

Outline for August 22, 2010 Luke 1:5-17 – The Silence is Broken

Introduction: Dr. Luke's grasp and understanding of the Scriptures was remarkable. He was a student of the Word of God and clearly used the text in a wonderful manner in presenting the gospel to Theophilus. It appears from the study of chapters 1 and 2 that he incorporated Genesis 11-21 in his writing of the infancy narrative. Also his understanding of the division and order of the Levitical priesthood engages the reader to discover the providence of God throughout the history of Israel and the church as the Lord so mightily and sovereignly sustained the worship and service of the Temple in preparation for the coming of the Messiah.

I. Luke's preface and the introduction of John the Baptist and Jesus

A. Preface: Luke carefully builds on precedents (1:1-4)

B. Infancy narrative: Forerunner and Fulfillment (1:5-2:40)

1. Announcement to Zechariah (1:5-25)

a. The political, religious and cultural setting into which John and Jesus were born

(1) Rome ruled the world – "In the days of Herod, the king..." (1:5)

(2) Hellenism influenced the culture – Greek language and cultural patterns

(3) Religiously and morally Judaism was competing with the mythological gods of Rome and Greece

(4) God's providence during this period is clearly and dramatically seen – "there was a priest..." (1:5)

- Though Rome ruled the world, God ruled over Rome and the world (Psalm 135:6, 115:3)

- "named Zechariah of the division of Abijah" (1:5-9)

There were 24 divisions of priests to serve before the Lord

For Zechariah this was a most high honor and privilege – the only time in his life when he would offer incense in the Temple (I Chronicles 24:1-19)

- "chosen by lot" (Proverbs 16:33)

(5) The character of Zechariah and Elizabeth (1:6)

- "righteous before God"

- "walking blamelessly"

- "But they had no child..." (1:7)

b. The priestly service and the breaking of silence – "Now while he was serving" (1:8)

(1) Zechariah was faithfully serving the Lord in his responsibility as a priest

(2) The people were outside praying

(3) "an angel of the Lord..." (1:11)

- "Zechariah was troubled" – disturbed, dismayed, frightened (1:12)

- "fear fell upon him" – he is terrified

- "but the angel said..." (1:13) – The silence is broken! For 400 years, not a word had come from God and now He speaks through the angel of the Lord.

- "Do not be afraid" (1:13)

A word of comfort and good news (Genesis 15:1)

A word of hope and grace:

"You will have joy and gladness and many will rejoice..." (1:14)

"great before the Lord" (1:15, 7:28)

"he must not drink wine or strong drink" (1:15)

"he will be filled..." (1:15)

"he will turn many..." (1:16)

"he will go before Him..." (1:17; Malachi 2:6-7, 3:1, 18)

"to turn the hearts of the fathers..." (1:17; Malachi 4:5-6)

"the disobedient to the wisdom..." (1:17)

"to make ready for the Lord a people prepared." (1:17)