

ZECHARIAH AND ELIZABETH

PRECEPT

LUKE 1:5-17

⁵ In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah: and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. ⁷ And yet they had no child, because Elizabeth was infertile, and they were both advanced in years. ⁸ Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, ⁹ according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. ¹¹ Now an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense...

PROMISE

Have you ever felt forgotten by God, discouraged, or even on the verge of giving up your faith? Waiting helps us experience negative thoughts and emotions such as discouragement, anger, and sometimes even shame. However no matter what stage of life you are in, there is still hope and good news. The birth of Jesus, the Messiah is described in this manner: "good news of great joy" for "all the people" (Luke 2:10). But before the birth of Jesus, deal with another miraculous birth — that of John the Baptist.

Luke tells us that the birth of Jesus is a good news for Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were both righteous and blameless in their walk with God. We might even consider them saints today. However, there is one thing that negatively sets them apart: Elizabeth is childless. This is a discouraging and heart-wrenching situation for both of them, and one that society would not receive generously. These individuals who have given their entire lives to God, serving him faithfully, yet their hearts desire has not come to pass. While Zechariah was performing his priestly service, he was chosen to enter the temple and burn incense. During this time that an angel appeared to him to give him this very good news: "his prayer has been heard," his wife, "Elizabeth will bear him a son," and "they will have joy and gladness" (Luke 1:13-14). In verse 25, Elizabeth describes her condition as her "reproach among people."

Zechariah and Elizabeth are having a child. But not just any child — a very important child in God's plan of salvation. A child who will be "filled with the Holy Spirit," will help people "turn back to the Lord," "the next Elijah" and who will "prepare people for an encounter with God" (Luke 1:15-17). Remember that the first people who were given a glimpse of the coming Messiah were not the young, nor the rich, nor the powerful, but an older, childless couple who's suffering through pain of wanting, waiting, and never having a child.

This was a good news for Zechariah and Elizabeth. The reason that they were gonna have a child is so that a prophet would prepare people to meet the Lord. Giving them a child, God demonstrates His intention to give grace. Her disgrace among the people is replaced with a son who will preach a message about repentance. Elizabeth's shame is removed and is replaced with a demonstration of God's favour and grace.

PRACTICE

1. Waiting for God's Grace. Are there any circumstances that you are forced to wait for a long time? In those times did you find it easy or difficult to trust God?

2. God's Grace. What are the things that hinders you from fully trusting God? How can we encourage and pray for you regarding this?

PRAYER

I. Community

- Pray for our community to know Christ fully and deeply and study His Word daily.

II. Gospel

- Pray that Gospel may spread far and wide, touching hearts and changing lives.

III. Healing

- Thank God that though we face trouble in this world, we can be assured He has overcome it.

IV. Leaders

- May God grant them wisdom, strength, and discernment as they guide His people.

V. Trust

- When we face uncertainty, may we be reminded of His love, faithfulness, and promises.

VI. Members

- Pray for the spiritual maturity and growth of each of our attendees.

VII. Pastors

- Pray for protection from any schemes from the enemy for our pastors and leaders.