

Episode: Christmas Series No. 3

Narrator: Elizabeth

Primary Scriptures: Luke 1

Story Summary: Elizabeth miraculously has a child

Location: Judea

Time: Circa 5 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Luke 1:5-7

There were at least three prophecies concerning John the Baptist in the Old Testament. About seven centuries before his birth, the prophet Isaiah wrote about a voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way for the Lord (Isaiah 40:3-5). We know this prophecy was specifically about John the Baptist because Matthew confirmed it in Matthew 3:1-3, while John confirmed it about himself, recorded in John 1:20-23.

About four centuries before John's birth, the prophet Malachi also wrote about him. In Malachi 3:1, he wrote that a messenger would prepare the way for the Lord. We know that prophecy was specifically about John the Baptist because Jesus said so in Matthew 11:7-10.

Malachi also wrote that Elijah the prophet would be sent before the great and dreadful day of the Lord (Malachi 4:5). We can determine he was metaphorically speaking of John the Baptist because of Jesus' teaching in Matthew 11:13-14. Luke also alludes to this in Luke 1:17.

The details of the birth of John the Baptist are given in Luke 1, information so specific that it seems likely to have come from a participant in the story. Perhaps Elizabeth or Mary gave Luke the information he needed to write this chapter! In Luke 1:2, Luke stated that he talked to eyewitnesses before writing his account.

Luke makes it clear that the conception of John the Baptist was a miracle provided by the Lord. John's mother, far past child-bearing age, was unable to conceive until the Lord allowed it to happen. When God declared she would become pregnant, it happened immediately. Elizabeth specifically said that the Lord had caused it to happen (Luke 1:25).

Elizabeth and Zechariah were not chosen randomly—she was a relative of Mary, who was soon to become the mother of Jesus. Soon after Mary became pregnant by the Holy Spirit, she visited Elizabeth who was pregnant with John, and from that moment on, the miracle babies would be linked together for all time.

Luke describes how Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, proclaimed that Mary's child was to be her Lord. In this proclamation, she intimated that Jesus would not only be her Lord, but he would be the Lord of the world.