

People of the Bible

Zechariah and Elizabeth

Zechariah and Elizabeth were “righteous before the God, walking blamelessly in the commandments and statutes of the Lord” (Luke 1:6).

Zechariah, a priest in the Jerusalem temple, was greeted by the angel Gabriel, who announced that Zechariah and Elizabeth would become parents of a son. Initially, Zechariah did not believe Gabriel’s announcement because of their old age.

For his disbelief, Zechariah became unable to speak. After their son was born, Elizabeth named their son John. Zechariah confirmed his wife’s choice, and his ability to speak was restored.

In response, he sang the Benedictus, a magnificent summary of God’s promises in the Old Testament and a prediction of John’s work as forerunner to Jesus (Luke 1:68-79).

Elizabeth was relative of Mary the mother of Jesus. It is not known whether she was a cousin, aunt or other relation.

Zechariah and Elizabeth are remembered as examples of faithfulness and piety.