



## Prayer Focus

December 5–11, 2022

### A Second Chance

“Through the tender mercy of our God” (Luke 1:78 NKJV).

December is a month when we start looking back, often with regret as we recall what we did wrong and the opportunities we missed over the year. The story of John the Baptist’s birth is a reminder that God is bigger than our mistakes and He is well able to give us a second chance.

A few months before the angel Gabriel announces the birth of Christ to Mary, her relative Zacharias is burning incense before the Lord in the temple. His old prayer for a child is probably far from his mind in this solemn moment – and suddenly, there is Gabriel, standing at the right side of the altar!

As we know from his encounter with the angel, Zacharias does not believe that the Lord is finally going to give him and his barren wife their longed-for child. In the moment when he most needs to recall what God did for his ancestors Abraham and Sarah, Zacharias forgets. For this he is rendered mute.

That scene in the temple must have played over in his mind several times throughout Elizabeth’s pregnancy. And yet, because of the Lord’s tender mercy, Zacharias is given a second chance to display faith. When the time comes to name his son, he writes, “His name is John” (Luke 1:63).

For this act of faith, Zacharias's tongue is instantly loosed and he begins to praise God. Then he is filled with the Holy Spirit and makes one of the most eloquent prayers in the entire Bible! Please take a few moments to read [Luke 1:67-79](#) and to watch [this brief word on Zacharias](#).

This week let's pray for those who are looking back on 2022 with regret. Let's also give our own regrets to the Lord, repent of any unbelief, and receive a second chance "through the tender mercy of our God."

-Sharon Arpana Edwards