

# Luke 1:59

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child; and they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father.

## Analysis

The eighth-day circumcision demonstrates Zacharias and Elisabeth's covenant faithfulness, maintaining God's command from Abraham (Gen 17:12). The community's assumption that the child would be named Zacharias follows custom of naming after the father, showing how tradition can conflict with divine instruction. This sets up the dramatic moment when Elisabeth contradicts convention to obey God's specific command (v60). The circumcision ritual, incorporating the child into the covenant community, takes on special significance for the last and greatest prophet who would call Israel to covenant renewal. The naming controversy highlights that God's ways often contradict human expectations and traditions.

## Historical Context

Circumcision on the eighth day marked entrance into the Abrahamic covenant. Naming typically occurred at circumcision, with firstborn sons often named for fathers or grandfathers. The community gathering for this ceremony would witness both Elisabeth's and Zacharias's obedience to angelic instruction.

## Related Passages

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

## Study Questions

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1. How does obedience to God sometimes require breaking cultural traditions?
2. What is the significance of incorporating children into the covenant community?
3. How can we discern when to follow tradition versus when to depart from it?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ ὁγδόῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἥλθον

And it came to pass that on the eighth day they came

G2532 G1096 G1722 G3588 G3590 G2250 G2064

περιτεμεῖν τὸ παιδίον καὶ ἐκάλουν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τῷ

to circumcise the child And they called him after G3588

G4059 G3588 G3813 G2532 G2564 G846 G1909

ὄνοματι τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ Ζαχαρίαν

the name father him Zacharias

G3686 G3962 G846 G2197

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 17:12** (Parallel theme): And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed.

**Leviticus 12:3** (Parallel theme): And in the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised.

**Luke 2:21** (Parallel theme): And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

**Philippians 3:5** (Parallel theme): Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

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