

### The Birth of John (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:57–66

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth that she should give birth, and she gave birth to a son.  
 58 And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown his great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.  
 59 And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were wanting to name him after his father Zechariah.  
 60 And his mother answered *and* said, “No, but he will be named John.”  
 61 And they said to her, “There is no one of your relatives who is called by this name.”  
 62 So they made signs to his father *asking* what he wanted him to be named,  
 63 and he asked for a writing tablet *and* wrote, saying, “John is his name.” And they were all astonished.  
 64 And his mouth and his tongue were opened immediately, and he began to speak, praising God.  
 65 And fear came on all those who lived near them, and in all the hill country of Judea all these events were discussed.  
 66 And all those who heard kept *these things* in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be? For indeed the hand of the Lord was with him!”

### Zacharias’ Song of Praise—The *Benedictus* (mid 3 BC)

Luke 1:67–79

67 And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,  
 68 “Blessed *be* the Lord, the God of Israel,  
 because he has visited to help and has redeemed his people,  
 69 and has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
 in the house of his servant David,  
 70 just as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from earliest times—  
 71 salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all those who hate us,  
 72 to show mercy to our fathers  
 and to remember his holy covenant,  
 73 the oath that he swore to Abraham our father,  
 to grant us  
 74 *that* we, being rescued from the hand of *our* enemies,  
 could serve him without fear  
 75 in holiness and righteousness  
 before him all our days.  
 76 And so you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High,  
 for you will go on before the Lord to prepare his ways,  
 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people  
 by the forgiveness of their sins,  
 78 because of the merciful compassion of our God  
 by which the dawn will visit to help us from on high,  
 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,  
 to direct our feet into the way of peace.”

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