

December 8, 2021

## Speechless in Judea

[Luke 1: 68-79](#)

*By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

Have you ever found yourself unable to talk? I'm a talker -- an extrovert. As a college professor, I had laryngitis for months, and I could barely speak above a whisper. I wondered if God was trying to tell me something: talk less; listen more!

Earlier in Luke 1, the elderly couple Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth had given up on being parents. One day Jewish priest Zechariah was at work in the temple when the angel Gabriel showed up and told Zechariah that he and Elizabeth would have a son.

Zechariah very much doubted that they would have a child. He was unable to speak until the child was born. Being speechless as a priest was likely as frustrating as trying to teach with no voice.

The baby was born, named John, but still Zechariah couldn't talk. He used hand gestures and wrote on tablets to communicate.

Family is everything in Jewish culture. In order to keep the family name in place, the custom was to name the child after his dad. Everyone in the community was excited to learn that they would name him John, though. They got the message that this was to be a special kid.

Eight days after he was born, the baby was to be circumcised and the entire community showed up to celebrate the occasion. At the ceremony Zechariah suddenly was no longer speechless.

The passage for today's devotion is the speech Zechariah gave to his family and friends. He praised God for his son and for the messiah that was soon to be born. Baby John would be a prophet and would prepare the way for the promised messiah.

During this Advent season, we celebrate John's birth because of the influence he would have on Jesus who would bring light in the darkness and guide us to the path of peace.

*Prayer: Thank you, God, for sometimes making us speechless so we will hear your Word. Teach us not to doubt your promises because we know that your Son still brings light in today's world. Help us be the light to others. Amen.*

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