



Rev. & Mrs. Zacharias

Reading: Luke 1:5-25, 57-65

"Walking in all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly, both of them were righteous before God" (Lk 1:6)

The other side of Christmas is to celebrate obedience. All the good characters of Christmas story have exemplified obedience in some way or the other. Of the seven men and women we will look at today and the next six days, we will study about Elizabeth and Zacharias first. Their obedience was not a temporary one, but consistent for a long time, until they were "well advanced in years." The denial of the fruit of the womb did in no way deter them in their walk with God. This was pure obedience. Obeying God for who He was!

The parents of John, especially his mother, served as mentors for Mary as she was growing the Baby Jesus in her womb. They were actually relatives. The angel quoted the case of Elizabeth to encourage Mary to believe God for the impossible (Lk 1:36,37).

Though understandably Zacharias questioned angel Gabriel, "How shall I know this?" at the first instance, he settled down to quiet trust quickly. We wonder why such a severe judgment was passed on a godly man for asking a sign for the difficult promise. God is more strict with the obedient than the disobedient. Was he not soon to father a son whose ministry would be to turn "the disobedient to the wisdom of the just" (v17)?



Elizabeth called Mary as "the mother of my Lord" (v 43). The Lordship of Christ was a prophetic revelation to her. She responded to it with submission and obedience. Knowledge without obedience is empty. True wisdom is born out of reverential fear before God.

The obedience of this godly couple is further illustrated in the naming of their son. In order to obey God they even broke the tradition of naming the child after any one of his relatives. They gave him the name, John, as commanded by God (vv 58-63,13). What a rebuke for us who so easily disobey God's guidance just in order to please the family

folks! John means "God is gracious!" That was an apt name for the child which broke God's prophetic silence of nearly 400 years.

*I am glad I have heard of the Saviour's great mercy!
And that now I am singing His redemption's new song;
And e'er since, by His grace, unto Him I surrendered,
In my heart has been ringing—"I believe! I belong!"*
(J. Mountain)
