

I. There Was A Move from Heaven (11-14)

“11 And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth...”

II. There Was A Mission for the Forerunner (15-17)

A. A mission of consecration (15) - “...for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.”

B. A mission of persuasion (16) - “And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God...”

C. A mission of transformation (17) - “...he will 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 for the Lord a people prepared.”

III. There Was A Miracle in a Family (18-24)

A. Zechariah lost his voice (18-20) - “And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” 19 And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. 20 And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.”

B. The people received a sign (21-23) - “And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22 And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. 23 And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.”

C. Elizabeth received a child (24-25) - “After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, 25 “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”

IV. There Was a Mantle for John (76-80)

A. John’s prophetic destiny (76-77) - “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins...”

B. John’s preparatory calling (78-79) - “...because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high 79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

C. John’s intimacy and hiddenness (80) - “And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.”