

## Message to Zachariah

### Luke 1:1-17

- 1 Since many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the events that have been fulfilled among us,
- 2 just as those who were eyewitnesses from the beginning and ministers of the word have handed them down to us,
- 3 I too have decided, after investigating everything accurately anew, to write it down in an orderly sequence for you, most excellent Theophilus,
- 4 so that you may realize the certainty of the teachings you have received.
- 5 In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.
- 6 Both were righteous in the eyes of God, observing all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.
- 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren and both were advanced in years.
- 8 Once when he was serving as priest in his division's turn before God,
- 9 according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.
- 10 Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering,
- 11 the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense.
- 12 Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him.
- 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him 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. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will 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 go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord."

### **Genesis 17:15-22**

- 15 God further said to Abraham: As for Sarai your wife, do not call her Sarai; her name will be Sarah.
- 16 I will bless her, and I will give you a son by her. Her also will I bless; she will give rise to nations, and rulers of peoples will issue from her.
- 17 Abraham fell face down and laughed as he said to himself, "Can a child be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah give birth at ninety?"
- 18 So Abraham said to God, "If only Ishmael could live in your favor!"
- 19 God replied: Even so, your wife Sarah is to bear you a son, and you shall call him Isaac. It is with him that I will maintain my covenant as an everlasting covenant and with his descendants after him.
- 20 Now as for Ishmael, I will heed you: I hereby bless him. I will make him fertile and will multiply him exceedingly. He will become the father of twelve chieftains, and I will make of him a great nation.
- 21 But my covenant I will maintain with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you by this time next year.
- 22 When he had finished speaking with Abraham, God departed from him.

### **Ruth 1:11-18**

- 11 Naomi replied, "Go back, my daughters. Why come with me? Have I other sons in my womb who could become your husbands?"
- 12 Go, my daughters, for I am too old to marry again. Even if I had any such hope, or if tonight I had a husband and were to bear sons,
- 13 would you wait for them and deprive yourselves of husbands until those sons grew up? No, my daughters, my lot is too bitter for you, because the LORD has extended his hand against me."
- 14 Again they wept aloud; then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth clung to her.
- 15 "See now," she said, "your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. Go back after your sister-in-law!"
- 16 But Ruth said, "Do not press me to go back and abandon you! Wherever you go I will go, wherever you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God, my God.
- 17 Where you die I will die, and there be buried. May the LORD do thus to me, and more, if even death separates me from you!"
- 18 Naomi then ceased to urge her, for she saw she was determined to go with her.

### **1 Samuel 1:9-17**

- 9 Hannah rose after one such meal at Shiloh, and presented herself before the LORD; at the time Eli the priest was sitting on a chair near the doorpost of the LORD's temple.
- 10 In her bitterness she prayed to the LORD, weeping freely,
- 11 and made this vow: "O LORD of hosts, if you look with pity on the hardship of your servant, if you remember me and do not forget me, if you give your handmaid a male child, I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life. No razor shall ever touch his head."
- 12 As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli watched her mouth,
- 13 for Hannah was praying silently; though her lips were moving, her voice could not be heard. Eli, thinking she was drunk,
- 14 said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Sober up from your wine!"
- 15 "No, my lord!" Hannah answered. "I am an unhappy woman. I have had neither wine nor liquor; I was only pouring out my heart to the LORD.
- 16 Do not think your servant a worthless woman; my prayer has been prompted by my deep sorrow and misery."
- 17 Eli said, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have requested."

### **Isaiah 41:8-17**

- 8 But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, offspring of Abraham my friend—
- 9 You whom I have taken from the ends of the earth and summoned from its far-off places, to whom I have said, you are my servant; I chose you, I have not rejected you—
- 10 Do not fear: I am with you; do not be anxious: I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.
- 11 Yes, all shall be put to shame and disgrace who vent their anger against you; those shall be as nothing and perish who offer resistance.
- 12 You shall seek but not find those who strive against you; they shall be as nothing at all who do battle with you.
- 13 For I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand; it is I who say to you, Do not fear, I will help you.
- 14 Do not fear, you worm Jacob, you maggot Israel; I will help you—oracle of the LORD; the Holy One of Israel is your redeemer.

- 15 I will make of you a threshing sledge, sharp, new, full of teeth, to thresh the mountains and crush them, to make the hills like chaff.
- 16 When you winnow them, the wind shall carry them off, the storm shall scatter them. But you shall rejoice in the LORD; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory.
- 17 The afflicted and the needy seek water in vain, their tongues are parched with thirst. I, the LORD, will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

## **2 Peter 1:3-11**

- 3 His divine power has bestowed on us everything that makes for life and devotion, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and power.
- 4 Through these, he has bestowed on us the precious and very great promises, so that through them you may come to share in the divine nature, after escaping from the corruption that is in the world because of evil desire.
- 5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, virtue with knowledge,
- 6 knowledge with self-control, self-control with endurance, endurance with devotion,
- 7 devotion with mutual affection, mutual affection with love.
- 8 If these are yours and increase in abundance, they will keep you from being idle or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 9 Anyone who lacks them is blind and shortsighted, forgetful of the cleansing of his past sins.
- 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more eager to make your call and election firm, for, in doing so, you will never stumble.
- 11 For, in this way, entry into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be richly provided for you.

## **Romans 4:13-25**

- 13 It was not through the law that the promise was made to Abraham and his descendants that he would inherit the world, but through the righteousness that comes from faith.
- 14 For if those who adhere to the law are the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void.
- 15 For the law produces wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.
- 16 For this reason, it depends on faith, so that it may be a gift, and the promise may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not to those who only adhere to the law but to those who follow the faith of Abraham, who is the father of all of us,

17 as it is written, "I have made you father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not exist.

18 He believed, hoping against hope, that he would become "the father of many nations," according to what was said, "Thus shall your descendants be."

19 He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body as [already] dead (for he was almost a hundred years old) and the dead womb of Sarah.

20 He did not doubt God's promise in unbelief; rather, he was empowered by faith and gave glory to God

21 and was fully convinced that what he had promised he was also able to do.

22 That is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."

23 But it was not for him alone that it was written that "it was credited to him";

24 it was also for us, to whom it will be credited, who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

25 who was handed over for our transgressions and was raised for our justification.

#### **Luke 1:5-25**

5 In the days of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah of the priestly division of Abijah; his wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

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9 according to the practice of the priestly service, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.

10 Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering,

11 the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right of the altar of incense.

12 Zechariah was troubled by what he saw, and fear came upon him.

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John.

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15 for he will be great in the sight of [the] Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will 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 go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord.”
- 18 Then Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.”
- 19 And the angel said to him in reply, “I am Gabriel, who stand before God. I was sent to speak to you and to announce to you this good news.
- 20 But now you will be speechless and unable to talk until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled at their proper time.”
- 21 Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and were amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary.
- 22 But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was gesturing to them but remained mute.
- 23 Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home.
- 24 After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying,
- 25 “So has the Lord done for me at a time when he has seen fit to take away my disgrace before others.”