

It was not uncommon in Israel for firstborn sons to be named after their father - for example, "Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus" (Mark 10:46 – "bar" in Hebrew meant "son"). Therefore, when it came time to name the firstborn son of the priest Zacharias and his wife, Elizabeth, their relatives assumed the child's name would be the same as his father. However, Elizabeth said his name would be John - a decision Zacharias confirmed.

The angel Gabriel, when revealing to Zacharias that his barren wife would conceive a son, said the boy's name would be John. For being skeptical of Gabriel's announcement, Zacharias was made mute until John was born. But apparently during Elizabeth's pregnancy, Zacharias had somehow communicated to her what the angel had said. Out of loyalty to God's will through Gabriel, and loyalty to her husband, Elizabeth confirmed the baby's name would be John - who became John The Baptist.

Loyalty means choosing a priority that might be different than your own personal preference. Loyalty to God *always* comes first.

Luke 1:59-60 "So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said: 'No; he shall be called John.'"