

THERE WAS A CERTAIN MAN NAMED ZACHARIAS

Luke 1:1-25

Learn: For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. | Peter 3:12

Hundreds of years had passed since the Jewish people had returned from their captivity in Babylon. But they were still ruled by foreign kings. They longed for freedom and the Messiah, who God through the prophets, had promised.

Now in the days of Herod, who was ruling as king in Judea under the Romans, there was a certain priest, a descendant from the family of Aaron, named Zacharias. Zacharias was married to Elisabeth, who was also a descendant of Aaron. These two people were righteous before God, following all the commandments of God given by Moses. They were NOT SINLESS, as no person is without sin, but they were blameless. That is, they obeyed God as much as possible, and with all their hearts they loved their Creator and waited for his salvation.

Zacharias and Elisabeth had no children, for she was barren. Among the Jewish people, to be barren was considered a curse for some sin, because children are a blessing from the Lord and they had not been blessed with children. This made Zacharias and Elisabeth sad, for along with not having a child they were also looked down upon by the people. At the time of our account they were both old and no able to have a child.

By this time there were many priests descended from Aaron, so a priest might expect only one or so opportunity to serve in the Temple. This is the day that Zacharias' turn to burn incense has come after all the years, and God has something amazing planned for Zacharias and all Israel.

Zacharias was alone in the Temple and he saw an angel. He was so troubled and afraid, but the angel said to him. "Don't be afraid Zacharias, for your prayers have been heard. Your wife Elisabeth will give you a son, and you shall call his name John. You will have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. He will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is not to have wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Ghost, even when he is in his mother's womb. Many of the children of Israel will he turn to the Lord their God. He will go before the Lord in the 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 a people prepared for the Lord."

Zacharias answered the angel, "How can I believe this? I and my wife are very old.?"

The angel answered Zacharias, "I am Gabriel, that stands in the presence of God. I am sent to tell you this, and to show you glad news. And now, you will not be able to speak, until the day that all this is performed, because you didn't believe what I told you."

Out side the temple the people were praying and waiting for Zacharias to return. They wondered why he took so long to do his duty in the Temple. When Zacharias finally came out to them, he could not speak and all he could do was make motions with his hands. The people understood that Zacharias had seen a vision in the Temple.

So, after the days of Zacharias service in the Temple were ended, he and Elisabeth returned to their home. Then Elisabeth conceived, and hid herself for five months, keeping the fact that she was pregnant a secret. For she said, "This is how the Lord has cared for me in these days. For he looked on me, to take away my shame because of being barren, from among the people."

Elisabeth had a thankful heart, and she saw her God do marvelously in her life.

Think about the promise of the coming Saviour, the Messiah
God continues to work his plan. Zacharias and Elisabeth are an important part of God's plan for the salvation of the world.

REMEMBER:

GOD NEVER FORGETS THOSE WHO LOVE HIM. He is always faithful to hear and answer their prayers. He may take a lifetime, but that is because HE KNOWS just the RIGHT TIME to bring his promises to pass.

I hope we can all learn to trust him completely, for he is the promise keeping God.