



DON ANDERSON MINISTRIES

STATION A
P. O. BOX 6611
TYLER, TEXAS 75711

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 1:5-80

I. Introduction of the Parents v. 5-7

v. 5 There was in the days of Herod, King of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

v. 6 And they were both righteous in the sight of God, ordering their lives blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.

v. 7 And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both had gone far in their days.

II. Gabriel Visits Zacharias v. 8-23

v. 8 Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division,

v. 9 According to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot when he entered into the temple of the Lord to burn incense.

v.10 And all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of the burning of the incense.

v.11 Now there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

v.12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

v.13 But the angel said to him, "Stop fearing Zacharias, because your petition has been heard and your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son and you shall call his name John.

v.14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will be rejoicing at his birth.

v.15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

v.16 And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.

v.17 And he will go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; to prepare for the Lord a people having been made ready.

v.18 And Zacharias said to the angel: "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife has advanced in her days."

v.19 And the angel answering said to him: "I am Gabriel the one who stands before God and I was sent to speak to you and to bring to you this good news.

v.20 And behold you shall be silent and not able to speak until the day these things come to be, because you believed not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season."

v.21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias and they marvelled while he tarried in the temple.

v.22 But when he came out, he was not able to speak to them, and they knew that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he continued beckoning them (making signs) and he remained dumb.

v.23 And it came to be when the days of his ministry were fulfilled, he went to his house.

III. Elizabeth Is Pregnant v. 24-25

v.24 Now after these days, Elizabeth his wife conceived and hid herself five months, saying,

v.25 "For in this way the Lord has dealt with me in days wherein he looked upon (me) to take away my reproach among men."

IV. Gabriel Visits Mary v. 26-38

v.26 Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, the name Nazareth,

v.27 To a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David and the name of the virgin, Mary.

v.28 And coming in, he said to her, "Hail! You who have been endued with grace, the Lord is with you."

v.29 Now she was greatly troubled at the saying and was considering of what sort a greeting this might be.

v.30 And the angel said to her, "Fear not, Mary, for you have found grace with God.

v.31 And behold you will conceive in your womb and you will bring forth a son and you will call his name Jesus.

v.32 This one shall be great and he shall be called Son of (the) Most High and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David.

v.33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and to his kingdom there shall be no end.

v.34 But Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be since I am not knowing a man?"

v.35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, wherefore also the one begotten shall be called holy, the Son of God.

v.36 And behold Elizabeth your kinswoman she also has conceived a son in her old age and this is the sixth month to her, the one called barren.

v.37 For no word from God shall be impossible."

v.38 Now Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it unto me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

V. Mary Visits Elizabeth v. 39-56

v.39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste to a city of Judah.

v.40 And she went into the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

v.41 And it came to be when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

v.42 And she lifted up her voice with a loud cry and said: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.

v.43 And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

v.44 For behold when the voice of your greeting came into my ears the baby in my womb leaped in exultation.

v.45 And blessed is she who believed for it shall be completed, the things having been spoken to her by the Lord."

v.46 And Mary said: "My soul is magnifying the Lord.

v.47 And my spirit rejoiced in God my Saviour.

v.48 For He looked upon the low estate of His handmaid, for behold from now all generations shall call me blessed.

v.49 For the Mighty One did great things for me, and holy is His name.

v.50 And His mercy is from generation to generation to the ones fearing Him.

v.51 He showed strength in His arm. He scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

v.52 He tore down princes from their thrones and exalted them of low estate.

v.53 The hungry ones He filled with good and the rich ones He sent away empty.

v.54 And He helped Israel His servant that He might remember mercy.

v.55 Even as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever."

v.56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned unto her house.

VI. The Birth of John v. 57-80

v.57 Now Elizabeth's time was fulfilled to be delivered and she brought forth a son.

v.58 And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord magnified his mercy towards her and they were rejoicing with her.

v.59 And it came to be on the eighth day, they came to circumcize the child, and they were going to call him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

- v.60 And his mother answered and said: "No indeed but he shall be called John."
- v.61 And they said to her that there is none of your relatives called by this name.
- v.62 And they were making signs to his father, as to what he might desire him to be called.
- v.63 And he asked for a writing tablet and he wrote saying John is his name and they all marvelled.
- v.64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he was speaking blessing God.
- v.65 And fear came upon all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.
- v.66 And all who heard them laid them up in their heart, saying: "What then shall this child be? For indeed the hand of the Lord is with him."
- v.67 And Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying;
- v.68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and made redemption for His people.
- v.69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of David His servant--
- v.70 Even as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old--
- v.71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who are hating us;
- v.72 To show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant,
- v.73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,
- v.74 To give to us that we being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear,
- v.75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.
- v.76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways;
- v.77 To give to His people the knowledge of salvation, by the forgiveness of their sins,
- v.78 Because of the heart of mercy of our God, in that the sun rising from on high shall visit us,
- v.79 To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace."
- v.80 And the child was growing and becoming strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Want to be treated with a little
More respect Now that I'm An
AGGie's Dad

Bumper sticker upside down: I'm An AGGie's Dad!!

A + M Graduation: President Van Diver:

" We Are About to unleash on An innocent
And unsuspecting world Another class
of Aggie Graduates And in A Year's Time
The Longhorns will be calling you boss!!

Two monkeys And An AGGie sitting on
a limb what's the AGGie: " He's the branch manager "

Tapes!!

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Luke 1:5-80

INTRODUCTION:

The Word of God exhorts us in several places to humility:

1 Peter 5:5

"Yea, all of you gird yourselves with humility to serve one another, for God resisteth the proud but giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time."

Philippians 2:3,4

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory but in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others."

Where there is strife, it is simply the proud and selfish attempting to get glory.

Romans 12:3

"Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you all."

Charles Haddon Spurgeon said, "Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self."

One poet put it this way:

I have the cutest ego
Important neat and prim.
He thinks he's fine and dandy,
No other quite like him.

He always makes excuses
For all that I do wrong,

He never blames me any
But flatters me along.

He knows just why I blunder,
He sees the whole thing through,
So kind and very tender,
To me but not to you.

Today I got to see him,
His camouflage was thin.
A boastful evil fellow
Coal black and vile as sin.

No longer I'll protect him,
I'll bring him to the light.
He is a mean deceiver,
His judgment is not right.

If you by chance should spy him,
Just rap him on the head.
'Twill do me good, for really,
That fellow should be dead.

Another writer said it so well:

Sometime when you're feeling important,
Sometime when you're ego's way up,
Sometime when you take it for granted
That you are the prize-winning pup.
Sometime when you feel that your absence
Would leave an unfillable hole,
Just follow these simple instructions
And see how it humbles your soul:

Take a bucket and fill it with water,
Put your hand in it up to your wrist,
Now pull it out fast and the hole that remains
Is the measure of how you'll be missed.

You may splash all you please as you enter,
And stir up the water galore,
But stop and you'll find in a minute
It's back where it was before.

John 3:26-30

"And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across Jordan, to whom you have borne witness, behold, this one is baptizing and all are coming to him." John answered and said, "A man is not able to receive even one thing except it has been given him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but that I have been sent before that one.' The one having the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, the one who stands expectant and hears him, with joy is rejoicing because of the voice of the bridegroom. This, therefore, my joy has been fulfilled. It is necessary for that one to continually become greater, but for me, to continually be made less."

PRIDE is the subtle instrument used by Satan to accomplish his three-fold objective for all of mankind:

1. His first objective is to keep us out of God's family because our pride will never admit a need.
2. When we become part of the family, he wants to keep us childish and carnal because pride wants to do it our way.
3. Pride, once again, comes into those who've walked with the Lord for many years, and that is a pride over the level of spiritual maturity.

*Sermons Are for Someone else !
Don You Are Just too basic !!*

It is going to be our pleasure and privilege in this message to consider one of the loveliest passages in Scripture. We will consider the BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST in Luke 1:5-80.

I. INTRODUCTION OF THE PARENTS v.5-7

v. 5 There was in the days of Herod, King of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

In the days of Herod the Great, King of Judea, there are two people that come to our attention:

1. ZACHARIAS - He is a priest. This, therefore, tells us that he is of the tribe of Levi, and he is of the division of Abijah.

In David's day the priesthood was divided into 24 orders. These various orders served the temple for a period of two weeks annually.

2. ELIZABETH - "His wife was of the daughters of Aaron." She too came from a very special line, and her name was Elizabeth.

"Zacharias" means "God remembers." "Elizabeth" means "His oath." When you put these together, "God remembers His oath."

Psalm 89:34-36

"My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter the utterance of my lips. Once I have sworn by my holiness, I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before me."

v. 6 And they were both righteous in the sight of God, ordering their lives blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.

"Man looks on the outward appearance but God looks upon the heart." And as God looked upon their hearts, they were both righteous.

This manifested itself in their conduct as they ordered their lives blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.

v. 7 And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both had gone far in their days.

They had no children and so Elizabeth joins Sarah and Rebekah and Rachel and others in not being able to have children.

Genesis 30:1

"Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister, and she said to Jacob, 'Give me children, or else I die.'"

"And they both had gone far in their days."

The illustration told by Hugh Clayton, time sure made a mess of you, didn't it?

In these first 3 verses we have been introduced to Zach and Liz, two of the very important characters in our story. They both were godly people, and they had been entrusted with a trial. Elizabeth could not have children.

II. GABRIEL VISITS ZACHARIAS v. 8-23

v. 8 Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division,

It was time for Zacharias to perform his two-week tour of duty at the temple because the order of Abijah was called upon at this time to do this.

v. 9 According to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot when he entered into the temple of the Lord to burn incense.

This was a very special privilege.

He would be going to the golden altar in front of the veil, at the place of prayer at 3:00 p.m. in the afternoon to put the incense on the altar.

v.10 And all the multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of the burning of the incense.

v.11 Now there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

v.12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him.

When a supernatural touches the natural, it always creates fear, as we are going to see in the responses of Zacharias and of Mary.

v.13 But the angel said to him, "Stop fearing Zacharias, because your petition has been heard and your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son and you shall call his name John."

Zacharias, don't get shook! Here's your answer.

Genesis 25:21

"And Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife because she was barren. And the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived."

Zach, don't be afraid!:

1. Your petition has been heard--and guess what! You got a "yes."

2. Your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son.

3. You shall call his name John.

God here breaks into human history after 400 years of silence. Both of them had been praying for a son.

Man's extremity is often God's opportunity.
God's delays are not His denials.

v.14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will be rejoicing at his birth.

The angelic message has five parts:

1. Your petition has been heard

2. Your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son

3. You shall call his name John

4. You will have joy and gladness

5. Many will be rejoicing at his birth.

v.15 For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb.

Here and in verses 16 and 17 we have the five reasons that Zach and Liz will have joy and gladness and that many others will be rejoicing in his birth:

1. "He shall be great in the sight of the Lord."

Matt. 11:7-11

"And as these were going away, Jesus began to say to the multitudes concerning John, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at, a reed shaken by the wind? But what did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings' palaces.

But why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes. I tell you, and one who is more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it was written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you." Truly I say to you, among those born of women there has not arisen anyone greater than John the Baptist. Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

2. "and he will drink no wine or liquor"

From this we learn that John was to be a Nazarite, that is, set apart unto the Lord for a special service.

3. "he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb"

We will note this happening a little later in the passage.

v.16 And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God.

v.17 And he will go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, to prepare for the Lord a people having been made ready.

4. The fourth thing we learn "He will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God."

The record of the Gospels and of His life certainly indicate this.

5. "He will go before his face in the spirit and power of Elijah."

He will be a forerunner of the Lord. There are several things that he is going to do in going before the Lord's face in the spirit and power of Elijah:

1. To turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children
2. the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous
3. To prepare for the Lord a people having been made ready.

Amos 4:12

"Prepare to meet your God."

Isaiah 40:3

"A voice is calling, 'Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness. Make smooth in the desert the highway for our God.'"

Malachi 3:1

"Behold, I am going to send my messenger and he will clear the way before me, and the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple. And the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight; behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts."

v.18 And Zacharias said to the angel: "Whereby shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife has advanced in her days."

Zacharias is looking at it strictly from a human point of view.

He as a priest certainly should have known that when God promises something or obligates himself to something, He will in fact accomplish that.

He has prayed often, O God give me a son. And now God has said I am going to give you a son, and Zacharias says, "How do I know? We are both old and there is no way, José." There is no faith at all in this situation.

"I don't believe you, for people as old as we are do not become parents."

SKEPTICISM with regard to God's promises is inexcusable.

Genesis 18:9-15

"Then they said to him, 'Where is Sara, your wife?' And he said, 'Behold, in the tent.' And he said, 'I will surely return to you at this time next year, and behold, Sara your wife shall have a son.' And Sara was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sara were old, advanced in age. It had ceased to be with Sara after the manner of women. And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, 'After I have become old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?' And the Lord said to Abraham, 'Why did Sarah laugh, saying, "Shall I indeed bear a child when I am so old." Is anything too difficult for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son.' Sarah denied it, however, saying, 'I did not laugh,' for she was afraid. And he said, 'No, but you did laugh.'"

v.19 And the angel answering said to him: "I am Gabriel the one who stands before God and I was sent to speak to you and to bring to you this good news."

① First he tells Zacharias that he is "Gabriel, the one who stands before God"

② and that he was "sent to speak to Zacharias"

③ to bring to him this good news.

God's good news is bound to be fulfilled when the appropriate season arrives.

v.20 And behold you shall be silent and not able to speak until the day these things come to be, because you believed not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season."

Zacharias is not going to be able to speak until these things that have been described come to be.

The reason being "because you believed not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season."

Hebrews 11:1,6

"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. And without faith it is impossible to please him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."

Romans 4:20,21

"Yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what he had promised, he was able also to perform."

"They shall be fulfilled in their season"

Ecclesiastes 3:11

"He makes all things beautiful in His time."

Because he has made wrong use of his tongue, that tongue will be silenced.

v.21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias and they marvelled while he tarried in the temple.

This is all the multitude of the people who are praying outside at the hour of the burning of the incense back in verse 10.

v.22 But when he came out, he was not able to speak to them, and they knew that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he continued beckoning them (making signs) and he remained dumb.

v.23 And it came to be when the days of his ministry were fulfilled, he went to his house.

After the two weeks, he went home.

III. ELIZABETH IS PREGNANT v. 24-25

v.24 Now after these days, Elizabeth his wife conceived and hid herself five months, saying

v.25 "For in this way the Lord has dealt with me in days wherein he looked upon (me) to take away my reproach among men."

The Lord always does exactly what He says He will do.

Zacharias came home from his priestly responsibilities and immediately Elizabeth his wife conceived. And for the first five months of her pregnancy, she hid herself, and she says, "For in this way (that is, by becoming pregnant) the Lord has dealt with me in days wherein he looked upon me to take away my reproach among men."

2 Chron. 16:9

"The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth to show himself strong in the behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him."

IV. GABRIEL VISITS MARY v. 26-38

v.26 Now in the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee, the name Nazareth,

This is the sixth month of the pregnancy of Elizabeth.

This time Gabriel is sent from God to Nazareth.

v.27 To a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David and the name of the virgin, Mary.

Gabriel is first sent to a man, and now to a woman, to a virgin named Mary.

v.28 And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, You who have been endued with grace, the Lord is with you."

In the birth of John the Baptist, a man had a part, but in this birth it is going to be a miraculous conception by the Holy Spirit; and thus, Gabriel calls upon the virgin.

It is easy, oftentimes, to say that woman brought sin into the world when you look back at the Garden of Eden, and to forget to say that woman also brought the Savior into the world.

v.29 Now she was greatly troubled at the saying and was considering of what sort a greeting this might be.

v.30 And the angel said to her, "Fear not, Mary, for you have found grace with God."

v.31 And behold you will conceive in your womb and you will bring forth a son and you will call his name Jesus.

v.32 This one shall be great and he shall be called Son of (the) Most High and the Lord God shall give to him the throne of his father David.

Back in verse 15 when Gabriel spoke of John the Baptist, he said, "For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord."

v.33 And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever and to his kingdom there shall be no end.

"When we've been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun.
We've no less days to sing God's praise,
Than when we've first begun."

v.34 But Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be since I am not knowing a man?"

This is not a statement of unbelief but simply a question of procedure. Her question is simply: How is it going to happen since I've never had sex?

v.35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit shall come upon you and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, wherefore also the one begotten shall be called holy, the Son of God."

Back in verse 15 we learned that John will be "filled with the Holy Spirit while he is yet in the womb of Elizabeth." And here we learn the Holy Spirit shall come upon Mary and the power of the Most High shall overshadow her and she will then, through this miraculous intervention, be prepared for the birth of the Savior.

v.36 And behold Elizabeth your kinswoman she also has conceived a son in her old age and this is the sixth month to her, the one called barren.

Now Gabriel announces the news to Mary that Elizabeth is already in her sixth month. And she was the one called barren.

v.37 For no word from God shall be impossible."

1 Thess. 5:24

"Faithful is he who calls you, and he also will bring it to pass."

Jeremiah 32:27

"Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh.
Is anything too difficult for me?"

v.38 Now Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord.
Be it unto me according to your word." And the
angel departed from her.

Mary could have said, I really appreciate you thinking of me but why don't you see if you can get somebody else. Instead she says, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." I am your servant. Do to me what you need to do.

V. MARY VISITS ELIZABETH v. 39-56

v.39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the
hill country with haste to a city of Judah.

v.40 And she went into the house of Zacharias and
greeted Elizabeth.

Since Zacharias couldn't speak, he had to sit around and listen to the ladies.

v.41 And it came to be when Elizabeth heard the greeting
of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth
was filled with the Holy Spirit.

This probably is the fulfillment of verse 15 when Gabriel says, "He (that is John the Baptist) will be filled with the Holy Spirit while he is yet in his mother's womb."

v.42 And she lifted up her voice with a loud cry and
said:

1. "Blessed are you among woman
2. Blessed is the fruit of your womb."

v.43 And whence is this to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

v.44 For behold when the voice of your greeting came into my ears the baby in my womb leaped in exultation.

Just as Jacob and Esau were struggling in the womb of Rebekah, so the infant John leaps in exultation at the greeting from Mary.

John 3:29

"The one having the bride is the bridegroom, but the friend of the bridegroom, the one who stands expectant and hears him, with joy is rejoicing because of the voice of the bridegroom. This, therefore, my joy has been fulfilled."

v.45 And blessed is she who believed, for it shall be completed, the things having been spoken to her by the Lord."

Elizabeth has a three-fold blessing here:

1. Blessed are you among women
2. Blessed is the fruit of your womb
3. Blessed is she who believed.

The reason: "For it shall be completed, the things having been spoken to her by the Lord."

We are reminded of verse 37:

"For no word from God shall be impossible."

v.20 "And behold, you shall be silent and not able to speak until the day these things come to be because you believed not my words which shall be fulfilled in their season."

v.46 And Mary said: "My soul is magnifying the Lord.

v.47 And my spirit rejoiced in God my Savior,

Elizabeth and Mary have faith, and Zacharias does not.

Liz is old and Mary is young.

v.48 For he looked upon the low estate of his handmaid,
for behold from now all generations shall call
me blessed.

As he looked upon Elizabeth and took away her reproach,
so he looked upon the low estate of Mary. And now all
generations shall call her blessed.

v.49 For the Mighty One did great things for me, and
holy is His name.

Psalm 48:1

"Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised."

Psalm 71:19

"For thy righteousness, O God, reaches to the
heavens, thou who hast done great things. O God,
who is like thee?"

v.50 And His mercy is from generation to generation
to the ones fearing Him.

v.51 He showed strength in His arm. He scattered
the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

Isaiah 53:1

"Who has believed our message and to whom has
the arm of the Lord been revealed?"

v.52 He tore down princes from their thrones and exalted them of low estate.

Psalm 75:6,7

"For promotion comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south. But God is the judge; he puts down one and sets up another."

v.53 The hungry ones He filled with good and the rich ones He sent away empty.

Matt. 5:6

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."

v.54 And He helped Israel His servant that He might remember mercy.

v.55 Even as He spake to our fathers, to Abraham and his seed forever."

It is interesting that Mary calls reference to the Abrahamic covenant and to the seed there mentioned.

v.56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned unto her house.

Mary stayed with her until just about the time of her delivery and then returned unto her own home.

VI. THE BIRTH OF JOHN v. 57-80

v.57 Now Elizabeth's time was fulfilled to be delivered and she brought forth a son.

v.13

"But the angel said to him, "Stop fearing, Zacharias, because your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name John."

v.58 And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord magnified his mercy towards her and they were rejoicing with her.

All of the family and the neighbors are so happy at the birth of John.

v.59 And it came to be on the eighth day, they came to circumcize the child, and they were going to call him by the name of his father, Zacharias.

They fully intended to call him Zach, Jr. II.

v.60 And his mother answered and said, "No indeed but he shall be called John."

v.61 And they said to her that there is none of your relatives called by this name.

v.62 And they were making signs to his father, as to what he might desire him to be called.

v.63 And he asked for a writing tablet and he wrote saying John is his name and they all marvelled.

v.64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he was speaking blessing God.

About 9½ months had been a long time to be silent. And now Zacharias, as a result of this final act of obedience in fulfilling the words spoken by Gabriel, his mouth is opened and his tongue is loosed, and he begins to speak, blessing God for what he has done.

- v.65 And fear came upon all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.
- v.66 And all who heard them laid them up in their heart, saying: "What then shall this child be? For indeed the hand of the Lord is with him."
- v.67 And Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying;

The passage starts with Zach and ends with Zach.

You will notice, he is called the father of John the Baptist.

There is no such statement with regard to Jesus Christ.

Just as Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and began with the word blessed; so Zacharias has the same experience, and he speaks a prophecy with regard to John's future.

- v.68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and made redemption for His people.
- v.69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us, in the house of David His servant--

Mary is a little over three months pregnant but Zacharias now understands what is happening to Mary.

- v.70 Even as he spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old--

We studied all of this last week as we sat at the feet of Isaiah,
Jeremiah,
Micah and
Zechariah.

- v.71 Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who are hating us;

v.72 To show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant,

v.73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father,

v.37

"For no word from God shall be impossible"

v.74 To give to us that we being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear,

v.75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.

Zacharias evidently is holding the child in his arms as he speaks this prophecy.

v.76 And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare His ways;

Here we have an old gentleman with a babe in his arms, recognizing that John is going to be the forerunner of the Lord to prepare His ways.

John 3:28

"You yourselves bear me witness that I said I am not the Christ but that I have been sent before that One."

John knew that his was a secondary role. It would save a lot of resentment and heartbreak if we realize that there are certain things that are not for us, if we accepted with all our hearts and did with all our might the work that God has given us to do.

To do a secondary task for God makes that task a great task. All service ranks the same with God.

Hannah Hurnard in her book The Mountain of Spices says,

"In acceptance lieth peace,
O my heart be still.
Let thy restless worry cease,
And accept his will.
Though this test be not thy choice,
It is his, therefore, rejoice.
In his plan there cannot be
Ought to make thee sad.
If this is his choice for thee,
Take it and be glad.
Make from it some lovely thing
To the glory of thy king.
Cease from sighs and murmuring
Sing his loving grace.
This thing means thy furthering
To a wealthy place.
From thy fears he'll give release,
In acceptance lieth peace."

v.77 To give to His people the knowledge of salvation,
by the forgiveness of their sins,

John 1:28ff

"These things took place in Bethany, beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. The next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is He on behalf of whom I said, After me comes a man who has a higher rank than I, for he existed before me.'"

v.78 Because of the heart of mercy of our God, in that
the sun rising from on high shall visit us,

Malachi 4:

"The sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."

v.79 To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace."

Isaiah 9:2

"The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them."

v.80 And the child was growing and becoming strong in spirit, and was in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

John is like Elijah in this regard. Elijah seems, as the Tishbite, to come out of nowhere to storm the palace of Ahab and condemn him for his Baal worship.

CONCLUSION:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: You can trust the Lord to fulfill His promises.

LESSON #2: The Lord always does exactly what He says He will do.

LESSON #3: For no word from God shall be impossible.

LESSON #4: Is your soul magnifying the Lord and your spirit rejoicing in God your Savior?

LESSON #5: What great things has the Lord done for you?

X-mas: Lot's of things more important than
expensive gifts...
Cliff: Cup of Ice Cream!!

LESSON #6: Jesus came to bring a knowledge of salvation and the forgiveness of sins.

" A LOVE LETTER FROM JESUS "

How are you? I just had to send you this letter to tell you how much I love and care about you. I saw you yesterday as you were walking with your friends. I waited all day, hoping you would walk and talk with me also. As evening drew near, I gave you a sunset to close your day, and a cool breeze to rest you. Then I waited, but you never came. Oh yes, it hurt me, but I still love you because I am your friend.

I saw you fall asleep last night, and I longed to touch your brow, so I spilled moonlight on your pillow and your face... Again I waited, wanting to rush down so we could talk. I have so many gifts for you.

You awakened late this morning and rushed off for the day. My tears were in the rain. Today you looked so sad, so alone. It makes my heart ache because I understand. My friends let me down and hurt me many times, but I love you. I try to tell you in the quiet green grass. I whisper it in the leaves and trees, and breathe it in the color of the flowers. I shout it to you in the mountain streams, and give the birds love songs to sing. I clothe you with warm sunshine and perfume the air. My love for you is deeper than the oceans and bigger than the biggest wave or need you could ever have.

We will spend eternity together in heaven. I know how hard it is on earth. I really know, because I was there, and I want to help you. My Father wants to help you too. He's that way, you know. Just call me, ask me, talk to me. It is your decision...I have chosen you, and because of this, I will wait.... Because I love you.

Your Friend,

JESUS

Reprinted by permission and with appreciation to Harry D. Cup WDDO Radio Orlando, Florida and presented to you and your friends at the Southern Baptist Radio and Television Commission 6350 West Freeway Ft. Worth, Texas 76153