

# Elizabeth and Zechariah

Luke 1:5-25

## 1. Intro

1. Are names important to us?
2. In our society we sometimes tend to be numbers.
3. Our story today unfolds the faithfulness of parents and the blessing that comes from a child.

## 2. What's In A Name

1. Names allow us to be identified, to respond, to control.
  1. Call on someone??
2. Do the names we give our children have a meaning?
3. Bible names usually have meaning
  1. Zechariah = God remembers
  2. Elizabeth = God is my promise (oath)
  3. John = God has been gracious
4. God did remember His promise and the prayers of Zechariah.
5. God did fulfil promise to Elizabeth.

## 3. The Story (5-7)

1. Both Elizabeth and Zechariah were from families of priests (5)
  1. Double honour.
2. They were held in high esteem because of their devotion and faithfulness to God (6)
3. But there was also stigma associated with them because Elizabeth was barren. (7)
  1. It brought sorrow and shame.
  2. There was a thought of something sinful that prevented them from having children.
  3. The description of being barren was that of land that produced nothing. It had the implication of death.
4. We find the story of Abraham and Sarah is a story that has similar parallels. (Gen 21)
  1. God remembered and God gave His word.

## 4. Serving (8-20)

1. Served under the priestly division of Abijah (5a)
  1. King David organized the priests into 24 divisions (I Chron 24)
  2. They rotated throughout the year. Would do duty for one week.
  3. Were chosen by lot. Were to burn incense morning and afternoon, says prayers for the people.
2. Angel contacted Zechariah and told him what to expect. (11)
  1. He would have a son. Name him John. (13)
  2. He would have the customs of a Nazarite (15; Num 6)
  3. He would turn many of Israel back to God. (17a)
  4. He would prepare the people for the Lord. (17b)

3. Zechariah questions the angel. (18)
  1. How?
  2. The result is he would not be able to speak until the child was born. (19-20)
    1. Sounds harsh to me.
    2. Mary asks a similar thing, yet she is blessed. (34)
    3. There must have been doubt in the response of Zechariah. Remember he had prayed for this to happen (13)
    4. God looks at the heart.
  3. You give your children a five minute time out in the corner; an eternity to them. Zechariah gets nine months!
4. People were waiting for Zechariah to come out; realizing something wasn't correct. (21-22)
  1. He was not able to finish with his prayers for the people (prayer from Num 6:24-26)
5. Zechariah finishes his time of service and soon God fulfils His promise (23-25)

## 5. Conclusion

1. Names mean something to God. You are significant.
2. No matter what our circumstances we need to be faithful to God.
  1. We are a royal priesthood. Set apart for service to God.
3. How do we view our difficulties?
  1. Sometimes it takes time for our prayers to be answered.
4. Times of testing can produce good results.