



Key References:

Luke 1:10–17 (ESV)

¹⁰ And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹ And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. ¹³ But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴ And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb. ¹⁶ And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, ¹⁷ and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.

¹⁸ And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” ¹⁹ And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰ And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.” ²¹ And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²² And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute.

Luke 1:64–66 (ESV)

⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him.

1 – PROMISE GIVEN

Read Luke 1:5-17. **Why do you think God picked Zechariah and Elizabeth for this blessing and purpose?**

2 - SCEPTICS

Read Luke 1:18-23. Nathan mentioned there almost a sarcastic tone to Gabriel’s words in verse 19. **What do you find interesting about Gabriel’s rebuke?**

Are there any promises in your life that you find hard to believe?

Why do you think Zechariah was made mute up until the birth of John? God doesn’t take away Zechariah’s blessing in response to his lack of faith – **what does this show you?**

3 - PURPOSE OF THE BLESSING

In v25 Elizabeth says God has taken away her reproach amongst her people, but John’s birth had a much bigger purpose than only this. **When God blesses us how does this also work out God’s bigger agenda?**

In v15-17 Gabriel gives both instructions and purpose of this child. **When God blesses you do you have a sense of a bigger purpose to it than just the blessing in itself?**

Read Luke 1:57-66. **What was the response from their neighbours? Do you think word would have spread about this child so much if Zechariah wasn’t made mute or they weren’t advanced in age?**

4 - WAITING ON THE LORD

Zechariah & Elizabeth prayer for many years for children. **What have you been praying for in a similar way?**

Elizabeth, as with all pregnancies, had to wait before the birth. **Are there promises from God that you are waiting in expectation of?**

Read Luke 1:67-79. **From this prophesy about Jesus what gives you most hope?**