

# Zacharias Prophecies about his Son, John

**Key Verse:** *“Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.”*  
—**Luke 1:76,77**

**Selected Scripture:**  
**Luke 1:57,58,67-79**

well stricken in years.” (vs. 7) Nevertheless, this righteous couple was specially chosen by God to have a son who would be used in the Lord’s service. Zacharias, however, questioned the news delivered by the angel Gabriel. (vs. 18) As a result of this doubt, Zacharias had his speech taken away. (vss. 19,20) It was not until their son was born and Zacharias asked for a writing table to agree with his wife that their son’s name would be John that he had his speech restored.—vss. 59-64

**JESUS STATED, AS RE-** recorded in Luke 7:28, “Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist.” Thirty years earlier, John’s father, Zacharias, had prophesied about his son with the words of our Selected Scripture.

Zacharias was a priest of Israel, and the Scriptures say he and his wife, Elisabeth, “were both righteous before God.” (Luke 1:6) We also read about them that “they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now

to prophesy how his son would be used by God to return favor to Israel and eventually the entire human family. The prophecy begins with words of praise to God: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel." (Luke 1:68) These words are similar to the opening words in the model prayer Jesus gave to his disciples when they asked how they should pray as John had taught his disciples: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (chap. 11:1,2) The similarity of these two accounts should impress upon our minds that prayers should always begin by giving praise and reverence to our Heavenly Father. His ways are higher than our ways, and his love greater than our love. This should be remembered each time we approach God in prayer.

Peter tells us that prophets of old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. (II Pet. 1:21) Since prophets often spoke as if their messages were already accomplished, so Zacharias declared that God "hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David." (Luke 1:69) John was born six months before Jesus, so it follows that the begetting of Jesus as a human had already taken place at the time of these words. Thus the prophecy had already begun, but had not yet been completed. Zacharias reminded his Israelite audience that God had made a covenant with them to protect them from their enemies as well as to provide mercy in their times of need. That mercy had now brought to them the soon arrival of the "horn of salvation," or Messiah, for which they had been waiting, and John would be used to announce the arrival. "Thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins, Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."—vss. 76-79 ■