



Incarnation 2012

Zacharias & Elizabeth

Jesus said the following about John the Baptist, “*He was a burning and shining light (luknos): and you were willing for a season to rejoice in his light (phos).*” This ‘light’ was the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth and was the forerunner of the one true LIGHT.

John 5:35

Background: Two key words regarding ‘light.’

Phos: The essence or source of light

Luknos: A lamp that bears light

Jesus was the ‘phos’ of the world (*John 8:12*) but He also said that we are the ‘phos’ of the world (*Matt 5:14*).

A. Bareness and the Light vv. 5-7

1. **Bareness motif:** From Sarah to Israel to Elisabeth we see how God uses ‘bareness’ to demonstrate his sovereignty and grace.
2. **Righteous but not sinless:** In regards to the ceremonial and moral obligations of the law they were righteous but that did not mean they were sinless.

B. Messenger of the Light vv. 8-12

1. **While serving:** Zacharias is serving, the people are praying and the incense was symbolic of the prayers going before God.
2. **God speaks:** The angel Gabriel brings an answer to the ‘incense’ and the people’s prayer—a message from God.

C. Message of Light Vv. 13-17

1. **Which prayer?** It’s doubtful that Zacharias and his wife were still praying for children at their age. Yet, all of Israel was praying for deliverance and the coming of the Messiah.
2. **The message:** A miracle baby would be born and be a blessing to Zacharias and his wife—but also a blessing to the whole world.

Great in the sight of God— A Nazarite vow
 Filled with Holy Spirit in the womb
 ‘Spirit and power of Elijah’ - Restore families
The (lamp/light) forerunner of the Messiah

D. Unbelief and the Light vv. 18-22

1. **Righteous but no faith:** It’s possible to have right doctrine and right living but not live in FAITH. And there are consequences to a lack of faith.
2. **God is faithful:** God was faithful when Zacharias was fearful and doubting.

E. Belief and the Light vv. 23-25

1. **Wonderful silence:** Elizabeth conceived during the time period that Zacharias was speechless.
2. **The Lord has dealt with us:** When seemed hopeless for Israel (400 years of silence), and for Elizabeth, God ordains the birth of a ‘lamp/light’ that would show the way to the **TRUE LIGHT** of the world.

Luke 1:5-25 (NKJV)

5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

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

13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; 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,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

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.” 19 And the angel 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. 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.” 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; 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. 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.”