

The Angels Messages

MEMORY VERSE:

"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."

Luke 1:31

For a long time God had not spoken to His people. A few hundred years had gone by and there had been no new prophets speaking words from God. However, during that time there were still some who faithfully waited for the promised Messiah who would save the people of God.

During the reign of King Herod, there was a man named Zechariah. He was a priest who served in the Temple. He and his wife, Elizabeth, were good people who tried hard to please God. They were growing old now and were sad that they had never been able to have children.

One day, Zechariah was in the temple burning the incense on the altar when an he saw an angel standing before him. He was surprised and a little frightened, but the angel told him that his wife would soon give birth to a son whose name would be John. He would be a special man who would prepare the people for the coming of the Messiah and turn many to God.

Zechariah found this hard to believe and asked the angel for another sign. The angel was not pleased that Zechariah doubted him and told him that he would be unable to talk until what he had promised had come true.

A little later in a small village called Nazareth, the same angel appeared to a young woman named Mary. "Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women," he said.

Mary was a little surprised by this greeting. But the angel went on to tell her that she had been chosen to be the mother of the son of God! He told her that her cousin Elizabeth was also expecting a special baby.

When the angel had gone, Mary hurried into the hills of Judea to visit Zechariah and Elizabeth. As soon as Mary entered the house and called out a greeting, Elizabeth felt the baby leap for joy in her womb. The two women rejoiced in the honour that had been given them and spoke of the wonderful promises God had made that would come to pass through their children.

Elizabeth soon gave birth to a son. Her family and neighbours were very happy for her! On the eighth day when he would be circumcised, they were gathered together and insisted that he be called Zechariah after his father. But Elizabeth said no, his name would be John. They didn't like this and turned to Zechariah to see what he would say.

Zechariah could still not speak but he wrote "His name is John." And at once he was able to talk and he praised God and thanked him for his son.

Back in Nazareth, Mary had married a man named Joseph. An angel had come to Joseph and told him that the child Mary was expecting had been given to her by God and that his name would be Jesus, which means "saviour."

Things to Remember

- Mary trusted God when He made a promise to her.
- Mary was willing to be God's obedient servant.
- Zechariah doubted at first, but was faithful in the end.

Discussion

The Jewish people had been waiting a long time for the Messiah that God had promised who would come to save them. Probably many women in Israel down through time had hoped that they would be the mother of this great person. But the time had to be right. Finally the time had come. God chose two faithful women to be the mothers of two very special men.

1. Why was Zechariah not able to speak?
2. Who was the father of Mary's baby?
3. What were the promises that would come to pass through the children of Mary and Elizabeth?
4. What were John and Jesus going to do?

Activity Suggestions

Draw a picture of Elizabeth and Mary together outside Elizabeth's home. Make sure you draw Elizabeth with a big tummy!

Cut out pictures from a magazine or catalogue of things you would need for a baby. Make a collage. Maybe find a picture of a happy mom to glue on as well.