

— Luke 1.1-17 —
Luke's Advent of Christ 1
Gabriel Visits Zacharias

Luke 1.1 *Inasmuch as many have taken in hand to set in order a narrative of those things which have been fulfilled among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word delivered them to us, 3 it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write to you an orderly account, most excellent Theophilus, 4 that you may know the certainty of those things in which you were instructed.*

* **Who** was Luke? Why and to whom was he writing?

Acts 16.9 A vision appeared to Paul in the night ...10... immediately we sought to go into Macedonia ...

Col 4.14 Luke the beloved physician ... greet[s] you ... 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand.

Gal 1.11 ... the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ.

5 *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.*

* **How** and why does God use childlessness as a theme in the Bible? See, e.g., Sarah (Gen 11.30); Rachel (Gen 29.31); Hannah (1Sam 1.2; Manoah's wife (Judges 13.2).

Isaiah 54.1 "Shout for joy, O barren one ... For the sons of the desolate one will be more numerous Than the sons of the married woman," says the LORD. ... 3 "For you will spread abroad ... And your descendants will possess nations ... 4 Fear not ... you will forget the shame of your youth, And the reproach of your widowhood ... 5 For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth."

Eze 37.1 ... the Spirit of the LORD ... set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones ... 3 And He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" ... 11 ... "Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They ... say, "Our bones are dry, our hope is lost, and we ourselves are cut off!"

* **Who** was Herod (vs 5), and how does he call to mind the plight of Israel?

* **How** long had it been since God had last spoken to Israel through the prophets?

* **What** does it mean that Zacharias and Elizabeth were "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments ... of the Lord blameless"? (vs 6)

Exo 12.21 ... "kill the Passover lamb ... 23 ... when He sees the blood ... the LORD will pass over ... and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you." ... 19.1 In the third month after ... Israel had gone out of ... Egypt ... they came to ... Sinai ... 20.1 And God spoke all these words, saying: 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt ... 3 You shall have no other Gods before Me ..." 29.36 "And you shall offer a bull every day as a sin offering for atonement ..."

1Cor 5.7 ... Christ, our passover, was sacrificed for us.

Mat 22.37 Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and great commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

8 *So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.*

* **What** were a priest's normal duties, how was he chosen to minister in the temple, and how often would he do so?

11 *Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias ...*

* **What** command does the angel give Zacharias, and what is its significance in the NT?

Luke 5.10 ... And Jesus said to Simon, "Do not be afraid ..." (also Mat 14.27; 17.7; 28.10; Mark 5.36; 6.50; Luke 8.50; 12.4; John 6.20; Acts 19.9)

13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John."

* **What** prayer has God heard?

* **What** does "John" mean, and what does it mean that God is naming the boy?

14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 He will also go before Him in the spirit and 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."

* **What** OT book does the angel quote, what was the book about, and what did God promise there?

* **What** two titles are given in the book to the Messiah?

Malachi 3.1 "... the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts ... 4.1 "For behold, the day is coming, burning like an oven, and all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble ... 2 But to you who fear My name the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings ...

* **Who** will come before the Messiah and prepare his way?

Malachi 4.5 "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

* **What** will be special about Zacharias' and Elizabeth's son?

Mat 11.11 "... among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist ... 14 and if you are able to receive it, he is Elijah who is to come."

John 10.41 ... "John performed no sign, but all the things that John spoke about this Man were true."

* **What** does it signify that the boy "shall drink neither wine nor strong drink"?

Numbers 6.2 ... "When a man or woman makes a special vow, the vow of a Nazirite, to dedicate himself to the LORD, 3 he shall abstain from wine and strong drink ... 4 ... he shall not eat anything that is produced by the grape vine ... 5 All the days of his vow of separation no razor shall pass over his head. He shall be holy until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD ..." (E.g., Judges 13.5; 1Sam 1.11)

* **Big** picture, what is Luke doing with Gentile converts in terms of the history and promises of Israel?

1Cor 14.20 Brethren, do not be children in understanding; however, in malice be babes, but in understanding be mature.

Rom 4.11 ... [Abraham] ... the father of all ... who believe ...

1Cor 10.1 ... I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers ... passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all at the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.