



Luke 1:5-38 (some paraphrased)

Zechariah and Elizabeth were a childless, elderly couple who loved God and followed his commands. One year Zechariah was chosen from his division of priests to enter the temple to burn incense.

While inside an angel appeared to Zechariah startling him. 13 But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ...And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the

righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

18 Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

19 The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. 20 And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.” ...When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

23 When his time of service was completed, he returned home. 24 After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. 25 “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

Luke 1:57-64 When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. **58** Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy **59** On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, **60** but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.” **61** They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”

62 Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. **63** He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone’s astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.” **64** Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.

Icebreaker

Tell about a time you were surprised with some good news.

Conversation Starters

1. Tell about a time in your life when God was silent.
2. Are you good at waiting? Give some examples.
3. Are you good at being quiet? Give some examples.
4. God remembers. God is faithful. God is gracious. Which of these 3 do you find the easiest to hang on to? Which of these is the hardest?