

# 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

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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

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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

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**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	ὀγδόῃ	ἡμέρᾳ	ἦλθον
And	it came to pass	that on	G3588	the eighth	day	they came
G2532	G1096	G1722		G3590	G2250	G2064
περιτεμεῖν	τὸ	παιδίον	καὶ	ἐκάλουν	αὐτοῦ	ἐπὶ τῷ
to circumcise	G3588	the child	And	they called	him	after
G4059		G3813	G2532	G2564	G846	G1909
ὀνόματι	τοῦ	πατρὸς	αὐτοῦ	Ζαχαρίαν		
the name	G3588	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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