

Wednesday Evening Bible Study

November 14, 2018

The Gospel of Luke

The Birth of John

Topics – Luke 1; Elizabeth, John the Baptist, Zacharias, Gabriel, Benedictus

Text – Luke 1:57 - 80

Introduction

In the previous passage, we saw the angel Gabriel declare to Mary that she will give birth to the Lord Jesus Christ. She then goes to visit her cousin Mary in the hill country of Judaea to help her through the last three months of her pregnancy.

In the section that we are dealing with today, Mary has returned home to Nazareth, and Elizabeth gives birth to her son.

I The Partruition (Birth) of John (vs. 57 – 58)

The birth of John the Baptist was a source of great rejoicing for a couple of reasons:

- 1 Her friends and family were thrilled that Elizabeth who was beyond child-bearing years and who was also barren was finally having a child – a son.
- 2 They also rejoiced because of the special promises and purpose of this child.

II The Public Appearance of John (vs. 59 – 66)

John's first public appearance would be at his circumcision. (See Leviticus 12; Luke 2:22 – 32)

"And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed." (Genesis 17:12)

It was customary to announce the name of the child at the time of the circumcision.

A Elizabeth States the Name is "John" (vs. 59 – 60)

Zacharias' family assumed that the child would be named after Zacharias. Because Zacharias could not speak, Elizabeth announced the name as "John" in obedience to the command of the angel. Interestingly, Zacharias must have found a way to communicate all of the information given to him by the angel about John to Elizabeth.

B The People Sign to Zacharias for Verification (vs. 61 – 62)

The family and friends then seek verification from Zacharias by signing to him. Apparently, he could not hear either.

C Zacharias Scrawls the Name "John" (v. 63)

Zacharias affirms the words of the angel. "thou shalt call his name John."

D Zacharias Speaks Again (vs. 64 – 66)

John's punishment is officially ended when he completely obeys the Lord, and names the child "John."

The miraculous healing of John's muteness caused a great deal of excitement in the hill country, and left the people wondering about what God would do with this miraculous child.

III The Praise of Zacharias (vs. 67 – 79)

The first words out of the mouth of John after having his tongue loosed was praise to the Lord.

Practical Point – What kind of words come out of our mouths. ([See James 3](#))

Notice that Zacharias is filled with the Spirit also. We now know that the entire family was filled with the Spirit: John from the womb (Luke 1:15), Elisabeth (v. 41), and now Zacharias.

Practical Point – Wouldn't it be awesome if we had some whole families who were filled with the Spirit.

"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;" (Ephesians 5:18)

A family that is filled with the Spirit is:

- 1 Obedient to the Word of God.
- 2 Yielded to the Will of God.
- 3 Passionate about the Purpose of God.
- 4 Vocal in Their Praise of God.

We will see here that Zacharias expresses publicly his praise to the Lord regarding the birth of John.

Zacharias' praise is referred to as the "Benedictus," or "The Song of Zacharias."

Notice also that Zacharias' song is also a prophecy.

V. 68 – "redeemed his people" – The coming of the Messiah would not initially free the people of Israel from the bondage of the religious corruption or Roman persecution, but He would redeem people from the penalty of their sin:

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"
(Ephesians 1:7)

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." (1 Peter 1:18-21)

Someday this same Messiah will redeem his people Israel and set up His promised kingdom.

V. 69 – "the house of his servant David" – John was not from David's tribe, but he would be the one to announce the coming of the Son of David, the Messiah.

Notice that Israel's expectation had all to do with the Kingdom. John the Baptist will ultimately have a few reservations about what Christ will do. (See Luke 7:19 – 23)

V. 76 – "and thou child" - here the psalm specifically ties in John the Baptist.

V. 78 – "dayspring" – a sun rise. The Messiah would bring the dawning of a new day:

"The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." (Matthew 4:16)

IV The Plain and Private Life of John (v. 80)

John could have lived the comfortable life of a priest in Judaea, but instead he chose the desert.

"And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;" (Mark 1:6)