

Everyday FAITH Family Page

New Testament 1

Law/Gospel

I sin when I doubt God's Word and promises. **God sent His Son to forgive my sin and works through His Word and Sacraments to give me faith to believe and to strengthen my trust in Him.**

Bible Words

The LORD will do the thing that He has promised.
2 Kings 20:9

Fun Facts

The names of this family show God's work in their lives.

- In Hebrew, *Zechariah* means "Yahweh remembered."
(English Bibles usually translate Yahweh, the name of God, as "LORD" with small caps.)
- *Elizabeth*, the Greek version of the Hebrew name *Elisheba*, means "God is her oath."
- John, the short form of *Jehohanan*, means "Jehovah's gift" or "God is gracious and moved to pity."

The Birth of John Foretold

Luke 1:5–25

Married couple Zechariah and Elizabeth both came from families of priests. Faithful believers in the Lord, they trusted God's leading and purpose for their lives. In their old age, they realistically gave up thoughts of children; Elizabeth was barren.

All that changed when the angel Gabriel appeared to Zechariah as he burned incense in the temple during his service as a priest. Fear filled Zechariah when he saw Gabriel, but he probably felt more shocked when told he and Elizabeth would have a son. Gabriel said their son would be great before the Lord and turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord. The angel specified that Zechariah name the child John.

When Zechariah did not believe this news and cited the couple's ages, Gabriel made him unable to speak. Zechariah did not speak again until after his son's birth.

After Gabriel's visit, Elizabeth conceived. This son grew up to be John the Baptist, the prophet who called people to repent, baptized them, and prepared them to meet their Messiah. Jesus said, "Among those born of women, there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11:11).

An Offering of Incense

By Old Testament ceremonial law, priests burned incense of sweet-smelling spices or perfumes as an offering of worship (Exodus 30:1, 7–8).

In New Testament times, the Israelites observed formal prayer in the temple in the morning and evening. One priest, chosen by lot, entered the Holy Place of the temple to burn incense at the altar while people prayed outside. This probably was a once-in-a-lifetime privilege.

With Jesus as our High Priest, we don't need a priest to enter the Holy Place and pray for us. God invites us to pray to Him anytime, and we welcome the prayers of our pastors as they care for us spiritually.

Prayer

Lord, remember us and bring us into Your kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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