

# **Zacharias and Elizabeth**

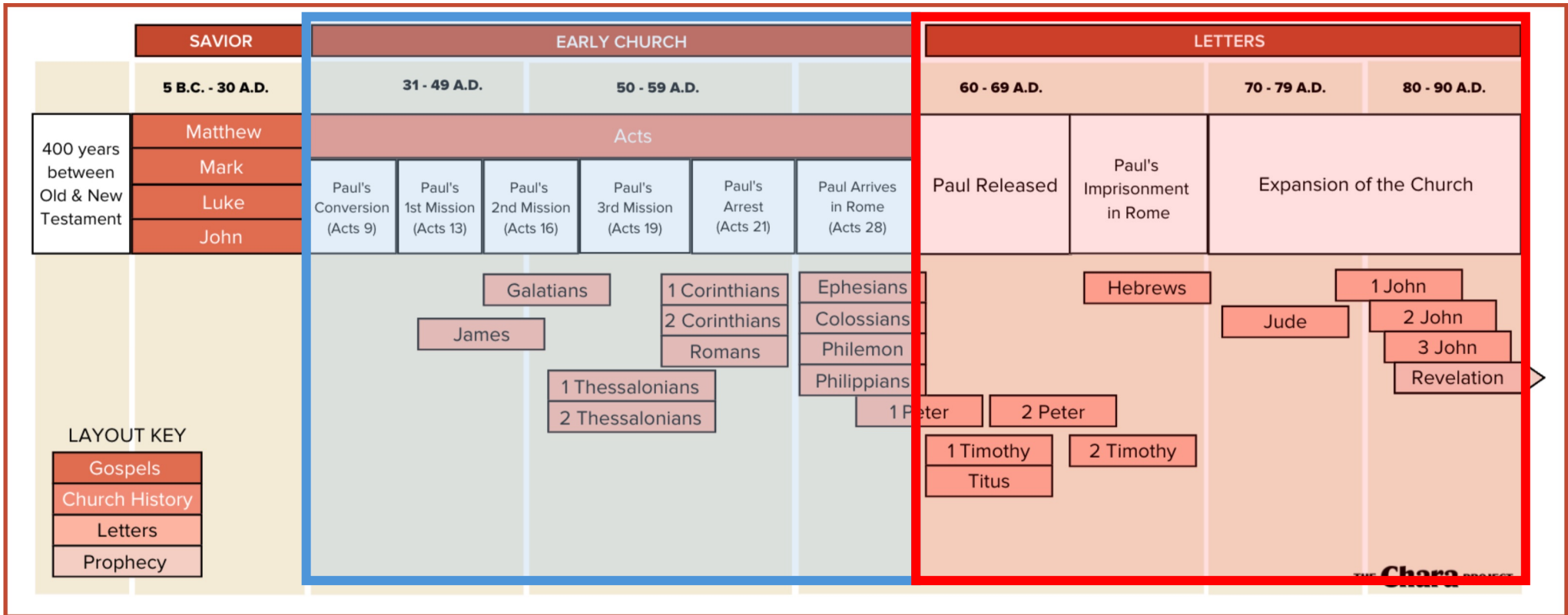
Chapter 10

# Old Testament layout

<b>Law – 5</b>	Genesis Exodus	Leviticus Numbers	Deuteronomy
<b>History – 12</b>	Joshua Judges Ruth	1/2 Samuel 1/2 Kings 1/2 Chronicles	Ezra Nehemiah Esther
<b>Poetry – 5</b>	Job Psalms	Proverbs Ecclesiastes	Song of Solomon
<b>Major Prophets – 5</b>	Isaiah	Jeremiah Lamentations	Ezekiel Daniel
<b>Minor Prophets – 12</b>	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah	Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk	Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

# New Testament layout

<b>Gospels – 4</b>	Matthew Mark	Luke John
<b>History – 1</b>	Acts	
<b>Pauline Epistles (letters) – 13</b>	Romans 1/2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians	Colossians 1/2 Thessalonians 1/2 Timothy Titus Philemon
<b>General Epistles (letters) – 8</b>	Hebrews James 1/2 Peter	1/2/3 John Jude
<b>Prophecy – 1</b>	Revelation	



# Intertestamental Period

- Period between the Old and New Testaments
- Also known as the 400 years of silence
- Begins: end of the book of Malachi
- Ends: With the ministry of John the Baptist
- Prophecy ceased during this time
- Israel and the region was anything but silent
- What was going on?

# Intertestamental Period

- 750 BC Assyrian N, Egypt S, Israel middle
- 722 Samaria (capital of Israel) fell to Assyria
- 612 Ninevah fell to Babylon
- 586 Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem (Judah capital), most Jews moved to Nineveh
- 539 Persians take over Babylon, Judeans allowed back
- End of OT “History”

# Intertestamental Period

- 334 Alexander the Great Greek Empire (Macedonian)
- 323 he died, empire divided up by 5 major generals
  - Ptolemy I took Egypt and Syria including Judah
  - Series of wars between the 5
  - The Maccabean revolt
    - King of the ruling Seleucid Empire entered the temple and sacrificed a pig upon the altar in the Holy of Holies
    - Judas “The Hammer” Maccabaeus (Maccabaeus means hammer) led a revolution
    - The Pharisees and Sadducees arose during this time
    - Feast of dedication (John 10:22-23), or Hanukkah as it’s known today.
- 164 altar of Zeus

# Intertestamental Period

- Greek was the language of business
  - Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek – Septuagint (which means 70 writers)
- 63 BC Romans take over
- Judea until Roman rule in NT



# OT → NT

OT ending:

- Mal 4:4-6
- “Remember the Law of Moses, My servant,  
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel,  
With the statutes and judgments.  
5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of  
the Lord.  
6 And he will turn  
The hearts of the fathers to the children,  
And the hearts of the children to their fathers,  
Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

NT opening:

- John the Baptist
- Only in Luke

# Outline – Zacharias & Elizabeth

- I. Introduction
- II. The Angel's Announcement  
(Luke 1:2-15)
- III. Mute Zacharias (Luke 1:18-25)
- IV. The Birth of John  
(Luke 1:57-66)
- V. Conclusion

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# Divisions of Priests

## 1 Chronicles 24:1-19

1 Now these are the divisions of the sons of Aaron. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2 And Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and had no children; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar ministered as priests. 3 Then David with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, divided them according to the schedule of their service.

4 There were more leaders found of the sons of Eleazar than of the sons of Ithamar, and thus they were divided. Among the sons of Eleazar were sixteen heads of their fathers' houses, and eight heads of their fathers' houses among the sons of Ithamar. 5 Thus they were divided by lot, one group as another, for there were officials of the sanctuary and officials of the house of God, from the sons of Eleazar and from the sons of Ithamar. 6 And the scribe, Shemaiah the son of Nethanel, one of the Levites, wrote them down before the king, the leaders, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech the son of Abiathar, and the heads of the fathers' houses of the priests and Levites, one father's house taken for Eleazar and one for Ithamar.

# Divisions of Priests

## 1 Chronicles 24:1-19

7 Now the first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah, 8 the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim, 9 the fifth to Malchijah, the sixth to Mijamin, 10 the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah, 11 the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah, 12 the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim, 13 the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab, 14 the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer, 15 the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Happizziez, 16 the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to [b]Jehezkeel, 17 the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul, 18 the twenty-third to Delaiah, the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.

19 This was the schedule of their service for coming into the house of the Lord according to their ordinance by the hand of Aaron their father, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded him.

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# The Birth of John (Luke 1:57-66)

- Barrenness: common theme
  - Sarah
  - Rebekah
  - Rachel
  - Samson's mom (Judges 13:3)
  - Hannah (1 Samuel 1)
- John a Nazirite?
  - Compare Samson and Samuel
  - Both dedicated to the Lord

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# Conclusion

- God's timing is more important than man's
- Believe God's word or there will be consequences
- God uses "ordinary people" to accomplish his work

## Chapter 10 Zacharias & Elizabeth

- Relate logic of Math to Christianity
  - A November study released by UC San Diego faculty
  - <https://nypost.com/2025/12/03/us-news/the-shocking-rise-of-gen-z-college-freshmen-who-cant-even-do-middle-school-math/>
    - The number of Gen Z college freshmen who are entering universities without high school math skills is skyrocketing — as SAT scores are plummeting, a stunning new report has found.
    - “The incentives are in the system to make ourselves look good,” he told The Post. “High GPA, high graduation rate, etc. — when it’s a mirage.”
    - “You can literally declare a kid a graduate.”
    - The UC San Diego example is particularly stark.
      - In 2020: Just 30 of the school’s incoming freshmen had below-high-school-level math skills.
      - In 2025, that number rose to 900
    - Even more shocking: Many of the students can’t even do middle school-level math, meaning their skills are fifth-grade or below.
    - Of those 900, even more – 70% of them, or one in 12 members of the incoming class — couldn’t do middle school-level math, the report found.
  - Math teaches logic
  - Bible is logical
  - When you start adding emotion and feeling to it, it is no longer pure
  - Dawson commented last week when talking about Gomer and whether she was a harlot before or after marriage, what’s the takeaway?
    - We’re studying, learning the Bible, to be prepared
    - 1 Peter 3:15: 5 But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
    - Critics of the Bible and Christianity have tried to find anything to disprove the Bible, we should have a working knowledge of the Bible and able to give a defense
    - Hosea, coincidentally, says in 4:6
      - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.
- OT layout
- NT layout
- Intertestamental period
  - The intertestamental period was the period between the Old and New Testaments. It began with the end of the book of Malachi and ended with the ministry of John the Baptist. The intertestamental period is also known as the 400 years of silence; the Jews believed prophecy ceased at the beginning of this time. While prophecy may have ceased, Israel was anything but silent during this time, being conquered and reconquered numerous times.
  - History
    - 750 BC Assyrian N, Egypt S, Israel middle
    - 722 Samaria (capital of Israel) fell to Assyria
    - 612 Ninevah fell to Babylon

- 586 Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem (Judah capital), most Jews moved to Nineveh
  - 539 Persians take over Babylon, Judeans allowed back
  - End of OT “History”
- 334 Alexander the Great Greek Empire (Macedonian)
- 323 he died, empire divided up by 5 major generals
  - Ptolemy I took Egypt and Syria including Judah
  - Series of wars between the others
  - Maccabees
  - The Maccabean revolt began after the king of the ruling Seleucid Empire, an empire founded after Alexander the Great’s death, did something that shocked the Jews. He entered the temple and sacrificed a pig upon the altar in the Holy of Holies, desecrating the space. Needless to say, the Jews didn’t receive this well. As a result, Judas “The Hammer” Maccabaeus (Maccabaeus means hammer) led a revolution and established his independent kingdom in Israel. He needed to join forces with various Jewish leaders to overpower the Seleucids. When his revolution succeeded, the Hasmonean dynasty began.
  - The Pharisees and Sadducees, the theologian groups most commonly mentioned in the Gospel accounts, developed after Judas Maccabeus established the Hasmonean dynasty. The Pharisees didn’t have much appreciation for the Hasmonean dynasty because the kings were not of the line of David. Consequently, the Hasmoneans joined forces with the Sadducees. That’s why the Sadducees held great positions of power in Jesus’ day, and were known as the more progressive upper-class group. By Jesus’ time, two other powerful groups—the Essenes who lived separate from society in the desert, and the Zealots who wanted to overthrow Rome—also existed.
  - After the Seleucids were driven out, the Jews needed to rededicate the temple—cleansing it of the impurities Antiochus Epiphanes had imposed upon it. During this time, the Jews lit a menorah to rededicate the temple. There was only enough oil for one night, but miraculously the menorah stayed lit for all eight nights needed to rededicate the temple. This became known as the feast of dedication (John 10:22-23), or Hanukkah as it’s known today.
- 164 altar of Zeus
- Greek was the language of business in the intertestamental period. During this time, the Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek. This translation, known as the Septuagint (which means 70 writers), was the dominant translation of the Bible in the New Testament era as well. It is the translation that the New Testament writers quote when they quote Scripture.
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- 63 BC Romans take over
  - Most Jews in Jesus’ day were clamoring for the Messiah to kick out the Roman oppressors.
- OT ends:
  - Mal 4:4-6
 

“Remember the Law of Moses, My servant,  
Which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel,  
With the statutes and judgments.  
5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet  
Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.  
6 And he will turn  
The hearts of the fathers to the children,

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Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

- NT:
  - Opens with John the Baptist
- I. Introduction
  - A. Only Luke mentions Zacharias & Elizabeth
- II. The Angel’s Announcement (Luke 1:2-15)
  - A. God chose Zacharias & Elizabeth because they were good. (1:6)  
6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.
  - B. Luke 1:8-9  
8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.
  - C. Priests likely only enjoyed special opportunity to serve in the temple once during their ministry. Too many priests, too many descendants of Levi for all to serve in the temple over the years. High priests assigned a turn to each of them for service
    - 1. Being a priest, Zacharias served two weeks out of each year in the temple, running from Sabbath day to Sabbath day. Thus each Sabbath had two divisions on duty at the same time, the one ending their turn and the one beginning their turn. Being of the division of Abijah, his division worked the eighth and thirty-second week of the year (**I Chronicles 24:1-19**).
    - 2. Josephus wrote that David “divided them also into courses; and when he had separated the priests from them, he found of these priest twenty-four courses, sixteen of their course of Eleazar, and eight of that of Ithamar; and he ordained that one course should minister to God eight days, from Sabbath to Sabbath. And thus were the courses distributed by lot, in the presence of David, and Zadok, and Abiathar the high priests and of all the rulers.”
      - i. It appears that the guards of the Temple followed the same schedule (**II Kings 11:4-9**).
    - 3. The particular duties to be served by each priest was determined randomly through the use of lots. Zacharias’s duty was to burn the incense, which was done twice a day (Exodus 30:7-8). The time of burning the incense was also the time for the people of Israel to offer prayers to God.
      - i. Ex 30:7-8: 7 “Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it. 8 And when Aaron lights the lamps [b]at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.
- III. Mute Zacharias (Luke 1:18-25)
  - A. Zacharias wanted a sign. The answer he got was not what he expected.
  - B. Mute for better part of a year (if she wasn’t pregnant yet)
  - C. Was he also deaf? 1:62
  - D. Why Elizabeth hid her pregnancy is not known
- IV. The Birth of John (Luke 1:57-66)
  - A. Theme of barrenness is common (Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Hannah, Samson’s mom (Judges 13:3))
  - B. **Nazirite? Samson and Samuel both dedicated to the Lord**
    - 1. Samson, Judg 13:2-5  
2 Now there was a certain man from Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. 3 And the

Angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, “Indeed now, you are barren and have borne no children, but you shall conceive and bear a son. 4 Now therefore, please be careful not to drink wine or similar drink, and not to eat anything unclean. 5 For behold, you shall conceive and bear a son. And no razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from the womb; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.”

2. Samuel, 1 Sam 1:11

11 Then she made a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”

C. Circumcised 8 days old (Gen 17:12, Lev 12:2-3). Received his name

1. Circumcised

i. Gen 17:10-12

10 This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised; 11 and you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you. 12 He who is eight days old among you shall be circumcised, every male child in your generations, he who is born in your house or bought with money from any foreigner who is not your descendant.

ii. Lev 12:2-3

2. Named after 8 days

i. A Jewish tradition had developed that a newborn child was named on the eighth day. Most attributed to the fact that Abram and Sarai's names were changed when Abram was circumcised (Genesis 17)

D. Not named after father but John meaning “the Lord’s gracious gift”

E. Matt 11:11: 11 “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

V. Conclusion

- A. God’s timing is more important than man’s
- B. Believe God’s word or there will be consequences
- C. God uses “ordinary people” to accomplish his work