Zechariah & Elizabeth – Character studies in the Christmas story (1) | November 12th 2026 | By Pastor Gracewin

ZECHARIAH THE FAITHFUL

Luke1:5-9

Zechariah was old and his wife was barren, yet he still went up to the temple when his shift came to minister. That day an angel appeared to him and said, "Your prayers are heard! Your wife will bear a son.

Luke 1:23 – So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.

If it had been us, after the vision, we would have rushed to go on a second honeymoon. But no—not Zechariah. He was faithful. He stayed and finished his course. He didn't think, 'What good am I, mute and old?' He finished his work!

Deuteronomy 7:9 – Therefore know that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments

God is a faithful God. Therefore God chooses and blesses the faithful

Proverbs 28:20 – A faithful man will abound with blessings, But he who hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.

- Faithfulness is the quality of being true, steadfast and trustworthy in what was committed to your trust, completing it with all excellence and joy.

The world is looking for talented people, but God is looking for faithful people. You can teach skills to faithful people, but you cannot instill faithfulness into people. It takes time to develop.

ZECHARIAH THE FINISHER

Luke 1:23 – So it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.

Zechariah completed his course – It is so important to see someone who finishes their race with faith.

Surely He is one important reason John the Baptist finished well!

2 Timothy 4:7 – I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

Paul says," I have finished the course" – what an example for young Timothy!! May we have finishers in our generation!

But we see that Zechariah, too, struggled here and there. When the angel told him about the childbirth, he didn't believe it at first. He staggered in doubt, and the angel had to mute him lest he abort the miracle before it was born.

- Zechariah was not perfect but he finished. You don't have to be perfect to finish well; you only need to be yielded.

ELIZABETH THE WORSHIPPER

Elizabeth is seen as a praying and a worshipping woman who is an encourager of those in associated with her – she was already a mother by means of what she had.

Luke 1:24-25 – Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying, "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

When Elizabeth had conceived, instead of publicizing it and making it about herself – she hid herself saying "The Lord did this!" She devoted her time to prayer and thanksgiving.

ELIZABETH THE MOTHER WHO WAS BARREN

Luke 1:57-59 – Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her. So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

Elizabeth was already a mother – she had the ministry of blessing and encouraging others. That's why she was surrounded by relatives and friends and neighbors – they were willing to do much for her, including the naming of her son.

Luke 1:26-28 – One day a young girl who had surrendered to carry Jesus in her womb needed prophetic encouragement and guess whom the angel pointed them to? Elizabeth.

Luke 1:39-45 – Mary came to Elizabeth and she was filled with the Holy Spirit and she began to confirm God's working in Mary's life by way of prophecy.

4 confirming statements by Elizabeth

1) Blessed among women

2) Fruit of the womb

3) Mother of my Lord

4) Blessed is she who believed

These words from Elizabeth encouraged Mary and strengthened her.

THEIR "NAMES" CARRIED THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Luke 1:68-73 – Zechariah himself speaks out the message – their life is a testimony that God always remembers his covenant and fulfills his oaths.

ZECHARIAH: ZACHAR – recall / remember & YAH – Short form for Yahweh. So Zechariah means – Yahweh remembered.

ELIZABETH: ELI – "my God" and SHEVA –"to swear an oath". Elizabeth means – The oaths of my God

JOHN: YAHWEH'S GRACE

So their names meant – Yahweh has remembered his promises and sends His grace. In the same way, God will remember his covenant with you and send you grace for the season and fulfill his promises in Jesus name!

CONCLUSION

From the characters of Zechariah and Elizabeth, we learn wonderful lessons. Zechariah's life teaches us to be faithful always and yield ourselves to God so that we can finish well. From Elizabeth, we learn to be a worshipper, as well as an encouragement and a blessing to others. Finally, we see the message of the Gospel hidden in their names: that God has remembered His promises and has sent His grace!