

## **Announcements**

### **Annunciation to Zacharias about John the Baptist**

**October 10, 7 B.C.**

**Luke 1:5-25**

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**Text:**

**Luke 1:5-25,**

**5. In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.**

**6. Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.**

**7. But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.**

**8. Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,**

**9. he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.**

**10. And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.**

**11. Then the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.**

**12. When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.**

**13. But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John.**

**14. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,**

**15. for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.**

**16. Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God.**

**17. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”**

**18. Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”**

**19. The angel answered, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.**

**20. And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time.”**

**21. Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.**

**22. When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.**

**23. When his time of service was completed, he returned home.**

**24. After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion.**

**25. “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”**

## **Introduction:**

I. A prime duty of John the Baptist was to introduce Christ to the world of his day.

A. **Isaiah 40:3-5, A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the Lord; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the Lord**

**will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”**

B. The prime duty of present day Christians is to introduce Christ by word and deed to the world of our day.

II. All four authors of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) stressed the vital importance of the ministry of John the Baptist.

### **Commentary:**

**Luke 1:5, In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.**

I. Characters introduced:

A. Herod, called The Great, king of Judaea, an unscrupulous Idumean who had been appointed ruler of several Palestinian provinces by the Roman Senate in return for large contributions made to Octavius.

1. Herod reigned from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. He died 04-01-04 B.C.
2. The events of this lesson are dated somewhere between 6 B.C. and 4 B.C.

B. Zecharias (Jehovah is renowned) was a priest who served in the course of Abijah.

1. No further mention is made of Zechariah in the Bible after the events of this chapter.

2. Priests were divided into 24 groups and their service in the temple was scheduled on a rotational basis (1 Chronicles 24:1-19), specific jobs being determined by the casting of lots.

C. Elizabeth, wife of Zechariah, was also a descendant of Aaron of the tribe of Levi.

1. Elizabeth was a relative of Mary the mother of Jesus (Luke 1:36) on her mother's side. Tribal membership was determined by paternal lineage.

**Luke 1:6, Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.**

I. Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were:

A. Righteous before God.

B. Blameless.

C. Obedient to all God's commands and ordinances.

II. "Righteousness" defined:

**A. Romans 1:5, Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith.**

**B. Romans 16:26, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey him.**

**Luke 1:7, But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years. NIV**

I. Zechariah and Elizabeth had no children because:

A. Elizabeth was barren, unable to conceive.

B. They were both now past child bearing years.

II. Childlessness was regarded as a particularly regrettable state among Jewish people of that time.

**Luke 1:8-9, Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.**

I. Zachariah was faithfully discharging his temple duties pertaining to burning incense. Being appointed to burn incense was regarded as an honor.

**Luke 1:10, And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.**

I. While Zechariah was burning incense in the temple a large multitude gathered outside for prayer.

**A. Exodus 30:6-8, Put the altar in front of the curtain that is before the ark of the Testimony – before the atonement cover that is over the Testimony – where I will meet with you. “Aaron must burn fragrant incense on the altar every morning when he tends the lamps. He must burn incense again when he lights the lamps at twilight. He will burn incense regularly before the Lord for the generations to come.**

- B. The multitude waited for the priest's benediction following the burning of incense.

**Luke 1:11, Then the angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.**

I. An angel appeared to Zechariah.

- A. The angel was standing on the right (north) side of the altar of incense.
- B. The clear teachings of both the Old and New Testaments attest to the existence of angels.

**Luke 1:12, When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.**

- I. When Zechariah saw this unusual, infrequent angelic appearance he was troubled and fearful.
- II. The angel could have been the bearer of either good or bad news.

**Luke 1:13, But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John.**

- I. The angel reassured Zechariah that he had nothing to fear.
- II. The angel announced that Zechariah's prayers had been answered, that . . .
  - A. he and Elizabeth would have a child.

B. the child's name would be John (lover of God).

**Luke 1:14, He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth.**

I. Joy and gladness would bless Zechariah and Elizabeth in regard to Elizabeth's expectancy and John's birth.

**Luke 1:15, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth.**

I. John would be:

A. Great in the sight, view of the Lord.

B. Nazirite from birth which precluded drinking strong drink.

C. Filled with the Holy Spirit.

**II. Number 6:1-21, The Lord said to Moses "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the Lord as a Nazirite, he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. As long as he is a Nazirite, he must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins. "During the entire period of his vow of separation no razor may be used on his head. He must be holy until the period of his separation to the Lord is over; he must let the hair of his head grow long. Throughout the period of his separation to the Lord he must not go near a dead body. Even if his own father or mother or brother or sister dies, he must not make himself ceremonially**

unclean on account of them, because the symbol of his separation to God is on his head. Throughout the period of his separation he is consecrated to the Lord. “If someone dies suddenly in his presence, thus defiling the hair he has dedicated, he must shave his head on the day of his cleansing – the seventh day. Then on the eighth day he must bring two doves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. The priest is to offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to make atonement for him because he sinned by being in the presence of the dead body. That same day he is to consecrate his head. He must dedicate himself to the Lord for the period of his separation and must bring a year-old lamb as a guilt offering. The previous days do not count, because he became defiled during his separation. “Now this is the law for the Nazirite when the period of his separation is over. He is to be brought to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. There he is to present his offerings to the Lord: a year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering, a year-old ewe lamb without defect for a sin offering, a ram without defect for a fellowship offering, together with their grain offerings and drink offerings, and a basket of bread made without yeast – cakes made of fine flour mixed with oil, and wafers spread with oil. “The priest is to present them before the Lord and make the sin offering and the burnt offering. He is to present the basket of unleavened bread and is to sacrifice the ram as a fellowship offering to the Lord, together with its grain offering and drink offering. “Then at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, the Nazirite must shave off the hair that he dedicated. He is to take the hair and put it in the fire that is under the sacrifice of the fellowship offering. “After the Nazirite has shaved off the hair of his dedication, the priest is to place in his hands a boiled shoulder of the ram, and a cake and a wafer from the basket, both made without yeast. The priest shall then wave them before the Lord as a wave offering; they are holy and belong to the priest, together with the breast that was waved and the thigh that was presented. After that, the Nazirite may drink wine. “This is the law of the Nazirite who

**vows his offering to the Lord in accordance with his separation, in addition to whatever else he can afford. He must fulfill the vow he has made, according to the law of the Nazirite.”**

**Luke 1:16, Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God.**

I. John would turn many people of Israel to the Lord.

**A. Matthew 3:1-12, In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. “I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will**

**B.**

**clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”**

**Luke 1:17, And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”**

I. John would:

A. Go before God’s face, would serve with God’s approval and as Christ’s herald.

B. Do his work in the spirit and power of Elijah.

1. **Malachi 4:5-6, “See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”**

C. Turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, the fathers including Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to rebellious Israelites.

D. Encourage the disobedient to walk in the wisdom of the just.

E. Make ready a people prepared for God.

**Luke 1:18, Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”**

I. Zechariah could not believe his eyes and ears.

II. He asked for a sign to confirm the angel's word.

III. There was an element of unbelief in Zechariah's question.

**Luke 1:19, The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.**

I. The angel was an archangel, Gabriel by name.

A. Gabriel stands in the presence of God.

B. God had sent Gabriel to Zechariah with this announcement.

II. Only two of God's angels are named in scripture, but there are seven archangels in all.

A. Michael -

1. **Daniel 10:21, but first I will tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one supports me against them except Michael, your prince.)**

B. Unnamed -

1. **Jude 9, But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"**
2. **Revelation 8:2, And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets.**

C. Gabriel -

1. **Luke 1:19, The angel answered, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.”**

**Luke 1:20, And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time.”**

I. Because Zechariah doubted the angel’s promise, Zechariah would be unable to speak (mute) until John was born.

II. Zechariah evidently also lost his hearing until John was born.

III. Zechariah did not believe the words of the angel and, as a result, lost his own words, ability to speak.

**Luke 1:21, Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.**

I. The assembled multitude was perplexed by Zechariah’s late appearance following the burning of incense.

II. The appearance of the angel and its aftermath must have taken a certain amount of time and “unnerved” Zechariah causing the delay.

**Luke 1:22, When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.**

I. When Zechariah appeared the multitude realized he could not speak and concluded that he had seen an angel.

II. Zechariah could not pronounce the customary benediction on the praying multitude because of his inability to speak!

**Luke 1:23, When his time of service was completed, he returned home.**

I. Even though Zechariah was suddenly struck deaf and speechless he did not take “sick leave” from his temple duty, but stayed on the job until his service rotation was completed.

II. Zechariah then went home.

**Luke 1:24, 25, After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. “The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”**

I. After these events Elizabeth conceived.

A. She remained in private at home for 5 months following conception.

1. This could have been to avoid questions – with possible attendant embarrassment related to pregnancy for an aged lady.

2. This could also have enabled Elizabeth to follow singlemindedly health measures which would lead to normal fetal development.

B. God’s looking upon people was a way of saying that God was watching over them to protect and bless them.

1. **Psalm 33:18, But the eyes of the Lord are on those who fear him, on those whose hope is in his unfailing love.**

C. God by this pregnancy took away her reproach, disgrace among men.

1. Barrenness was, among the Jews, regarded as a major sign of God's displeasure.

## Annunciation to Zechariah about John the Baptist

### Questions

1. A prime duty of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ was to introduce \_\_\_\_\_ to the  
\_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_, called \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, an unscrupulous  
\_\_\_\_\_ who had been appointed ruler of several Palestinian  
provinces by the \_\_\_\_\_ in return for  
large \_\_\_\_\_ made to \_\_\_\_\_ reigned from  
\_\_\_\_\_ B.C. to \_\_\_\_\_ B.C.
3. \_\_\_\_\_, which means \_\_\_\_\_ is  
\_\_\_\_\_, was a priest who served with the course of  
\_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_, wife of \_\_\_\_\_, was also a descendant  
of \_\_\_\_\_ of the tribe of \_\_\_\_\_.  
\_\_\_\_\_ was a relative of \_\_\_\_\_ on her mother's  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. The parents of \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ were both \_\_\_\_\_ in the  
\_\_\_\_\_, observing all  
the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_'s job was to \_\_\_\_\_  
in the temple. While doing his work in the temple an \_\_\_\_\_  
of the \_\_\_\_\_ appeared to him and said, "Your wife

\_\_\_\_\_ will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name \_\_\_\_\_.

7. \_\_\_\_\_ would be great in the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord, a \_\_\_\_\_ from birth and \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_.

8. \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, to make ready a people \_\_\_\_\_ for the \_\_\_\_\_.

9. The angel who appeared to \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ was \_\_\_\_\_, an archangels. The only other archangel named in the Bible is \_\_\_\_\_.

10. Since \_\_\_\_\_ doubted the angel's word that he and his wife \_\_\_\_\_ would have a child in their advanced age, \_\_\_\_\_ was to be \_\_\_\_\_ and not able to \_\_\_\_\_ until their son was born.

11. When the people who had gathered at the temple saw \_\_\_\_\_ they \_\_\_\_\_ he could not \_\_\_\_\_ to them and concluded that he had seen a \_\_\_\_\_.

12. After he returned home, \_\_\_\_\_ his wife \_\_\_\_\_ became \_\_\_\_\_.

13. \_\_\_\_\_ said, "The \_\_\_\_\_ has done this for me. In these days he has shown his \_\_\_\_\_ and taken away my \_\_\_\_\_ among the \_\_\_\_\_.

14. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ was the \_\_\_\_\_ of one calling in the \_\_\_\_\_, "Prepare the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_."

15. The prime duty of present day \_\_\_\_\_ is to introduce \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to the world of our day.

16. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ died on 04-01-4 B.C., \_\_\_\_\_.

17. Priests were divided into \_\_\_\_\_ groups and their service in the temple was scheduled on a \_\_\_\_\_ basis, specifics being determined by the casting of \_\_\_\_\_.

18. The people waited outside the temple for the \_\_\_\_\_ following the \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_.

19. When \_\_\_\_\_ saw the angel standing on the \_\_\_\_\_ (north) side of the altar, he was \_\_\_\_\_ and was gripped with \_\_\_\_\_.

20. \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_ was a \_\_\_\_\_ from his birth which required that he abstain from \_\_\_\_\_ and other \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ juice, grapes and \_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_ could not go near a \_\_\_\_\_ and was not allowed to cut his \_\_\_\_\_.