

“God Has Visited & Redeemed His People!”

Luke 1:57-80

Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a Son. When her neighbors & relatives heard how the Lord Had Shown Great Mercy To Her, They Rejoiced With Her. 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. But his mother said, *“No; he shall be Called John!”* But they said to her, *“There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name!”* So they made signs to his father as to what he desired to call him. And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, *“His Name is John!”* So they all marveled. Immediately His Mouth Was Opened and His Tongue Loosed, & He Spoke, Praising God. Then Fear Came On All Who Dwelt Around Them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, *“What kind of child will this be?”* And the Hand of the Lord was with Him (John). Now His Father Zacharias Was Filled With The Holy Spirit, and Prophetied, *“Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has Visited and Redeemed His People, and has raised up a Horn of Salvation for us In the House of His Servant David, as He spoke by the Mouth of His Holy Prophets, who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His Holy Covenant, the Oath which He Swore to Our Father Abraham. To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before Him all the days of our life. And you, Child, will be called the Prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the Face Of The Lord To Prepare His Ways, To Give Knowledge Of Salvation To His People By The Remission Of Their Sins, Through The Tender Mercy Of Our God, with which the Dayspring From On High Has Visited Us; To Give Light To Those Who Sit In Darkness and The Shadow Of Death, To Guide Our Feet Into The Way Of Peace!”* So the Child John Grew and Became Strong In The Spirit and was in the desert till the Day of His Manifestation to Israel.

Luke 1:57-80 (NKJV)

We should recognize that this story concerning the birth of John the Baptist conforms to a unique Lukan format that is repeated 4 different times by the gospel writer in 6 consecutive passages concerning the events surrounding that First Christmas. Here in this passage we see the **Sign Fulfilled** and the **Evidence Of Fulfillment** that was given by the Archangel Gabriel to Zacharias followed by his **Response Of Praise** concluding the first of these four occurrences:

Handout I

“Luke’s Narrative Story Pattern - Birth of Jesus”

Luke's Historical Acts of Faith/Song of Praise Pattern

<u>Promise of God:</u>	Zacharias' Wife, Elizabeth Who Was Infertile & Unable To Have Children Would Bear A Son In Her Old Age	Luke 1:5-17
	There Will Be Great Rejoicing At His Birth	Luke 1:14
<u>Character:</u>	Zacharias	Luke 1:5
<u>Sign Fulfilled:</u>	Zacharias' Voice Was Restored As Soon As As His Son Was Born & He Named Him John	Luke 1:64-65
<u>Evidence of Fulfillment:</u>	John The Baptist, His Son Is Born	Luke 1:57
	Neighbors & Relatives Rejoice With Zacharias & Elizabeth At John's Birth & Circumcision	Luke 1:58-59a
<u>Response of Praise:</u>	Song Of Zacharias	Luke 1:67-79

Luke also saw and drew upon the parallels of the circumstances, the method of the announcement, and the actual events surrounding the birth of Isaac to Abraham and Sarah.

This later parallel between the birth of Isaac and John is portrayed by Luke in the following:

Handout II

“Luke's Birth & Circumcision Comparisons of Isaac & John” Two Promises Made By Archangel Gabriel To Zacharias Come True

1) John Is Born

Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered and she brought forth a son! **Luke 1:57**

Through the life of John, God simultaneously remembers the faithfulness of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and blesses them, while also remembering and blessing Israel!

2) Zacharias & Elizabeth's Relatives & Neighbors Rejoice & Celebrate John's Birth

When her neighbors & relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they came rejoiced with her!” **Luke 1:58**

The rejoicing recorded in verse 58 finally lifts the disgrace felt by Elizabeth because of her infertility.

The disgrace Elizabeth said she felt was being lifted by God in verse 25 is now officially a thing of the past and a matter of fact in the flesh & blood of John her son!

And while her relatives (Mary included) rejoice with her and show honor to her, Elizabeth chooses to give the honor to God instead:

Here Again Elizabeth Praise Her God

“The Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my reproach among the people.” **Luke 1:25**

While Elizabeth remained faithful to God throughout the past nine months;

Zacharias has been under the judgment of God, remaining mute because of his unbelief.

John Name Means “God Is Gracious” / “Full Of God's Grace”

- 1) God Is Gracious To Zechariah & Elizabeth**
- 2) God Is Gracious To Israel**
- 3) God Is Gracious To The Whole World**

At that Very Moment, Zachariah's Voice Returns & He Begins to Give God the Praise & Worship Due To Him!

This Sudden Intervention Of Zachariah's Praise From Being Mute

Is An Act Of God That Luke Calls A “Sign” & Today We Call A “Miracle”

And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time!” **Luke 1:19-20**

**Before Looking In Detail What Zacharias Prophecies We Will First Focus On What The
Neighbors & Relatives Experience**

- 1) Fear
- 2) Awe
- 3) Wonder

Then fear (awe) came on all who dwelt around them; & all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" Luke 1:65-66b

Notice also that our story opens with a birth celebration centered around John's circumcision on the 8th day after his birth. In spite of a moment of doubt by Zacharias, both he and his wife are righteous followers of God because they have their son circumcised on the 8th day after his birth in accordance with the covenant God made Abraham and his descendants after him!

I. Zachariah's Song Is A "Declarative Prophetic Psalm"

II. Zechariah Song Is A "Remembrance Of God's Faithfulness"

III. Zachariah's Song Is A Revelation Of God's Plan - "Salvation For All The World"

IV. Zachariah's Song Is A Praise To God For "His Divine Visitation & Fulfillment"

V. Zechariah's Song Is A "Prophetic Concerning His Son John"

Zacharias' Response Is An Ancient Psalm Of Praise

I. Zachariah's Song Is A "Declarative Prophetic Psalm"

- A. Benediction & Prophecy v 68
- B. Past Tense Format – "What God Has Already Done!" vs 70-74a
- C. Present & Future Prophecy
 - 1. Present Tense Format - "What God Is Currently Doing!" vs 74b-75
 - 2. Future Tense Format – "What God Is About to Do!" vs 76-79

II. Zechariah Song Is A "Remembrance Of God's Faithfulness"

- "That we should be saved from our enemies & from the hand of all who hate us!" (Psalm 106) v 71*
- A. Covenant With Abraham vs 72-73
 - B. Covenant With Moses vs 72-74a
 - C. Liberation From Egypt vs 71 & 74a
 - D. Liberation From Babylon vs 71 & 74a
 - E. Reason for Liberation vs 74b-75

Zechariah's Message To Us Today

"(That we) Might serve Him without fear, in holiness & righteousness before Him all the days of our life!" vs 1:74b-75

III. Zachariah's Song Is A Revelation Of God's Plan - "Salvation For All The World"

- A. John's Part In Preparing The People – Preaching, Teaching & Baptism of Repentance
- B. Jesus' Part In Bringing God's Plan To Fulfillment – Life, Death, & Resurrection
- C. Salvation Is For All But Delivered In Stages:
 - 1. First To Neighbors & Relatives vs 57-65
 - 2. Next To Israel - "God's Chosen People" vs 68-78
 - 3. Last To Gentiles – "Everyone Else" v 79

- IV. Zachariah's Song Is A Praise To God For "His Divine Visitation & Fulfillment"**
- A. Divine Visitation By God – Jesus/Emmanuel - "God Forever With Us"** vs 68-69
 - 1. Horn Of Salvation Coming In Power To Save v 69
 - 2. "The Prophet" Promised By Moses v 70
 - B. People Expected A Simultaneous Salvation Both Spiritual & Social/Political**
 - C. Salvation Made Available To All!** v 77
 - 1. "Jesus Our Visible High Priest" Spiritual Salvation Here & Now!
 - 2. "Jesus Our Coming King Of Kings" Social/Political Salvation In The Future!
- IV. Zachariah's Song Is A Praise To God For "His Divine Visitation & Fulfillment"**
- D. Year Of Jubilee – "All Of Israel Will Be Redeemed"** vs 78-79
 - E. New Covenant Is Dawning** vs 78-79
 - 1. Fulfilling & Surpassing The Old Covenant
 - 2. What God Is Doing Now Exceeds All He Did Before
 - F. Divine Illumination – "Dayspring From On High"...To Give Light To The World!** vs 78b-79a
 Hear Again The Prophet Isaiah
"The people who walked in darkness have seen a Great Light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a Light Has Shined!" Isaiah 9:2
"Arise; shine; for your Light Has Come! And the Glory of the Lord is Risen Upon You. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and deep darkness the people; but the Lord Will Arise Over You, and His Glory Will Be Seen Upon You. The Gentiles shall come to Your Light, and Kings to the Brightness of Your Rising!" Isaiah 60:1-3
- IV. Zachariah's Song Is A Praise To God For "His Divine Visitation & Fulfillment"**
- G. Visitation of God Brings Either:**
 - 1. Judgment, Banishment, & Curse
 - 2. Grace, Forgiveness, & Blessing vs 68-79
 - A. Mercy Shown In The Past: OT "Steadfast Love" v 72
 - B. Mercy Shown In The Future: NT "Tender Mercy" v 78
- IV. Zachariah's Song Is A Praise To God For "His Divine Visitation & Fulfillment"**
- H. Cosmic Redemption Is Coming**
 - 1. Forces Of Darkness In Opposition To God Will Be Defeated
 - 2. Forces Of Light Bring Victory & Peace Led By The "Light" – "Dayspring" vs 78-79
- V. Zechariah's Song Is A "Prophetic Concerning His Son John"**
- A. John As The Forerunner Of The Messiah** v 76
 - B. John As Prophet** v 76
 - 1. Compared With Prophets Of Old v 70
 - 2. Prophet Of The Most High v 76
 - C. John Is Subordinate To Jesus** vs 76 & 78
 - D. John Compared To David**
 - 1. Servant v 69
 - 2. Son v 76

E. John Fulfills Isaiah's Prophecy

vs 76-77

"Comfort, Yes, Comfort My People!" Says your God. "Speak Comfort to Jerusalem, & cry out to her, that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins." The Voice of One Crying in the Wilderness: "Prepare the Way of the Lord; Make Straight in the Desert a Highway for Our God. Every Valley shall Be Exalted & Every Mountain and Hill Brought Low; the Crooked Places shall be Made Straight & the Rough Places Smooth; the Glory of the Lord Shall Be Revealed, and All Flesh Shall See It Together; for the Mouth of the Lord Has Spoken."

Isaiah 40:1-5

F. John Is A Prophet To The Promised "Great Prophet"

v 80

"So, the child grew & became strong in spirit, & was in the desert till the day of his manifestation to Israel."

Luke 1:80

"And he Will Turn Many of the Children of Israel to the Lord Their God. He will also go before Him in the Spirit & Power of Elijah, 'To Turn The Hearts of the Fathers to the Children', and the Disobedient to the Wisdom of the Just, to Make Ready a People Prepared for the Lord!"

Luke 1:16-17

Today we are reminded of the great events that led up to the birth of John and ultimately to Jesus Christ & how God chooses to use His servants, people like Zacharias, Elizabeth, & John to do His will.

Let Me Ask Us All This Morning Just One Question & Provide An Answer?

Q

"What Is Similar About Zechariah's Day, John's Day, & Our Day?"

A

God Still Chooses To Bring His Will To The World Through His Willing Servants - You & I

A

**We Each Have A Mission To Go Into The World Like Zechariah & John,
Testifying About The Great Gift, We Have Been Given From God Our Father,
His Only Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord!**

**This Christmas You & I Have A Great Opportunity,
To Be Modern Forerunners Of Jesus' Second Coming,
To Be Modern Evangelists In The
"Spirit & Power Of Elijah & John The Baptist",
Announcing Christ's Soon Second Coming,
When He Will Forever Be Our Emmanuel!**

**Let Us Tell Everyone We Meet & Greet This Christmas Season
We Are Living Proof Today That
"God Has Indeed Visited & Redeemed His People!"**