

March 20th, 2022

“The Covenant Through David”

Luke 1:57-80

Read Luke 1:57-58... Last week we read (**vv. 13-17**), “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will 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. And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. It is he who will go *as a forerunner* before Him 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, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

And so, Elizabeth gave birth to a son, and her family and her neighbors were rejoicing with her. Gabriel’s announcement to Zacharias broke 400 years of silence between God and Israel; for John would be filled with God’s Spirit, to be set apart as the forerunner of the Messiah (who would bring redemption to all people who believe in Him).

Read Luke 1:59-63... John is 8 days old, and required to be circumcised according to the Abrahamic covenant (cf. **Genesis 17:9-14**), through which God set Israel apart from all the other nations in the world.

Circumcision also provided the benefit of decreasing the possibility of bacteria being transferred from man to woman; it is a fact that Jewish women have lower rates of cervical cancer and other diseases, then do women in other cultures, and this is attributed to the fact that all Jewish husbands are circumcised.

The practice of naming a son on the day of his circumcision is not an Old Testament requirement, but had become common place, perhaps because Abram [exalted father] received his new name Abraham [father of a multitude] on the same day he was circumcised (cf. **Genesis 17:5, 23**).

To honor Zacharias, some of his friends and family wanted to name the baby after him, but Elizabeth objected, saying the baby would be called John [God is Gracious]. However, some of the friends and neighbors were adamant that the baby be given his father’s name; so they made (*face and hand*) signs to get Zacharias’s attention, who then asked for a tablet (small wooden wax covered tablet: *sort of an etch a sketch*) upon which he wrote down that his son would indeed be called John.

Read Luke 1:64-66... Zacharias hadn’t been able to hear or speak for nine months. Note: The word translated “mute” (**Luke 1:22**), is used repeatedly in the NT and is often translated “deaf,” so it is likely that Zacharias couldn’t hear or speak.

At the moment Zacharias wrote down that his son would be called John, Zacharias began to speak again, giving praise to God. The people there were awestruck and somewhat fearful of what all this might mean.

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The word about John spread throughout the hill country of Judea, as they considered all the things that had happened over the past nine months: the angel Gabriel appearing in the Holy Place to Zacharias; Zacharias becoming deaf and mute because he didn't believe Gabriel's announcement that Elizabeth, although barren, would become pregnant with a son who would be the forerunner of the Messiah, and then Zacharias, able to speak and hear again after naming his son John, just as Gabriel had said (**Luke 1:20**), “And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time.”

Read Luke 1:67-69... This is awesome! Zacharias, filled with the Holy Spirit of God, *prophesied* [*prophesy = to declare or speak forth, to proclaim and explain*] the very Words of God. But, think about this: both his wife Elizabeth (**v. 41**), and his son John (**v. 15**), were already filled with the Spirit of God. God's presence had again come to Israel indwelling these three servants, the first “trinity” family..

The words of Zacharias's prophecy declare the wonderful truth that God is again blessing Israel, and has come (**v. 68**) to redeem His people through the long awaited Messiah. Israel believed the Messiah would free them from their bondage under Rome, just like God had freed their ancestors from slavery in Egypt.

Israel expected the Messiah to set up His kingdom on earth and to fulfill all the blessings promised through David and Abraham; but the Jews totally overlooked the fact that those promises would not be fulfilled until the New Covenant was established, i.e., the forgiveness for all sin, for all people, for all time, made effectual by the shed blood of God's own Son, to all who would believe in Him.

John the Baptizer would preach repentance, calling the people to confess their sin, for the Messiah would come and pay the full and final price for the sins of the whole world. Jesus Christ (**v. 69**) would be God's horn of salvation from the line of David.

A horn of salvation is an OT picture of a powerful conquerer, like a wild horned beast lowering its head to drive out God's enemies and protect God' people.

2Samuel 22:3, “My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge.”

Psalms 18:2, “The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer, my God, my rock, in whom I take refuge; my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.”

Psalms 92:10, “But You have exalted my horn like *that of* the wild ox; I have been anointed with fresh oil.”

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Micah 4:13, “For your horn I will make iron and your hoofs I will make bronze, that you may pulverize many peoples.”

The Messiah would come through the line of David (**Jeremiah 33:14-15**), “Behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will fulfill the good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch of David to spring forth; and He shall execute justice and righteousness on the earth.”

The Messiah would fulfill the Davidic Covenant by restoring Israel to its former glory, before it turned away from God, resulting in God leaving Israel without any message or messenger from Him for 400 years.

God was now speaking to Israel again, God’s favor had returned to Israel, and would be realized through the Messiah, the Horn of Salvation, God’s Son who would live among the Israelites, and then go to the cross to pay for their sins with His own blood, in order to redeem all those who would believe in Him.

Read Luke 1:70-71... God had spoken through the prophets concerning the covenant He made with David (**2Samuel 7:8-13**), “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

Isaiah goes on to declare that the Lord will restore the faithful remnant to the land promised them through David (**Isaiah 65:8-9**), “As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one says, ‘Do not destroy it, for there is benefit in it,’ so I will act on behalf of My servants in order not to destroy all of them. I will bring forth offspring from Jacob, and an heir of My mountains from Judah; even My chosen ones shall inherit it, and My servants will dwell there,”

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(Isaiah 65:18-25) “Be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; for behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing and her people for gladness. I will also rejoice in Jerusalem and be glad in My people; and there will no longer be heard in her the voice of weeping and the sound of crying. No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not live out his days; for ...the one who does not reach the age of one hundred will be thought accursed. They will build houses and inhabit them; they will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build and another inhabit, they will not plant and another eat; for as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, and My chosen ones will wear out the work of their hands. They will not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they are the offspring of those blessed by the Lord, and their descendants with them. It will also come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb will graze together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox; and dust will be the serpent’s food. They will do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain,’ says the Lord.”

Zacharias is full of praise as he goes on to proclaim that the Millennial Kingdom will be a time (cf. **Luke 1:71**) when God will deliver believing Israel from her enemies and from all who hate them; a time when the remnant of Israel and the Gentiles living among them will experience peace, prosperity, and long life.

The Millennial Kingdom will not occur until the Church has been raptured, and the Antichrist then rises up to rule the world during a seven-year period; after which, the Lord will return to the earth to bring judgement upon all the unbelieving; only then will the remnant of believing Jews (alive at that time), along with believing Gentiles, be ushered into the Millennial Kingdom where the Lord will rule on the throne of David for 1000 years.

John the Baptizer, as the forerunner of the Messiah will, at the Jordan River, declare Jesus to be God’s Son and Savior (**John 1:29**), “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” (**John 1:33-34**), “This is the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit, I myself have seen, and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

See **Luke 1:70-71** again. Zacharias could not have known that Israel would openly reject and brutally execute its own Messiah, its Savior-King, who would be born about 6 months after the time of Zacharias’s Prophecy being given here.

Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, as was Elizabeth, and their son John. Zacharias was praising God and prophesying about the coming Messiah who would deliver Israel from all her enemies.

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Zacharias, like most of the religious Jews at that time, believed the promises of the Covenant God made with David would be realized at the time of the Messiah’s arrival; and you know, they would have been, if Israel had received Him, but they didn’t, they rejected Him and then they crucified Him.

In A.D. 70, Jerusalem was burned, the Temple destroyed, over one million Jews were [put to death by the sword, and those who survived were enslaved and/or dispersed all over the world; and the Jewish people were not allowed to return to Jerusalem until A.D. 1948.

The promises of the Davidic Covenant will not be fulfilled in Israel until the Lord returns to the earth, this time as a conquering warrior (cf. **Revelation 11, 19**), not as a vulnerable child, like His first arrival. At His next advent, the remnant of Israel who believe in and receive Christ as Lord and Savior, will enter into the Millennial Kingdom where they will enjoy the fulfillment of God's promises made to David on their behalf, for the 1000 years on the earth; after which, they, along with all believers from all time, will live together with God and enjoy the new heavens, new earth, and new Jerusalem, where there will be no crying, or mourning, or pain, or death, for all of eternity.

Our God is an awesome God, a faithful God, a loving God to whom belongs all praise and honor and glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

Pastor Mike

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