

LESSON 1

INFANCY NARRATIVES OF JOHN & JESUS FROM LUKE'S GOSPEL

A. THE PURPOSE OF LUKE'S GOSPEL: Luke 1:1-4

1 Many have undertaken to plan and write an account of what has been done among us, **2** just as we heard it from those who from the first became eyewitnesses and servants of the word. **3** For this reason I too decided to check everything carefully from the beginning and to write it down in the proper order for you, excellent **Theophilus**, **4** so that you will be **SURE that what you have been told is completely dependable**.

B. THE BEGINNINGS: INFANCY OF JOHN THE BAPTIZER AND JESUS THROUGH THE PRESENTATION OF JESUS AT THE JERUSALEM TEMPLE: Luke 1:5—2:39

THE ANGEL GABRIEL COMES TO ZACHARIAS

Luke 1:5-25

5 In the days of **King Herod of Judea**, there was a priest by the name of **Zacharias** [**"God remembers"**]. He belonged to the division of priests named after *Abijah* (**1 Chronicles 24:10**). His wife was a descendant of **Aaron**, and her name was **Elizabeth** (Gk.; Heb. = "Elisheba," Aaron's wife, Exodus 6:23). **6** Both were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. **7** But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren and both were getting old. (*Think of the OT Sarah & Hannah.*)

8 Once when Zacharias was on duty with his division, serving as a priest before God, **9** he was chosen by lot—according to the custom of the priesthood—to go into the Lord's **Holy Place** to burn incense. **10** All the people were praying outside while he was burning incense. (**Cp. "Herod's Temple" on attached sheet.**)

11 Then he saw an angel of the Lord standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

12 Zacharias was startled to see him and was terrified.

13 "Stop being afraid, Zacharias," the angel told him. "Your prayer has been heard. You and your wife Elizabeth will have a son, and you are to name him John [**"the Lord has been gracious"**]. **14** He will be your joy and delight, and many will be glad he was born. **15** "For he will be a great man in the sight of the Lord. He will drink no wine or

other intoxicating drink (a **Nazarite?**). He will be filled with the **Holy Spirit** while he is still in his mother's womb. **16** And he will turn many Israelites [**convert their hearts**] back to the Lord their God. **17** He will go ahead of **Him** with the spirit and power of **Elijah**, to return [**convert**] the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the understanding of righteous men—and so make ready a people who are thoroughly prepared for the Lord” (**Malachi 4:5, 6; Isaiah 40:3**).

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17 And he will go ahead of **Him** with the spirit and power of **Elijah**,

A to return the hearts of the **fathers** (e.g., the Patriarchs, etc.)

B to the **children**, and

B the **disobedient**

A to the understanding of **righteous men**—

and so make ready **a people** who are thoroughly prepared for the Lord”

18 Zacharias asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife is old.”

19 The angel answered him, “I am **Gabriel** (see **Daniel 8:16; 9:21**)! I stand before God and was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news. **20** And now, you will be silent and not able to talk until the day this happens, because you did not believe what I said. But it will be fulfilled at the right time.”

21 Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zacharias and were surprised that he was staying so long in the Holy Place. **22** When he did come out, he could not speak to them. Then they realized that he had seen a vision in the Holy Place. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to talk.

23 When the days of his service were fulfilled, he went home (note “**hill country**” in v. **39** = **Hebron**, see Joshua 21:11, recording “**Hebron** in the hill country of Judah”: recall **Abraham** – **Genesis 13:18; 23:19**). **24** After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived and for five months did not show herself in public. She said, **25** “The Lord did this for me at a time when He was concerned about removing the feeling of shame that I had among people” (cp. 1 Samuel 1:19, 20).

SEE PAGE 3 THAT REPEATS THE SIGNIFICANT CHIASM/STEP PARALLELISM OF VERSES 5-25 AS BRILLIANTLY DESIGNED BY DR. ARTHUR JUST IN HIS CPH COMMENTARY ON LUKE 1:1—9:50 (p. 52)!!!

1:5-7 **INTRODUCTION** of Zechariah & Elizabeth (framework of persons) to the infancy narrative.

1:8 **A** Zechariah is performing his priestly/liturgical duties in the Temple.

1:9 **B** Zechariah enters into the Holy Place to burn incense.

1:10 **C** A multitude of people are praying outside at the hour of incense.

1:11-13a **D** An angel appears at the altar of incense and speaks to Zechariah, who is troubled and afraid.

1:13b-17 **E The announcement by the angel concerning John's future birth.**

1:18-20 **D** Zechariah responds to the angel about his doubts; he is silenced; the angel Gabriel answers that he was sent to announce the Good News.

1:21 **C** The people outside are waiting for Zechariah and wondering about the delay.

1:22 **B** Zechariah comes out; the people realize that he has seen a vision in the Holy Place.

1:23 **A** Zechariah finishes the days of his priestly service in the Temple before returning home.

1:24-25 **CONCLUSION** that describes Elizabeth's conceiving and hiding herself for the first five months of her pregnancy and her gratitude to God for taking away her shame.