed at what the angel said, he couldn't speak until after I was born.
4. My father spoke again when he wrote down my name.
5. I lived in the wilderness until I started my ministry.
6. I wore camel hair and ate locusts and wild honey
7. I told people to repent of their sins and prepare for the coming of the Messiah.

8. I said, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire."
9. I baptized people in the River Jordan after they repented of their sins.
10. I baptized Jesus even although I didn't feel worthy to do so.
11. When I baptized Jesus, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God was seen like a dove. The voice of God spoke, saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."
12. Herod had me put in prison.

**Say:** I've hidden several clues about the Mystery Man we will be learning about today around the room. There are 12 clues all together. Make sure you only find one clue. I want as many people as possible to find one of the clues. (If you have fewer than 12 children, allow the children to work in teams to find the clues.) Are you ready? Start hunting!

(As they find the clues, tell them to hold on to them until all 12 are found.)

**Say:** Now read your clues to me. Hmm – today's Mystery Man from the Bible sounds like a really interesting guy, doesn't he? Some of you may have studied about him before...Who is our Mystery Man? That's right! – John the Baptist.

As his name tells us – John baptized. But he also preached for people to repent from their sins. That's a big word – repentance...what do you think it means. (Take responses) In the Bible, the word repent means "to change one's mind." The Bible also tells us that true repentance will result in a change of actions. The full biblical definition of repentance, then, is a change of mind that results in a change of action. We feel sorry for what we have done and change what we are doing. It is when we stop doing things our way and start doing things God's way.

Now let's find out more about the mission and the call to repentance that our Mystery Man, John the Baptist, gave to the people of Israel...

**2. Bible Story:** (Please notice the bold print Bible verses. This is designed so that you can stop and let the children take turns reading these verses out loud)

John the Baptist's father was a priest named Zechariah. He helped in God's temple. One day, something amazing happened to him when he was chosen to be the one priest to go inside the temple and burn incense while the people stood outside and prayed. Suddenly an angel appeared in front of him! Zechariah was terrified. The angel comforted him, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah. God has heard your prayer. Your wife Elizabeth will have a son. You will name him John." The angel also told him that his son would prepare the people to be ready for the Lord.

Zechariah should have believed the angel and rejoiced. But he didn't. "How can this happen?" he asked. "My wife and I are old." The angel responded, "I am the angel Gabriel. God sent me to deliver this good news to you. But now, since you did not believe my news, you will not be able to talk until my words come true."

Outside the temple, the crowd was getting impatient. They wondered why Zechariah was taking so long inside the temple. But when he did come out, he couldn't tell them. The angel's words had come true: Zechariah couldn't talk. And more of the angel's words came true. Zechariah and Elizabeth soon discovered that they were going to have a baby. And when the baby was born, it was a boy, just as the angel had said.

When the baby was eight days old, many friends and relatives of Zechariah and Elizabeth came for a party to give the baby his name. As people gathered for the party, they talked about how the baby would be named Zechariah after his father. But Elizabeth heard them and said, "No, his name will be John!"

The guests were surprised. "But none of your relatives have that name." They turned to Zechariah and gestured for him to show what he wanted the baby to be named—he still could not talk. He asked for a writing tablet and on it wrote, "His name is John." All of a sudden, Zechariah realized that he could talk! He began praising God for the wonderful way He had kept His promises. He explained to the people that God had a special plan for this baby: John would prepare people to follow the Messiah (who would soon be born) just as the prophet Isaiah had said so many years before this. **(Isaiah 40:3-5)**

God had, indeed, blessed Zachariah and Elizabeth with a miraculous baby. John was the cousin of Jesus and God had a special purpose for John's life. He was to be the forerunner for Jesus, the Messiah. His mission was to announce the coming of Jesus and prepare the way ahead of time. He was teaching people that they needed God in their lives so they would be ready to hear from Jesus. John grew up to do this job as God had planned for him to do. He was the last of the prophets.

In today's story, John is about 30 years old and Jesus is a little younger. John was living in the desert country where he had grown up. John was going before Jesus to announce His coming and prepare the way for Him. He was teaching people that they needed God in their lives, so they would be ready to hear from Jesus.

God sent John to live in the wilderness. He led a quiet, simple life. **Matthew 3:4** reads, "John's clothes were made out of camel's hair. He had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey." When John announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand, he meant that God's rule was about to come into the world through the Messiah. John continued to tell the people that God was about to do something.

It had been over 400 years since the last prophet had spoken and now God was moving. The people of that day needed to turn from living in their sinful ways to living in God's way. John found them in their wilderness and told them they needed to repent. Do you remember what "repent" means? Repentance is when we see our sin as God

does, have sorrow for it, and turn away from it. It means to change direction and choose God's way instead of our way.

All the rulers in Israel at this time thought they were the masters of their world. But they were rebellious people who missed out on what God had for them. God's Word came to a simple man living in the wilderness. John told the leaders of that day that they needed to turn from their own ways to God's way...they needed to repent.

John had probably been living in the desert for about ten years. He was a powerful speaker and people came to hear him in large groups. He knew that many of the people were Sadducees and Pharisees who didn't think that they needed to repent. He told them, "they were like a nest of poisonous snakes" – he knew they would try to stop others from preparing their hearts for Jesus. The religious leaders thought that, because they were related to Abraham, they were already in fellowship with God. John told them that God doesn't accept people just because of who they are related to – He wants them to repent and turn to Jesus. They asked John what they should do. John told them to give to others, be honest, and be content with what they have.

When people truly repented of their sins, John would baptize them. Baptism was a way for them to say outwardly that they had turned away from their sins. It is a way of showing others that you believe in God and you want to live your life the way that God wants you to live. When you truly repent, you become a different person than you were before.

When people heard John talk, some thought that he might be the Messiah. John set them straight right away. He told them his message was repentance and he told them that Christ was coming. John baptized with water, but Jesus is the Son of God – He would come and baptize with the Holy Spirit and change us completely into a new person. Just like the caterpillar changes into a butterfly – Jesus changes our entire nature...only God can do that!

All four Gospels tell the story of the baptism of Jesus. Baptism was the first thing Jesus did when He started His ministry. It is also the last thing He talked about before going up to Heaven. Let's hear what He said in **Matthew 28:19-20. (Read the text)** The Gospel writers tell us that each member of the Godhead (the Trinity) was involved in the ministry of Jesus on earth and in His baptism. The Son was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended on Him, and the Father spoke His approval. Only Luke, however, stated that Jesus was praying, and Heaven was opened – God was breaking into human history with the declaration that Jesus is His Son. God came down upon Jesus at His baptism to show that Jesus was His provision to draw us back close to Him.

Jesus was not baptized because He needed to repent. Jesus never sinned. He was baptized to identify with us and show us that baptism is important. When Jesus came to be baptized, John didn't know what to say. He told Jesus He should be baptizing him. Listen to what the Bible says in John **1:29-34. (Read the text)**

Jesus wanted John to baptize Him to fulfill all righteousness. John agreed and baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. As Jesus came up out of the water, John saw something incredible. He saw the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus in the form of a dove. Then he heard the voice of God saying, "You are my Son, and I love you. I am very pleased with

you.” John understood what it meant – Jesus is the Messiah whom God had promised from long ago. And John fulfilled his mission on earth that had been prophesized so long ago - “The LORD who rules over all says, ‘I will send my messenger. He will prepare my way for me.’” – Malachi 3:1a

### **3. Bible Exploration – Checking for Understanding:**

1. Why did John baptize people? (To show that their sins were washed away; to show that they wanted to change.)
2. What was the important message John the Baptist preached? (Repentance)
3. What does “repent” mean? (It means to be sorry for the wrong things you are doing and stop doing them. It also means to begin doing the right thing instead of the wrong thing)
4. What kind of food did John the Baptist eat in the wilderness? (Things that could be found in the land – wild honey and locusts)
5. Why was John surprised that Jesus wanted to be baptized? (Because He didn’t have any sins; John called Him the Lamb of God.)
6. What river was John standing in when Jesus saw him? (The Jordan River)
7. John said he would baptize with \_\_\_\_\_ and Jesus would baptize with the \_\_\_\_\_. (water, Holy Spirit)
8. What type of bird came down from Heaven? (dove)
9. How are the three members of the Trinity represented in this story? (Jesus is baptized, the Holy Spirit descends like a dove, and God the Father speaks from Heaven.)

### **4. Mission Story:** Samuel Morris – Lesson 2

Here is the biography of Samuel Morris – from last week:

Samuel Morris was born in 1872 in Liberia (western Africa). His actual name was Prince Kaboo. His father was king of the Kru tribe. During a war with the neighboring tribe of Grebos, the Kru tribe was defeated. Because Prince Kaboo’s father could not pay his war taxes, he had to surrender his son – to be held by the Grebos tribe until the debt was paid. Kaboo was just a small child and his father was able to free him quickly.

However, when Kaboo was a young teenager, new fighting broke out. His people were defeated, and he was again taken until the war debts were paid.

When Kaboo’s father was unable to pay his ransom, the Grebos began whipping Kaboo to force his father to pay. Once when Kaboo was being whipped, a blinding light flashed, and a voice from heaven said, “Rise up and run.” Strength returned to Kaboo’s wounded body, and he ran into the jungle. Grebo warriors searched for him until it was dark.

But nighttime did not stop Kaboo. God provided a miraculous light to guide him. During the day, he slept in hollow logs. Finally, he arrived at the home of Monrovia, where missionaries told him about Jesus.

When Kaboo heard the story of Saul's conversion on the road to Damascus, he exclaimed, "That happened to me, too. A light flashed, and God spoke from heaven." Kaboo (called Samuel Morris by then) went to the United States to study God's Word at Taylor University in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Whenever he spoke at the university or while traveling, powerful revivals broke out. Many people gave their hearts to Jesus. However, weeks of being beaten when held captive in Liberia had weakened Samuel's body. During the harsh winter of 1892-93, he became ill. He died that spring. Though Samuel's death at the age of twenty seemed tragic, God used it to inspire many students to be missionaries. A Taylor University Bible School was even started in Africa.

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Another story that is told about Samuel is when he stepped onto the platform of a church in Fort Wayne, Indiana. He started, "I am Samuel Morris. I have just come from Africa with a message for your people." The surprised minister didn't know what to do. He would not usually let a stranger take over his service. But something about this young man caused the pastor to agree to let Samuel speak.

It was Samuel's first Sunday in Fort Wayne, where he had come to attend Taylor University. He did not have a prepared sermon. He simply started praying and encouraged the people to do the same. Soon the whole congregation was on their knees praying and worshiping God. "It was the most joyful service we ever had," said the grateful minister later.

After that, Samuel spoke in other churches – even in a roller-skating rink. People came from all over to hear him talk about God. Though he was just learning to read, those who heard him speak were surprised at the freshness and strength of his messages. One said, "He spoke for forty minutes in a quiet yet earnest style, simple and natural as a child. Everyone was interested."

At school, Samuel did not eat any food or drink any water from Thursday night until Saturday morning. He had figured out that God had miraculously rescued him from his Grebo captors on a Friday. So, he saved that day for praying – "talking to my Father," as he called it.

As other people heard about Samuel at the school, they gave money to a "faith fund" for his costs. (Even after Samuel's death, that fund continued to grow, helping one hundred needy students who were preparing for mission work.) During Samuel's time at Taylor University, the people in charge of the school almost closed it because there was not enough money to pay bills. "Take heart," said Samuel, "and pray." Inspired by his faith, the board members turned to God for help.

At their next meeting, one board member suggested that if the school couldn't afford to remain in Fort Wayne, it should move to Upland. Move the whole school!? That seemed impossible! But with Samuel's encouragement, the board member raised enough money within one day to purchase new land and move the school.

Samuel's inspiration meant new life for the school. But at age twenty, Samuel became ill because of the injuries he had received as a boy in Africa. After his death, hundreds attended his funeral, many of them had seen and learned more about faith and the power of God to save people than they had ever known before.

Encouraged by Samuel's example, many students volunteered as missionaries. And for years to come, missions was an important focus of the school – until hundreds had become missionaries. Of Samuel Morris, the president of the university said, "He

thought he was coming over here to prepare himself for his mission to his people, but his coming was to prepare Taylor University for her mission to the whole world.”

“And let us not give up meeting together. Some are in the habit of doing this. Instead, let us encourage one another with words of hope. Let us do this even more as you see Christ’s return approaching.” – Hebrews 10:25

**5.Bible Skills:** The Books of Major Prophets – Lesson 1

(If you have access to media, show this video of the Prophets)

**Bible Skills Video:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6EFjrTX41TY>

Let’s read **Isaiah 9:6** from the King James Version of the Bible = “ For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” This is a beautiful verse about our Savior and His birth. It tells us a few of the many different names of Jesus. This verse is found in Isaiah – one of the prophets in the Bible.

A prophet is someone who declares a message for God. Some of the prophets of the Bible revealed things that would happen in the future but it’s important to understand those prophets did not predict the future, they simply shared what God had revealed to them about the days to come. Other prophets reminded God’s people of his instructions for living or offered them hope for the future. God’s messengers shared many messages, but their words always pointed to God, His love, and His rescue plan.

There are 17 Books of Prophecy in the Bible (16 prophets) – today we are learning the five books of major prophecy – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, and Daniel. They are called “major” because of the length of the books.

The book of **Isaiah** includes the most important prophecy of all time – the coming of the Messiah. Although Isaiah called Judah and its kings to repent and come back to God or face judgment, many of Isaiah’s words were full of hope for God’s rescue plan to be completed through Jesus.

**Jeremiah** is sometimes called the “weeping prophet.” He shared God’s message even though no one would listen. He warned Judah of the judgment of God if they did not repent. He was heartbroken over their disobedience and they did not repent.

**Lamentations** was also written by Jeremiah. It is sort of like a long psalm about Jerusalem and Judah’s sin.

**Ezekiel** prophesized to Judah during their time of exile in Babylon.

**Daniel** was also a prophet to Judah during their time of captivity. There are many important prophecies and famous stories that are found in the Book of Daniel such as when he and his friends refused to eat the forbidden food of the king, when Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were put into the fiery furnace, and when Daniel ended up in the lions’ den because of his faithfulness to God. Even though they were put in very scary situations, they chose to honor God and His truth, no matter what.

**Say:** We're going to play a game to help us remember the Books of the Bible we have learned so far and in what divisions of the Bible they can be found.

I am going to call out one of your names, a book of the Bible that we have learned, and a step I want you to take. You will then take the step and name the division of the Bible in which the book is found. Ready?

1. Deuteronomy – "Do a football pass" (Pretend to pass a football and stretch out one leg – Books of Law)
2. 2 Kings – "Do a soccer kick" (Kick and bring the outstretched leg down to the floor – Old Testament Books of History)
3. Proverbs – "Half step" (Place toes at midway point of the other foot – Books of Poetry)
4. Daniel – "Frog leap" (Books of Major Prophets)
5. Isaiah – "Duck waddle" (Books of Major Prophets)
6. Ruth – "Ballerina turn" (Books of Old Testament History)
7. Psalms – "Waddle like a penguin" (Books of Poetry)
8. Genesis – "Rub your tummy and pat your head while taking two steps – Books of Law)
9. 1 Chronicles – "Walk backward 5 steps" (Books of Old Testament History)
10. Lamentations – "Crawl like a baby" (Books of Major Prophets)

If you need more, add other books we have learned and make up your own movements.

**6.Memory Verse:** Have the children say the memory verse - "The LORD who rules over all says, 'I will send my messenger. He will prepare my way for me.'" – Malachi 3:1a

### **Elementary: Play Tent Card Relay –**

Write the memory verse on tent cards – putting one word on each card. (A tent card is when you fold an index card or piece of cardstock so that it will stand, in a tent shape.) Divide the children into two teams – each team needs its own set of tent cards. Scramble the cards and set them out where they can be read at the other end of the room. Apply a strip of masking tape on the floor, in a completely different area, to designate where the cards will be placed as they are put in order. Give each team a spring clothespin.

When the game begins, the first team member on each team takes the team spring clothespin and runs down to the tent cards. He or she chooses the first word of the verse and picks it up – using only the clothespin. That player then runs to their designated place on the masking tape line and sets the tent card at one end of the line.

That player returns and tags the next team member, passing off the clothespin. That player then runs down to the tent cards to find the second word of the verse, picking it up with the clothespin, and placing it on the designated line to the right of the one already there. Play continues until the teams complete their verse.

**7.Closing Prayer:** Lead the children in a closing prayer. Encourage them to also say their own individual prayers about any added concerns they have. Don't forget to pray for missionaries.