

ELIZABETH - THE FIRST MOTHER OF CHRISTMAS

Luke 1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, **(God has remembered)** of the division **(team)** of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **(God is my oath)**

THESE WERE GOOD PEOPLE

6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

THESE WERE SOCIALLY SHAMED PEOPLE

7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

- Zach and Liz had lived their entire lives in shame because she was barren. It was considered a handicap in those days and living in seclusion was more than likely her coping mechanism.
- Now, she is an old childless prayer warrior.

THE FAITHLESS PRAYERS OF A PRIEST

8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

- IE, it was his team's turn, Abijah's team, to take a week off from their regular jobs to serve in the Temple.

10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

ZACH'S PRAYER HEARD

12 And when Zacharias saw *him*, he was troubled, and fear fell

upon him. **Zach probably thought it was the grim reaper...**

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard;

- WHAT PRAYER DO YOU SUPPOSE?

...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 in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also 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 He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS TO THE CHILDREN,' (**Malachi 4:6**) and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

- The Angel Gabriel has just announced to Zach that THE MESSIAH is coming, and that his son will be the forerunner!
- Zach doesn't even hear that part.... Listen...

THE PUZZLED PRIEST

18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

- "Look," Zach says... "I used to pray for a son but it's impossible now!"

THE MUTE BUTTON!

19 And the angel (**While shaking his head**) answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

- The glad tidings that Messiah was coming!!!!

20 But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

- No wonder God chose to use Shepherds to announce the birth of His Son after this dismal response from the clergy!
- Have fun learning sign language ZACH!

WHAT? NO BLESSING?

21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them;

- What was he supposed to say?
- **Numbers 6:24** "The LORD bless you and keep you; 25 The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; 26 The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace."'

and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless. 23 So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house. (*Without a word*)

ELIZABETH'S SELF-IMPOSED ISOLATION

24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, 25 "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

Here are five things we can learn from this important Mom:

1. Elizabeth was not only religious, she was also righteous!
 - Though she lived with constant shame from her bareness, she lived expectantly, knowing that: **Luke 1:37** "For with God nothing will be impossible."
 - I want to say to you Moms who are praying for miracles, or perhaps... just one miracle – Keep asking!

2. She was faithful even when her husband was a flake!
 - a. Think of it... Her husband gets home from his weeklong business trip... He is mute... And using sign language – has to explain to her what is about to happen...
 - b. I would have paid to watch THAT conversation!
 - c. Wives of flaky Christian men... Hold on! Keep praying. Be like Liz!

3. Elizabeth was so humble that she avoided the notoriety of her miraculous pregnancy.
 - I asked a labor and delivery nurse about this... She told me that it takes 5 months for a mom to feel the baby move... That, AND at her age bedrest was probably the prudent thing to do.
 - One commentator suggested that because Zach was being quiet, she just joined him in seclusion.

4. Elizabeth was submitted to her Husband...
 - No angel appeared to her!
 - She allowed her quiet hubby to lead her.
 - BUT... She did a visit from a VIP later...

5. One last thing... Elizabeth was full of the Holy Spirit...

Luke 1:39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, [40](#) and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. [41](#) And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. [42](#) Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! [43](#) But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? [44](#) For indeed, as soon as the voice

of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. 45 Blessed *is* she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

God took the fragrance of a flower...
The majesty of a tree...
The gentleness of morning dew...
The calm of a quiet sea...
The beauty of the twilight hour...
The soul of a starry night...
The laughter of a rippling brook...
The grace of a bird in flight...
Then God fashioned from these things
A creation like no other,
And when his masterpiece was through
He called it simply – Mother.

LORD, thank You for our mothers.