

“GOD INVADES HUMANITY SO HUMANS CAN ENCOUNTER GOD”

STUDIES IN THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

Luke 1:1-80

“ WHEN GOD’S PLANS FOR YOUR RELATIONSHIP OVERRIDE YOURS”

INTRODUCTION: Every year at Christmas time we hear the story about the birth of Jesus the Christ. Have you ever stopped to consider the individuals who suffered relationship trauma because God wanted to use them in His salvation plan? For one couple He seemed to intervene too late, and the other He appeared to intervene too early! Have you accepted the fact that God has the right to override what you want for what is best for you and others?

BACKGROUND: Luke (Lucas) was a man of many gifts and talents. He was a physician, missionary, and a first class researcher and historian. He was a Gentile and may have known Paul (Saul of Tarsus) from days together in Syria of Tarsus, Antioch, and Macedonia. Luke wrote of his missionary travels with Paul (notice the term “we” used in Acts chapters 16, 20, 21, 27, and 28). Luke was loyal to Paul to the end. He is identified in Colossians 4:12, 2nd Timothy 4:11, and Philemon 24. Luke wrote portions of his books while traveling with Paul, some while speaking with eyewitnesses in Israel, and nearly half of his gospel was written after Mark recorded the same stories. Many parables and stories are unique to Luke’s gospel.

I. LUKE WAS PASSIONATE ABOUT GETTING THE FACTS STRAIGHT ABOUT THE LIFE OF CHRIST. DO YOU KNOW THE TRUTH, OR HAVE YOU BELIEVED THE LIES? (Luke 1:1-4)

- A. It is very likely that Luke wrote this introduction after he had finished his research and was sending his findings to His Excellency Theophilus (“Lover of God”) to give him assurance of the facts. An enormous amount of material was already in circulation, and then, like now, much of it was wrong!
- B. Luke also received information directly from the Holy Spirit (“from the very first” are the same Greek words for “from above.” (John 3:3) He wanted to put his material in order, (methodical, not just chronological) and likely wrote some of it while his mentor, Paul, was imprisoned at Caesarea.

II. THE LORD ANSWERS PRAYERS WHEN HE KNOWS THE TIME IS RIGHT, NOT WHEN WE THINK HE SHOULD. (Luke 1:5-17)

- A. Around the same time the LORD was causing the vicious and vile King Herod to suffer a painful death, God was also preparing two chosen vessels to experience the pain and joy of bringing new life into the world.
- B. Zacharias and Elizabeth were a godly couple, both descendants of priests, and had experienced the emotional pain and embarrassment of being childless. They served faithfully even though their prayers for children were not being answered. Does that describe your faithfulness?
- C. Zacharias had a once in a lifetime assignment to minister in the Holy Place. After being assisted in his task, he was alone near the altar of incense and the shewbread. Suddenly he was not alone! Imagine how afraid you would be if an angel suddenly appeared to you after 400 years of no word from the Lord!

***THE NAME ZACHARIAS (ZICHARYAH) MEANS _____.
ELIZABETH (ELISHEVAH) MEANS _____.
JOHN (YCHANAN) MEANS _____.

Together, their names communicate what the LORD was doing at that time.

- C. As he recovered from shock and fear, Zacharias heard prophetic words that let him know he would become the father of the only New Testament prophet mentioned in the Old Testament, and that his

son would have the honor of being the messenger to prepare the way of the Christ (Messiah) to come. He would be Spirit filled from birth (no manifestations of signs or tongues!) and would fulfill a prophecy about the ministry of Elijah. (Malachi 4:5-6) (Luke 1:13-17)

D. Zechariah made the mistake of doubting God's ability to do something He had already promised to do! He could not speak for a season because he questioned God's power. Elizabeth believed! Have you lost your ability to confidently talk about the Lord because you don't believe He keeps His promises? (Luke 1:18-25)

III. THE LORD MAY CHOOSE YOU FOR SOMETHING YOU NEVER THOUGHT OF DOING AND IF YOU TRUST HIM MANY LIVES CAN BE CHANGED. (Luke 1:26-45)

A. Mary was likely a young teenager who had no idea she was being chosen to give birth to the Messiah. She had maintained her virginity as the Law required. She spoke the same words as Zechariah with a completely different tone, questioning only the *process* rather than God's *ability* to perform His Word.

1. Mary was blessed _____ women, not greater than all women (Luke 1:26-28)

2. Mary only questioned God's _____, not His unlimited power! She was chosen to provide the human body for the sinless Son of God to dwell. (Luke 1:29-38)

3. The Lord gave Mary supernatural confirmation, proving life begins at conception (Luke 1:39-45)

IV. THOSE THAT BELIEVE CAN GIVE GOD PRAISE. THOSE THAT DOUBT REMAIN IN SILENCE (Luke 1: 46-80)

A. Mary's soul and spirit gave praise to God her S_____, evidence that she was not sinless. Her song gave evidence she believed what God would do, even before Christ was born! (Luke 1:46-56)

B. Zacharias had plenty of quiet time (nine months!) to increase his faith. When he obeyed, he regained his ability to speak. Has your tongue been loosed or are you still doubting God's ability to keep His promises?? (Luke 1:57-66)

C. Zacharias also experienced the fulness (control) of the Holy Spirit and broke out in praise and prophecies easily understood (not in tongues!), also speaking about what God had done, BEFORE Christ had even been born! Faith sees the future better than most see the past! (Luke 1:67-79)

D. John the Baptist (Baptizer) spent time in the wilderness preparing for ministry, just as Isaiah said he would 700 years before his birth. Learn to embrace the loneliness and spend time alone with the LORD if you want to do ministry that has generational impact. (Luke 1:80) (Isaiah 40:3-5)

THE LORD IS ALWAYS WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES, MOVING PEOPLE IN AND OUT OF OUR LIVES IN ORDER TO PUT US IN THE BEST RELATIONSHIPS AND POSITIONS TO DO HIS WILL FOR HIS GLORY AND OUR GOOD. CAN YOU TRUST HIM TO WAIT FOR WHAT HE HAS FOR YOU?

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October 18, 2026