

Bible Stories for Daily Prayer

Church Year Stories

Gabriel Appears to Zachariah

Luke 1:5-25

Who was Zachariah?

A priest from the division of Abijah.

What was his wife's name?

Elizabeth.

Of which Old Testament couple do they remind us?

Abraham and Sarah.

From what family did Elizabeth come?

She was a descendant of Aaron.

What is Luke telling us about Zachariah and Elizabeth in verse 6?

They were righteous before God, walking in all the commandments of the Lord.

What does this mean? (See Genesis 15:6, Ephesians 2:8-9, and Romans 3:28.)

They were justified by grace through faith alone.

What was Zachariah doing in verses 8-10? (See Exodus 30:7-10.)

He was serving as a priest in the temple.

Where was Zachariah? (See Exodus 25:31-40)

He was going to burn incense in the temple at the time of the lighting of lamps at twilight.

For what was Zachariah praying? (See Daniel 9:20-27.)

He confessed the sins of Israel and prayed for the Savior to be born according to the LORD's promise.

What additional gift would be given to Zachariah?

A son.

What was to be the child's name?

John.

Whom would John be like? (See Malachi 3:1 for background to this.)

He would be a messenger like Elijah to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins.

Why was Zachariah silenced?

He doubted that God would now fulfill the promise of a Savior to Abraham, by giving him and his wife a son who would be the forerunner of the Messiah.

What two things did Elizabeth confess about her pregnancy?

God had looked upon her with favor and had taken away her reproach of not having children.

Meditation:

The symbol for Luke's Gospel is a winged bull, which illustrates his theme of sacrifice and Christ's fulfillment of the Law. Luke also stresses that the preaching of repentance and the forgiveness of sins is the message of the Church and that this Word is the greatest treasure for it reveals and bestows Christ. The opening of the Gospel presents Zachariah and Elizabeth who received the gift of a son, like Abraham and Sarah did. It indicates that God was remembering His promise to His people, just as the name Zachariah ("Yahweh remembers") proclaims. Zachariah failed to believe that the Messiah was going to come, and he was silenced until his son came as a sign of the fulfillment of the promise. It is always the Word of promise which faith keeps or holds fast.