

The Gospel of Luke

Chapter 1

(Luke 1:1-80)

Outline of the Book, based on Charles Ryrie's:

- I. Preface: The Method and Purpose of Writing, Luke 1:1-4.**
- II. The Identification of the Son of Man with Men, Luke 1:5-4:13.**
 - A. The Announcement of the Birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:5-25.**
 - B. The Announcement of the Birth of the Son of Man, Luke 1:26-56.**
 - C. The Advent of John the Baptist, Luke 1:57-80.**
 - D. The Advent of the Son of Man, Luke 2:1-20.**
 - E. The Adoration of the Baby, Luke 2:21-38.**
 - F. The Advancement of the Boy, Luke 2:39-52.**
 - G. The Baptism of the Son of Man, Luke 3:1-22.**
 - H. The Genealogy of the Son of Man, Luke 3:23-38.**
 - I. The Temptation of the Son of Man, Luke 4:1-13.**
- III. The Ministry of the Son of Man to Men, Luke 4:14-9:50.**
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2. Authority revealed, **Luke 20:9-18.**
3. Authority resisted, **Luke 20:19-40.**
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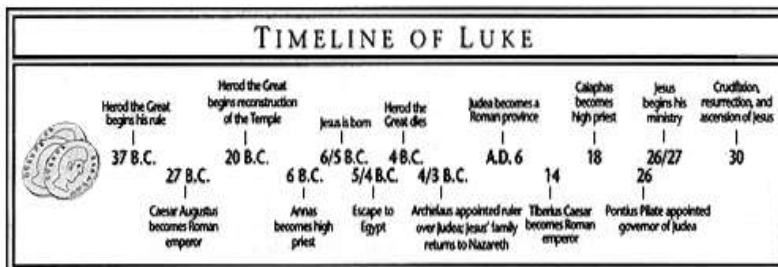
1. The Victory over Death, **Luke 24:1-12.**
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I. Preface: The Method and Purpose of Writing, Luke 1:1-4.



Author of the Book:

Written by the “the beloved physician,” Luke, it is the most comprehensive and longest of the Gospels. In fact, both the Gospels of Luke and Acts are written by him and addressed to Theophilus as a two-volume work. They are attributed to Luke, yet he is nowhere named as the author of either. Nevertheless, a great deal of evidence points to Luke, “the beloved physician,” **Col 4:14**, as the author of both books. Interestingly, these two books make up about 28% of the Greek NT.

The only places where we find Luke’s name in the NT are **Col 4:14**; **2 Tim 4:11**; and **Philemon 24**. It is also believed that Luke referred to himself in the “we” sections of **Acts 16:10–17**; **20:5–21:18**; **27:1–28:16**. These “we” sections of Acts show that the author was a close associate and traveling companion of Paul. Since all but two of Paul’s associates are named in the third person, the list can be narrowed to Titus and Luke. Therefore, by process of elimination, Paul’s “dear friend Luke, the doctor,” **Col 4:14**, and “fellow worker,” **Philemon 24**, becomes the most likely candidate.

His authorship is supported by the uniform testimony of early Christian writings. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius, and Jerome all support Lucan authorship. The second-century Muratorian Canon, which lists the books that are received as Scripture in Rome, declares Luke the physician to be the author of both the third Gospel and Acts.

Date:

Biblical evidence points to A.D. 58-63 as the likely time of writing. Luke was written earlier than Acts, its companion volume. The last chapter of Acts recounts events that are c. A.D. 63, and probably concludes as it does because events are contemporary. Perhaps Luke began his first volume at Caesarea and finished it in Rome, having accompanied Paul during Paul’s two-year imprisonment, **Acts 24:27**. Since the conclusion of Acts shows Paul in Rome, and since the gospel of Luke was written before Acts, **Acts 1:1**, Luke’s gospel was probably written around A.D. 60. However, suggesting that Luke’s Gospel received its final form in Greece and not in Rome, some have suggested A.D. 70. By comparison, the Gospels of Mathew and Mark were written in the 50’s or 60’s, and John was written between 85-90 A.D.

About the Author:

Luke, meaning, “luminous or white,” was called the “beloved physician,” **Col 4:14**, and was a close friend and companion of Paul, **2 Tim 4:11**; **Philemon 1:24**. In Greek it is Λουκᾶς, LOUKAS, and is apparently an abbreviation for Λουκανός, LOUKANOS. It seems evident from **Col 4:10–14** that Luke was a Gentile for there, Paul differentiates

him from the Jews. Here the apostle states that, of his fellow-workers, Aristarchus, Mark, and John were the only ones who were Jews. This suggests that Epaphras, Luke, and Demas, also mentioned in these verses, were Gentiles, not Jews. Luke's obvious skill with the Greek language and his phrase "their own language" in **Acts 1:19**, also implies that he was not Jewish. As such, he was the only Gentile author of any part of the NT.

We know nothing about his early life or conversion except that he was not an eyewitness of the life of Jesus Christ, **Luke 1:2**. Yet, he was an eyewitness to many of the acts of Paul, as he was his close companion. Though a physician by profession, he was primarily an evangelist, theologian, and historian writing this gospel and the book of Acts and accompanying Paul in missionary work.

We know that he lived in Philippi for a considerable period, at least 7-8 years. He first meets Paul at Troas just before the vision of the Man from Macedonia, **Acts 16:10-12**. Luke remains in Philippi when Paul and Silas leave, **Acts 16:40**. He is there when Paul comes back on his 3rd tour bound for Jerusalem, **Acts 20:3-5**. Although some believe he was from Antioch, Philippi could be considered his home, though he was probably a man who had traveled a great deal, and may have been with Paul in Galatia before coming to Troas. He may have ministered to Paul in his sickness there, **Gal 4:14**. His later years were spent chiefly with Paul away from Philippi, cf. **Acts 20:3-28, 31**, on the way to Jerusalem, at Caesarea, the voyage to Rome, and in Rome. He was with Paul at the time of the apostle's martyrdom, **2 Tim 4:11**, but of his later life we have no certain facts.

The Anti-Marcionite Prologue, an introduction to Luke found in a number of Latin manuscripts, ascribes the book to the physician and companion of Paul and supplies additional questionable information about him. It states, he was a native of Antioch, he wrote his Gospel in Achaia, and he died unmarried and childless in Boeotia at the age of eighty-four.

His education is considerable. He writes excellent Greek, both classical and Biblical, and demonstrates a literary ability that approaches a poetic quality at times. The gospel was written in the finest literary KOINE Greek, (the common Greek of the marketplace), and the prologue has affinities with the preambles of the historians Herodotus, Polybius, and Thucydides, and incorporates much of the language of the physicians Galen and Hippocrates.

Though Luke was not an eye-witness to the earthly life and ministry of Christ, he was in intimate contact with many who were. Luke was with Paul in Palestine in the late 50s, especially in Caesarea and Jerusalem, **Acts 21:1-27:2**. Members of the Jerusalem church including James, the brother of Jesus, would have provided much oral testimony to the physician. Luke's association with Paul also brought him into contact with leading apostolic witnesses, including James, Peter, and also Mark the companion of Peter and author of the gospel that bears his name.

We see Luke in Scripture as: A physician, **Col 4:14**; Writing to Theophilus, **Luke 1:1-4**; **Acts 1:1-2**; Accompanying Paul in his tour of Asia and Macedonia, **Acts 16:10-13**; **20:5**; **20:6**, to Jerusalem, **Acts 21:1-18**, and to Rome, **Acts 27-28**; **2 Tim 4:11**; **Philemon 1:24**

Content:

It is the third and longest book in the NT. The purpose of Luke is clearly stated in the prologue of his Gospel, **Luke 1:1-4**. All four verses are only one sentence in Greek. Several things need to be noticed regarding his approach to presenting the gospel:

1. Luke states that his own work was stimulated by the work of others, **vs. 1**. "**That have been accomplished**," this phrase tells us about what God has done through Jesus to fulfill His plan, cf. **Luke 24:43-47**.
2. That he consulted eyewitnesses, **vs. 2**. "**Original eyewitnesses**," this verse refers to the preaching of the original oral tradition that circulated about Him before there were Gospels. These traditions were rooted in the preaching ministry of those who had been with Him.
3. That he sifted and arranged the information, **vs. 3**. "**Orderly sequence**," since we know that Luke rearranged some events in his Gospel to be topical as opposed to chronological, cf. **Luke 4:16-30**, and parallels in Mark and Matthew, this orderly sequence has more to do with a general arrangement and order as opposed to meaning in

temporal sequence.

4. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit to instruct Theophilus in the historical reliability of the faith, **vs. 4.** “**May know,**” this is more than an intellectual knowledge, the word EPIGNOSIS has the idea of giving assurance in this context.

The theme of Luke’s gospel is Christ, the Son of Adam, emphasizing the Son of Man that tells of events that demonstrated Christ’s humanity. It is slanted toward all Gentiles, especially the unbeliever. This is a gospel of the compassionate Son of Man offering salvation to the whole world, **Luke 19:10.** It presents the Savior as the Son of Man, the Perfect Man who came to seek and save the lost, **Acts 19:10.** In Luke, the Son of Man is presented as meeting man’s needs, a perfect man among men, chosen from men, tested among men, and supremely qualified to be the Savior and High Priest.

Holman also notes, “A strong argument can be presented for a second, though clearly subordinate, purpose. Some see Luke-Acts as an apology for the Christian faith, a defense of it designed to show Roman authorities that Christianity posed no political threat. Pilate declared Jesus innocent three times (**Luke 23:4,14,22**). Acts does not present Roman officials as unfriendly (**Acts 13:4-12; 16:35-40; 18:12-17; 19:31**). Agrippa remarked to Festus that Paul could have been freed if he had not appealed to Caesar (**Acts 26:32**). Paul is pictured as being proud of his Roman citizenship (**Acts 22:28**). The apostle is seen preaching and teaching in Rome openly without hindrance as Acts draws to a close. It is possible to see in all this an attempt by Luke to calm Roman authorities’ fears about any supposed subversive character of Christianity.” (Holman Bible Dictionary.)

By comparison:

- In Matthew, Jesus is presented as the Son of David, emphasizing His Kingship, written for the Jews, cf. **Isa 11:1; Mat 1:1.**
- In Mark, Jesus is presented as the Son of Man, emphasizing His Servant hood, written for the Romans, cf. **Zech 3:8; Mark 8:38.**
- In John, Jesus is presented as the Son of God, emphasizing His Deity, written for Christians, cf. **Isa 4:2; 7:14; John 3:16.**
- In Luke, Jesus is presented as the Son of Adam, emphasizing Him as the Son of Man, written for the Gentiles, cf. **Zech 6:12-13; Luke 3:38.**

Comparisons	Matthew	Mark	Luke	John
Christ’s Sonship	of David	of Man	of Adam	of God
Christ Viewed as:	King	Servant	Man	God
Written to:	Jews	Romans	Gentiles	Church
Number of Chapters	28	16	24	21

In Matthew, we see groupings of significant events, in Mark we see the snapshots of significant events, but in Luke we see more details of these events by the physician/historian. Jesus’ perfect human nature as the Son of Man, yet also Son of God, is brought out by the following:

1. His physical birth with His genealogy traced all the way back to Adam, **Acts 3:38,** (Matthew goes back only to Abraham).
2. His mental development is stressed in **Acts 2:40-52.**
3. His moral and spiritual perfection is also stressed as evidenced at His baptism by the voice of the Father from

heaven and by the anointing of the Holy Spirit, **Luke 3:22**.

Both the humanity and compassion of Jesus Christ are stressed in Luke's Gospel over and over again. Luke gives the most complete account of Christ's ancestry, birth, and development. Jesus is portrayed as the ideal Son of Man who identified with the sorrow and plight of sinful man, in order to carry it and offer us the priceless gift of salvation. Jesus alone fulfills the ideal of human perfection. Therefore, in Jesus we have One who is perfect manhood, physically, mentally, and spiritually.

As we have noted, this Gospel is a carefully researched and documented writing. In it we see:

1. The author displays an unusual interest in medical matters, **Luke 4:38; 7:15; 8:55; 14:2; 18:15; 22:50**.

Luke 4:38, "Then He got up and left the synagogue, and entered Simon's home. Now Simon's mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever, and they asked Him to help her."

2. Much attention is given to recounting of the events surrounding the birth of Christ that only Luke records. For example, the annunciation to Zachariah and Mary, the songs of Elizabeth and Mary, the birth and childhood of John the Baptist, the birth of Jesus, the visit of the shepherds, the circumcision, presentation in the Temple, details of Christ's childhood, and the inner thoughts of Mary.

3. Luke shows an uncommon interest in individuals, as seen in his accounts of Zaccheus, **Luke 19:1-10**, and the penitent thief, **Luke 23:39-43**, and in the parables of the prodigal son, **Luke 15:11-32**, and the penitent tax-gatherer, **Luke 18:9-14**. It is Luke who gives us the story of the good Samaritan, **Luke 10:29-37**, and the one thankful ex-leper, **Luke 17:11-19**.

4. Luke shows a rhythm that alternates between crowds and individuals. Often after a scene of Christ in a crowd, Luke focuses on Christ alone, or on Christ with one individual or the disciples. For example, Judas betrays Christ, **Luke 22:1-6**; Christ celebrates the Last Supper, **Luke 22:7-38**; they retreat to the Mount of Olives, where Christ prays alone, **Luke 22:39-46**; when he returns to his disciples, he is arrested, **Luke 22:47-52**; the scene reverts to the courtyard where Peter becomes the focus as he betrays the Lord and weeps bitterly, **Luke 22:54-62**.

5. In this gospel, there is a special emphasis on prayer, **Luke 3:21; 5:16; 6:12; 9:18, 28-29; 10:21; 11:1; 22:39-46; 23:34, 46**.

Luke 5:16, "But Jesus Himself would often slip away to the wilderness and pray."

Luke 6:12, "It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God."

6. Another distinctive feature of this gospel is the prominent place given to women, **Luke 1; 2; 7:11-13; 8:1-3; 10:38-42; 21:1-4; 23:27-31, 49**.

7. Luke also shows interest in poverty and wealth, **Luke 1:52-53; 4:16-22; 6:20, 24-25; 12:13-21; 14:12-13; 16:19-31**. Luke's Gospel surpasses the others in the attention it accords to the fringe figures of society, including the outcasts, the poor, the sinners, and women. Luke repeatedly shows Jesus as the friend of sinners and outcasts, **Luke 5:29-32; 14:12-24; 15:1-2**.

8. The book preserves four beautiful hymns:

- a. The Magnificat of Mary, **Luke 1:46-55**.
- b. The Benedictus of Zachariah, **Luke 1:67-79**.
- c. The Gloria in Excelsis of the angels, **Luke 2:14**.
- d. The Nunc Dimittis of Simeon, **Luke 2:29-32**.

9. There are about 200 verses, mostly teaching material, which Luke and Matthew have in common. There are also

many verses that Mark and Luke have in common, yet about half of Luke's material is exclusively his own.

10. Luke includes more events of Jesus' final journey to Jerusalem than do the other Gospels. This special section, often called "the travelogue," **Luke 9:51-19:27**, contains many parables not otherwise recorded.

This is a gospel of the compassionate Son of Man offering salvation to the whole world, **Luke 19:10**. Luke presents The Christ in a pastoral, theological, and historical manner.

The Recipient of this Gospel, as well as the book of Acts:

Both Luke and Acts are dedicated to Theophilus, Θεόφιλος which means "lover of God, friend of God, or God-beloved," and may be the name of an actual person or a figurative representation of any Christian. Some believe that Theophilus is a discreet pseudonym to protect a highly placed Christian. Some speculate that it identifies Theophilus with Titus Flavius Clemens, cousin of the Emperor Domitian. His wife Domitilla was a Christian and he himself was to fall from the emperor's favor and be executed on the charge of "atheism." The Romans used the term "atheists" to describe Christians because they refused to worship idols.

The title "most excellent" **vs. 3**, could indicate a Roman of high rank, **Acts 23:26; 24:3; 26:25**, before whom the truth of Christianity is to be defended, as Paul uses the same title in addressing Felix, **Acts 23:26; 24:3**, and Festus, **Acts 26:25**. But the term "most excellent" was not limited to Roman officials, and there is really no way of knowing the identity of Luke's named reader.

Yet, we do see that Theophilus was an informed person in regard to Christianity, i.e., "**you have been taught**" **vs. 4**, a statement probably referring to his prior Christian instruction, cf. **Acts 18:25**, referring to Apollos. This prologue can be interpreted to mean that Theophilus was either not yet a Christian, hence Luke's purpose would be evangelistic, or that he was a new Christian who needed to be strengthened in the faith, hence Luke would have a didactic purpose. In either case, Luke wrote to provide the necessary information for anyone, including Theophilus to come to know and understand who Jesus was and what He did, so as to come to a saving faith in Him.

Still others like the ISBE propose another alternative. "*Theophilus may have been the presbyter who took part in sending the letter from the Corinthians to Paul, given in the "Acta Pauli" (compare Hennecke, Neutestamentliche Apokryphen, 378). There is also a magistrate Theophilus mentioned in the "Acts of James," as being converted by James on his way to India (compare Budge, The Contendings of the Apostles, II, 299), but these and other identifications, together with other attempts to trace out the further history of the original Theophilus, are without sufficient evidence for their establishment,*" (ISBE).

II. The Identification of the Son of Man with Men, Luke 1:5-4:13.

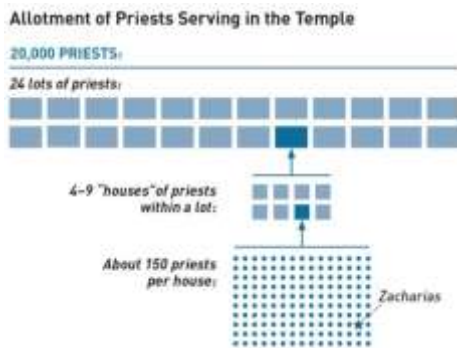
A. The Announcement of the Birth of John the Baptist, Luke 1:5-25.

Vs. 5



Historians customarily introduced a narrative by listing the names of reigning kings or governors, which provided the approximate time of the narrative. Luke first provides historical context for the events to follow by noting Herod the Great as the native ruler of Judea who ruled from 37-4 B.C. Herod was a Jewish proselyte, an Idumean or Edomite by birth, founder of the Herodian family, king of Judea from 37-4 B.C., made such by the Roman Senate on the recommendation of Mark Antony and Octavius Caesar. The qualifier "king of Judea" distinguishes this Herod from his sons, who ruled smaller regions and never received the official title of "king" from Rome.

This reminded them of the "dark days." The people had not heard a prophetic Word from God for 400 years, not since Malachi had promised the coming of Elijah, **Mal 4:5-6**. The spiritual leaders were shackled by tradition and, in some instances, corruption; and their king, Herod the Great, was a tyrant. Then came two great announcements from the Lord; the first being the announcement of John the Baptist.



In the demonstration of the spiritual heritage of the forerunner of Jesus, Luke notes that John's father, Zachariah whose name means, "the Lord remembers," was a priest from the division of Abijah. In the Hebrew and Greek, it is really Abia, cf. **1 Chron 24:10**. There were 24 such divisions of priests, cf. **1 Chron 24:1-19**. Each division was comprised of 4-9 families who were responsible for performing the daily service in the temple in Jerusalem for two separate weeks each year. In this scene, it was Zachariah's allotted period to serve, **vs. 8-9**. His was to offer the incense that was offered daily before the morning sacrifice, 9 am, and after the evening sacrifice, about 3 in the afternoon, cf. **Exo 30:1-8; Acts 3:1**. It was probably the evening offering that was assigned to Zachariah. The temple incense was made of stacte, onycha, galbanum, and pure frankincense, in equal parts, beaten very small, **Exo 30:7-8, 34-38**.

Not only was John's father from spiritual heritage, but his mother Elizabeth was also, i.e., the lineage of Aaron. Her name means, "my God is an or my oath," i.e. a worshipper of God. Together, Zachariah and Elizabeth's names means, "God remembers His oath."

Vs. 6

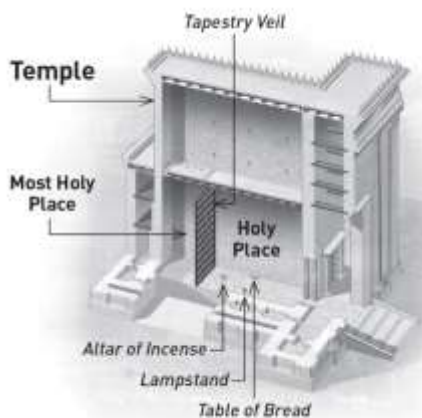
For Luke, piety is very important. This does not suggest that he advocates a doctrine of salvation by works. Rather, he makes it clear that the presence of piety and good works in the lives of those prior to the coming of the gospel of Christ is evidence of their trust in God. "**Righteous before God**," is not merely the quality of having an ethical character, but refers to living in accordance with what God requires. John's parents lived their lives in faithful obedience to the law of God.

This statement, "**righteous before God**," is also given so that the couple's childlessness is not interpreted by us as the result of sin or wickedness before God. In addition, we see that at this point in their lives they both were beyond the age of being able to conceive. This reminds us of Abraham and Sarah.

Vs. 7

Once again, Luke provides a subtle parallel with another OT example of God's power, Abraham and Sarah, **Gen 17:17**. Elizabeth's barrenness and advanced age underscored the miraculous nature of the event that was about to take place. And, we see that Elizabeth is yet another member of a devout group of women that includes individuals such as Sarah, **Gen 16:1**; Rebecca, **Gen 25:21**; Rachel, **Gen 30:1**; and Hannah, **1 Sam 1:2**, all of whom were delivered by God from their infertility and gave birth to great spiritual leaders.

Vs. 8-10



Zachariah's duty was to, "**burn incense**." Remember that the burning of incense in the Holy Place was a picture of our prayers going up to the Lord Who receives them as a sweet smelling aroma. Incense is a symbol of prayer found in, **Psa 141:1-2; Rev 8:3**. The main prayer for Israel was that God would provide a Messiah, which is about to be answered.



The Altar of Incense was made of acacia wood, and overlaid with gold, **Ex 37:25**, which represents the humanity and Deity of Christ in one, just as some of the other articles did. It stood in the Holy Place in front of the veil which hung between the holy and the most holy places. It was a small table twenty-two inches in breadth and length and forty-four inches in height.

Vs. 11-12

The “**angel of the Lord**” ANGELOS, ἄγγελος, KURIOS, κύριος is a very generic title used throughout Scripture, Old and New Testaments. It represents many different appearances of heavenly beings including our Lord Jesus Christ, **Gen 16:7- 13; 21:17; Exo 3:2-6; Judges 2:1-5**. Here, it is the Angel Gabriel, **vs. 19**.

Vs. 13

Zachariah and Elizabeth may have been praying for their own child, but given their age, they probably had given up on the opportunity to have a child. Being “righteous” they more likely were praying for the deliverance of Israel. Nevertheless, the angel tells them they will have a son and to name him “John,” which in the Greek is IOANNES, Ἰωάννης that means, “the Lord has given or the Lord has been gracious.” Together with his parents Zachariah and Elizabeth, their names combine to mean, “God remembers His oath, and the Lord has given.” The Lord gave them and all of Israel John, to pave the way for the Messiah.

God swore an oath to David, cf. Psa 89:34-37, that one of his descendants would have an eternal reign. Christ is that descendant. God is ready to break through His silence in human history after 400 years.

Vs. 14-17

Gabriel announces the impact John will have on them and the people of Israel in 6 ways:

1. He will be a joy and delight to you, **vs. 14**. John the Baptist's ministry brought joy to the Israelites who believed his message of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, **Luke 3:3**.
2. He will be great in the sight of the Lord, **vs. 15**.
3. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, **vs. 15**.
4. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth, **vs. 15**. Both of John's parents were filled with the Spirit, **Luke 1:41, 67**.
5. Many of the people of Israel would he bring back to... God, **vs. 16**. cf. **Mat 3:5-6; Mark 1:4-5**.
6. He will go on before the Lord. John the Baptist was the Lord's forerunner, announcing His coming in the spirit and power of Elijah, **vs. 17**. Zachariah apparently understood that the angel was identifying John the Baptist with the messenger in **Malachi 3:1**, for in his song of praise he noted that John would “go on before the Lord to prepare the way for Him,” **Luke 1:76**; cf. **Luke 3:4-6**. Jesus affirmed that John was the fulfillment of **Malachi 3:1**;

cf. **Mat 11:10**, and stated that John would have fulfilled **Malachi 4:5-6** if the people had accepted his message, cf. **Mat 11:14**.

“**Joy**” CHARA “**gladness** or rejoicing and exaltation;” AGALLIASIS and “**rejoice**” CHAIRO are favorite terms of Luke. They reflect the joy that accompanies the experiencing of God’s salvation, cf. **Psa 51:12**. Zachariah and Elizabeth, as well as the nation, would rejoice because of the ministry of John the Baptist.

Psa 51:12, “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit.”

In **vs. 15**, it was an allusion to the Nazirite vow in **Num 6:2**, **Judges 13-16**, (regarding Samson), **1 Sam 1:11**, (regarding Samuel), and in **Amos 2:11f**, (regarding special servants to the Lord). It was a vow of separation or consecration, setting someone apart for the special service to God. Interestingly, the stimulation of the Spirit is elsewhere contrasted with alcoholic stimulants, **Acts 2:15-18**; **Eph 5:18**.

This special consecration is further identified as John would be “filled with the Holy Spirit,” which is called in theology “the enduement of the Holy Spirit.” Enduement of the Spirit was typically a temporary filling of the Holy Spirit and given only to a few OT saints. Remember, this is still the time period of the “Age of Israel,” or the “Jewish Dispensation.” Not all believers received the indwelling or subsequent opportunity for the “filling of the Holy Spirit,” during that dispensation. But, it was told to Zachariah that John would receive it for his special service as the forerunner of and prophet for the coming Christ.

This “enduement” of the Holy Spirit for John was unique. And, even though he continued the OT tradition of spiritual leaders being empowered by God to fulfill a specific purpose or task, John’s Spirit-empowerment is unique.

But first, we need to correct something. The phrase, “**while yet in his mother’s womb**,” is a wrong English translation. It should be, “**from his mother’s womb**,” because the Greek utilizes the Genitive Preposition EK that means, “from, out of, out from, or away from.” In no way is it translated “while in.” It always has the connotation of, “out from or away from.” Therefore, John is not filled with the Holy Spirit inside of his mother’s womb, but after he is born and has his own life and receives the imputation of a soul at physical birth.

Now, back to the uniqueness of his “enduement.” First, it is unlike the temporary nature of the OT prophet’s Spirit-enablement, because John’s is to be permanently filled with the Spirit that would characterize the kingdom of God. Thus, John is an important transitional figure in the mind of Luke. He is ushering in the transition from the Age of Israel to the Church Age, where believers would be permanently indwelt with the Holy Spirit from the day of their salvation. Second, the phrase stresses in the most enthusiastic manner, God’s choice of John for this important task that is followed by the next two verses that speak of the impact of his ministry. God, as well as the angel Gabriel, was excited about this.

The ministry of John would accomplish two things. First, in **vs. 16**, he would evangelize the Israelites to bring them back to right relation with God. Second, in **vs. 17**, to act as the “forerunner” for Christ, cf. **Luke 1:76**; **3:4**, in the manner of Elijah, **Mat 11:14**; **17:11-12**, “**to make ready the people for the Lord**,” that quotes **Malachi 4:6**. Notice that John’s ministry would be directed to the Jews primarily.

“**In the Spirit and power**,” does not mean in the form of great signs as with Elijah; rather, this power would be evident in the authority and power of John’s message to save. John would be empowered by the same Divine Spirit that worked in and through the prophet Elijah to accomplish this. And, as we know from Scripture, Elijah was the stern prophet who rebuked the idolatrous King Ahab, **1 Kings 21:17-24**. Likewise, Elijah preached repentance, **1 Kings 18:21-40**, as John the Baptist would also do, **Luke 3:8**. Therefore, John would turn the Israelites from their false worship of God to a true worship of Him through Christ.

Vs. 18

Unfortunately, Zachariah has a moment of doubt that will cost him, **vs. 20**. He was looking at the physical things in doubt and not the spiritual things in faith. He had forgotten what God did for Abraham and Sarah, **Gen 18:9-15**; **Rom 4:18-25**. He thought that his physical limitations would hinder Almighty God. As Paul stated, “**The Jews look**

for / demand a sign,” 1 Cor 1:22a; cf. John 2:18; Mat 12:38-39. His individual reaction to the good news and his personal failure to believe God’s word mirrors the failure of Israel to bring the Word of God to the nations.

Remember what our Lord states in Isa 29:13, **“Because this people draw near with their words and honor Me with their lip service, but they remove their hearts far from Me, and their reverence for Me consists of tradition learned by rote.”**

We too, must be careful not to doubt God. We too, should not look at the physical and think it is impossible for our almighty God. We need to remember who He is and what His Word says and be faithful to Him in all situations.

In addition, Zachariah should have recognized the sign of Gabriel’s visit as a parallel between his own experience and that of Daniel, cf. Dan 9:21, who was also visited by Gabriel at the time of the evening sacrifice. As such, the appearance of the angel and his introduction as **“that (the one who) stands in the presence of God,” vs. 19**, were both intended to be signs that the message was authentic.

So, Zachariah wanted more proof than the Scriptures and more proof than an angel visiting him. He wanted proof rather than the promise. In that way, this righteous man walked by sight, not by faith.

As such, we too need to be careful, because we can be the most righteous person in the holiest places, carrying out the holiest acts of worship, and not believe God. Unbelief is that sneaky. It can slither right into the middle of spiritual worship.

Vs. 19

The angel gives his name, **“Gabriel,”** Γαβριήλ that means, “man of God or warrior/hero of God.” Gabriel is one of only two angels given a name in the Bible, Dan 8:16; 9:21; Luke 1:19, 26. Michael is the other who is the warrior angel, Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev 12:7.

As, **“The one who stands in the presence of God,”** Gabriel’s ministry involves making special announcements concerning God’s plans as directed by God. He is only seen in the announcements to Daniel, Zachariah, and Mary.

In Daniel 8, he interpreted the vision of the ram and he-goat; in Daniel 9, he delivered the 70-week prophecy. He brought Daniel out of a trance, Dan 8:15, flew quickly, Dan 9:21, and took hold of the prophet, Dan 8:18; 9:21. He also may have been the angel that came to Joseph in a dream to explain Mary’s condition, Mat 1:20-21. Generally speaking, Gabriel is associated with the salvation of God’s people, especially with Messianic promise.

Extra Biblical writings name several other angels. In the Jewish apocalyptic writings of Enoch, the addition of Raphael and Phanuel, 1 Enoch 9:1; 40:9; 54:6, Remiel and Saraqael, 1 Enoch 20:1-8, and Uriel, plus a number of others, 1 Enoch 82:7, 10-20, compose an elaborate angelic host.

1 Enoch 10:9; 20:7; 44:6; 2 Enoch 21:3, 5, and others, say Gabriel is the one who conveys to God the prayers of martyrs, 1 Enoch 9; casts the wicked into a furnace 1 Enoch 54:1; oversees all powers, 1 Enoch 40:9; and sits on the right hand of God, 2 Enoch 24:1, which are all messianic roles in the NT. Further, the Aramaic Targums write him into the OT accounts as the one who led Joseph to his brothers, Gen 37:15, buried Moses, Deut 34:6, and slaughtered Sennacherib’s army, 2 Chron 32:21. Yet, we cannot be assured as to these things, since they are not Divinely inspired writings.

In addition, Gabriel may have been the “angel of the Lord” that spoke to the wife of Manoah, about the impending birth of their son Samson, **“the Nazirite to God from the womb,” Judges 13:2-4**, but he is not named there.

Gabriel tells Zachariah that **“he was sent to speak to,”** Zachariah, and **“to bring him good news,”** EUAGGELIZO, εὐαγγελίζω. This is a general term that many times refers to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and back in vs. 17, he tells Zachariah that John **“will go before Him,”** who is Jesus Christ, the Messiah. So, John will preach the good news of Jesus Christ come into the world. This was Gabriel’s message of “good news” to Zachariah.

Vs. 20

Here, we see the discipline Zachariah received for not believing the message given to him by Gabriel; he was made mute. As we know, faith is blessed, but unbelief is judged. We should remember **2 Cor 4:13a**, “**I believed, and therefore have I spoken.**” Zachariah did not believe; therefore, he could not speak. And, **2 Cor 4:13b**, “**we also believe, therefore also we speak.**” Therefore, when God speaks, our only responsibility is to trust His Word, and teach it to others.

Zachariah’s 9+ month silence reflected the 400-year hush that preceded the fulfillment of God’s promises. And, in a way, it was the sign that he had requested, cf. **vs. 22**, because he would remain mute, “**until the day... which shall be fulfilled in its proper time,**” which was when they brought John to be circumcised eight days after his birth, **vs. 64**.

In fact, both Ezekiel and Daniel temporarily lost the ability to speak after receiving visions from God, **Ezek 3:26; Dan 10:7-8, 15**; a sign for all the people.

Zachariah’s condition also included the inability to hear, **vs. 62**. Therefore, this “sign” was both evidence of the message’s authenticity and a judgment against Zachariah for disbelieving the messenger.

Vs. 21

The reason “**the people were waiting for Zachariah,**” is that upon his return from the Holy Place, he would recite the Aaronic blessing over them found in **Num 6:24-26**. If he was delayed, they feared him dead and/or that they would not be blessed.

Num 6:24-26, “**The LORD bless you, and keep you; ²⁵The LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; ²⁶The LORD lift up His countenance on you, and give you peace.**”

Vs. 22

Because Zachariah could not speak, the people discerned it to be a sign that he had “**seen a vision**” OPTASIA, ὄπτασια. “*It is difficult to make a clear distinction between dreams and visions in the Bible, because visions are called dreams and dreams are called visions (e.g., Acts 2:17; 9:10, 12). However, OPTASIA is a waking vision, while HORAMA is a vision seen in a dream.*” (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary.)

So, here we know that Gabriel appeared to Zachariah while he was awake.

Vs. 23-25

Here we see Zachariah returning home and then conceiving John with his wife Elizabeth. We do not know the exact time period between returning home and conception, only that the promise of God had been fulfilled.

Given the societal disgrace of being barren, it makes sense that Elizabeth would wait until the time came when the reality of her pregnancy would be undeniable.

This was also where Zachariah composed his great “Benedictus,” **vs. 67-79**.

Vs. 25

Here, we have a wonderful prayer of thanksgiving by Elizabeth. She was thankful that the Lord chose her for this occasion and allowed her to conceive, as noted in the phrase, “**looked upon me with favor**” and “**to take away my disgrace among men.**” Praises like this were common among the barren whom God visited, **Gen 21:6-7; 1 Sam 2:1-11**, but Elizabeth especially recalls Rachel’s exultation, “**God has removed my reproach!**” **Gen 30:23**.

“**Disgrace or reproach**” is the Noun ONEIDOS ὄνειδος that means, “reproach, disgrace, insult, censure, rebuke,

blame,” and is only used here in the NT. In that day, it was considered something of a public embarrassment not to have had children, and the impending birth of John the Baptist would relieve her of this embarrassment. Compare the similar situation of Rachel the mother of Joseph in **Gen 30:23**, where the Septuagint also uses ONEIDOS.

B. The Announcement of the Birth of the Son of Man, Luke 1:26-56.

Vs. 26

The first thing Luke does is connect the announcement to Mary with the announcement to Elizabeth by using the connective Conjunction DE, “now,” and saying, “**in the sixth month,**” HEKTOS MEN, which is also in **vs. 36**, as Gabriel revealed Elizabeth’s pregnancy to Mary. Likewise, by naming Gabriel once again, cf. **vs. 19**, it links the two accounts. And, the fact that both pregnancies would be due to God miraculously working, links them together. Many put this time period from 6 to 4 B.C.



The location of Gabriel’s announcement was in Mary’s hometown of Nazareth located in Galilee, the northernmost province of Palestine ruled by Herod the Great as the native ruler of Judea from 37-4 B.C., and later his son Herod Antipas from 4 B.C. to 39 A.D.



Nazareth, Ναζαρέτ in this period, was an insignificant village of an estimated sixteen hundred to two thousand inhabitants. It is located in the lower Galilee region about halfway between Sea of Galilee and Mediterranean Sea.



Galilee comprised the lands of Zebulun, Naphtali, Issachar and Asher. It is situated on the most southern of the ranges of lower Galilee, about ten miles from the plain of Esdraelon. It is on the slopes of a natural basin facing east and southeast. Although situated near several of the important trade routes of Palestine, the town itself was surrounded on three sides by high hills, giving it the appearance of isolation. Cana was about five miles to the northeast. A Roman road from Capernaum westward to the coast passed near Nazareth. It was a small village in Jesus’ day, having only one spring to supply fresh water to its inhabitants and was not an abundant agricultural area.

It was the home town of Mary and Joseph, and became the hometown of Jesus. The people in Judah disdained the Jews in Galilee and claimed they were not “kosher” because of their contacts with the Gentiles there, cf. **Mat 4:15**. They especially despised the people from Nazareth and it had a poor reputation, **John 1:46**, “**Nathanael said to him, ‘Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see.’**” It was an unimportant town as shown by the fact that it is not mentioned in the OT, the Talmud, or in Josephus. It reflected the humble nature by which Jesus entered the world, and was part of the first fulfillment of OT prophecy about the Christ, cf. **Isa 53:3** with **Mat 2:23**; **John 19:19**.

Isa 53:3, “**He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and like one from whom men hide their face, He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.**”

Mat 2:23, “And came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: ‘He shall be called a Nazarene’.”

John 19:19, “Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, ‘JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS’.”

Nazareth comes from the Hebrew Noun NETSER that means “a shoot or branch,” which too is part of the fulfillment of prophecy, **Isa 11:1, “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit,”** cf. **vs. 27**. Some also think it comes from the Hebrew NOTSERAH, that means, “one guarding or watching,” thus designating the hill which overlooks and thus guards an extensive region. This is also an appropriate correlation to Jesus Christ.

Jesus became known as “**Jesus of Nazareth**,” **Mat 2:23; 26:71; Luke 18:37; 24:19; John 1:45; Acts 2:22; 3:6; 10:38**, and His hometown became affixed to Christianity, as even His apostles were called Nazarenes, **Acts 24:5**.

Vs. 27

In this verse, we learn several important facts:

1. Jesus’ mother would be a virgin; therefore, He would not have a human father, cf. **vs. 35**. Luke presents the theology of the Incarnation in a way so holy and congruent with OT sacred history that any comparisons with pagan mythology seem utterly incongruous. Instead of the carnal union of a pagan god with a woman, producing some kind of semi-divine offspring, Luke speaks of a spiritual overshadowing by God Himself that will produce the “Holy One” within Mary.
 - a. The first prophecy of the virgin birth, **Gen 3:15-16**.
 - b. The Jewish prophecy of the virgin birth, **Isa 7:14, 9:6-7**.
 - c. The historical fulfillment of the virgin birth, **Mat 1:19-25**.
 - d. The result of the virgin birth, **John 1:14; Rom 1:3; 1 Tim 3:16; Heb 2:14; Phil 2:5-11**.
2. She was already engaged. Engagement was as solid as marriage is today. To get un-engaged, they needed to apply for a certificate of divorce. Mary had already been given to Joseph, and according to the tradition of the betrothal, though they had not yet lived together or consummated the marriage, legally they were considered man and wife, cf. **Mat 1:20, 24**. The betrothal was a form of agreement that included witnesses, a marriage contract, and the payment of the bridal price. The betrothal was the first stage of the marriage procedure. The betrothal period was generally concluded at the end of one year when the woman would transfer residence to the man’s house.
3. The man she was engaged to was named Joseph. Joseph was not the biological father of Jesus. Nevertheless Matthew’s genealogy should be considered from the perspective that it is an official genealogy of Joseph intended to show that Jesus, as the son of Joseph, in the eyes of the Law is of the lineage of David. The very fact that Joseph took Mary as his wife, made Jesus the legal offspring of Joseph. Though nothing is said of Joseph outside the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke, both Gospel writers portray him as a man of deep piety, “Joseph the just,” and as a loving and devoted father of Jesus.
4. Joseph is a descendant of king David, therefore through adoption, Jesus is in the kingly line of David, cf. **Mat 1:16**, with **vs. 6**; as he also is through Mary, cf. **Luke 3:23** with **vs. 31**.
5. The virgin’s name is Mary, to be the mother of Jesus. Many believe she was only 12 or 13 years old at this time, but we do not know for sure. Luke’s Gospel presents Jesus’ birth from Mary’s point of view. It is also primarily concerned with showing the validity of the stories it contains. The doctrinal cornerstone of the Christian faith is the Deity of Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Birth is integral to this teaching. Therefore, Jesus Christ was born 100% man and 100% God; as truly God and truly man in what we call “hypostatic union.”

The Necessity of our Lord’s Virgin Birth:

1. Adam's original sin is the origin of the Old Sin Nature (OSN) in the human race, **Gen 3:6b-7, 17-19; Rom 5:12, 15b-17; 1 Cor 15:21-22a.**

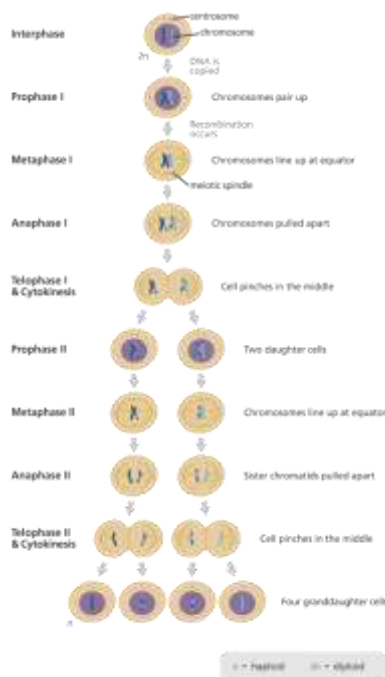
Rom 5:12, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned."

1 Cor 15:21-22, "For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead. ²²For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive."

It is Adam's original sin that is the precedence leading to the OSN, not the woman's original sin, since Adam's sin was deliberate; the woman was deceived.

2. At copulation, the OSN is transmitted through the 23 male chromosomes that contain the cells of the Sin Nature, which fertilize the 23 female chromosomes in the ovum that is absent of the cells of the OSN. The throwing off of the 23 female chromosomes that contain the OSN is done in the process called Meiosis and Polar body.

Pictorially, the process is as such:

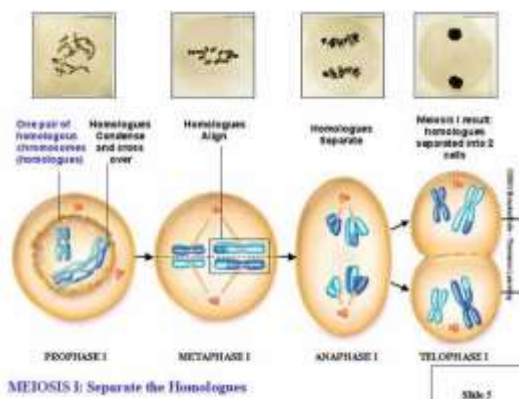


"Meiosis is a process where a single cell divides twice to produce four cells containing half the original amount of genetic information. These cells are our sex cells – sperm in males, eggs in females." (Genome Research Limited, <https://www.yourgenome.org/facts/what-is-meiosis>).

This illustration of the nine stages of Meiosis is credited to "Genome Research Limited," (<https://www.yourgenome.org/facts/what-is-meiosis>).

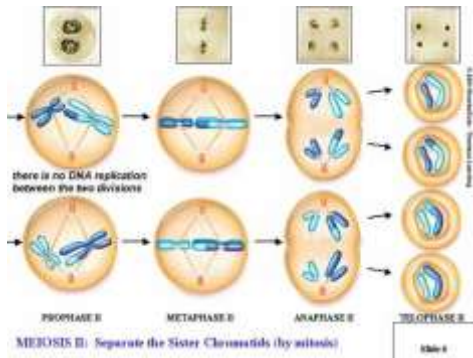
Another graphic shows the process broken down into two categories called Meiosis I and Meiosis II.

Meiosis I, Separate the Homologues:



In Meiosis II, (Prophase II, Metaphase II, Anaphase II, and Telophase II and cytokinesis), the last phase Telophase II and cytokinesis, results in the ovum and three polar bodies that are thrown off. *"Once cytokinesis is complete there are four granddaughter cells, each with half a set of chromosomes (haploid), in males, these four cells are all sperm cells, in females, one of the cells is an egg cell while the other three are polar bodies (small cells that do not develop into eggs)."* (Genome Research Limited.)

Meiosis II, Separate the Sister Chromatids:



“In the egg, there is a division into 4 cells with unequal fates; 1 ovum plus 3 polar bodies. The 3 polar bodies disintegrate. The 1 ovum gets all the resources (cytoplasm, mitochondria) and may get fertilized.” (Iupui Department of Biology, “Meiosis and the Formation of Eggs and Sperm,”

<https://embryo.asu.edu/pages/meiosis-humans>

As such, in the female, the elimination of the cells containing the OSN, (polar bodies), are thrown off and the viable female egg or ovum that remains does not contain the OSN cells. Yet, in the male, the process of splitting the cells into 23 chromosomes does not eliminate the OSN, as all four are viable called sperm.

During sexual reproduction, fertilization of the ovum (23 chromosomes) by the sperm (23 chromosomes) restores the diploid number and creates a zygote (46 chromosomes) that divides and grows by mitosis to form a multicellular human.

Therefore, we see the result and importance of the virgin birth. No human father, means no OSN cells. No OSN cells, means born without sin.

3. At human birth, the baby has the genetic structure of the OSN inside of its DNA. At birth, God imputes Adam’s original sin to the OSN, and the new born becomes a like copy of Adam at the point of his fall in the garden. At birth, the Holy Spirit then breathes the “breaths of lives,” (NESHAMAH), **Gen 2:7**, into the new born and the baby is born physically alive. But, because of the OSN and the imputation of Adam’s original sin, the baby dies spiritually. There are two factors involved in our spiritual death.
 - a. The Old Sin Nature.
 - b. Adam’s original sin.
4. The OSN contaminates all the cells in the human body and when God the Father imputes Adam’s original sin to Old Sin Nature at the time of physical birth, spiritual death results.
5. Yet, the female, (through meiosis and polar body), throws off the 23 chromosomes that are contaminated with the OSN, leaving 23 uncontaminated chromosomes prior to fertilization. All the other cells in the female body are contaminated by the OSN; the ovum prior to fertilization is the only exception. That is why Mary was not without sin. She had an OSN.
6. Although both the man and the woman in the garden were equally guilty, the woman’s sin of ignorance was the reason she became the bearer of the embryo, **1 Tim 2:13-15**.
7. While both man and woman are carriers of the OSN, only the man can transmit it through the fertilization of the female ovum.
8. Since, it is only the male’s 23 chromosomes that carry the OSN and not the female’s, this means that if a woman could have a virgin pregnancy, (i.e., if her ovum could be fertilized apart from male copulation), the progeny could be born into the world without an OSN. Being born without an Old Sin Nature, Adam’s original sin could not be imputed to that person, there being no affinity required for this imputation.
9. Therefore, Christ being born without an OSN meant there was no imputation of Adam’s original sin to our Lord. He was born physically and spiritually alive with no OSN and no original sin imputation.
10. This was how our Lord was born as the last Adam, **1 Cor 15:45**. The first Adam was created perfect (without sin);

the last Adam, Jesus Christ, was born perfect (without sin). So, Jesus Christ was in like form as Adam before the fall.

1 Cor 15:45, “So also it is written, “The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL.” The last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.”

11. Remember that while Mary was a virgin, she was not perfect or impeccable. Only her virgin-born son was absolutely perfect at birth. And, Mary did not remain perpetually as a virgin. She had other children **Mat 13:55-56; 12:46; Mark 6:3.**

12. Therefore, it is the virgin birth that is the basis for redemption, because it provided the world with a perfect human being, the only one qualified to be judged for the sins of the world, **Heb 9:15-16.**

Heb 9:15, “For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were *committed* under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. ¹⁶For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it.”

In **vs. 26-27**, we were introduced to the lowly, humble nature by which our Lord and Savior would be brought into this world.

In **vs. 28-31**, we are introduced to the grace, mercy, and kind-favor of God by which our Lord and Savior would be brought into this world.

Vs. 28

Luke 1:28, “And coming in, he said to her, “Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you.”

Some translations include at the end, “blessed are you among women,” but that is not found in the oldest and more reliable texts. Although it is found in Elizabeth’s rejoicing over the news in **vs. 42**, it is not found here. Therefore, it was a later addition to potentially elevate Mary’s position supposedly being classified as such by the “angel who stands before God,” and not just a rejoicing proclamation from her ordinary cousin.

“**Hail, favored one!**” is the Present, Active, Imperative of the Verb CHAIRO, χαίρω that means, “rejoice, be glad, welcome, greetings, hail,” with the Perfect, Passive, Participle in the Vocative, Singular, Feminine of CHARITOO, that means, “to give grace, bestow favor,” and means, “to confer grace upon or show kindness to.” BDAG says, “*To cause to be the recipient of a benefit, bestow favor on, favor highly, bless.*” It is only used here and in **Eph 1:6**. Both are cognates of CHARIS that means, “grace.”

CHARITOO functions as the verb form of CHARIS in which there is the endowment of CHARIS. Subjectively, grace on the part of the giver is bestowed as part of a favor or kindness. Objectively there is a recognition of favors received with the response of gratitude and joy, cf. **Luke 1:30; 2:52; Acts 2:47; 7:10, 46; 24:27; 25:9.**

Eph 1:6, “To the praise of the glory of His grace, which grace He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved.”

In our passage, it means that Mary is the recipient of God’s antecedent grace or favor. She is about to be the recipient of a wonderful Divine blessing.

Some think “hail” should be translated “rejoice” given Luke’s pattern of general use and when comparing, **Zech 9:9; Zeph 3:14.**

Zech 9:9, “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, humble, and mounted on a donkey, even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The angel Gabriel was greeting Mary and at the same time was saying she should rejoice because she was about to be the recipient of God's indescribable grace. God was smiling upon this young, unknown girl, and Gabriel's greeting reveals she is chosen solely as a matter of God's grace. We might be tempted to think Zachariah was chosen because he was righteous and a priest. But God's grace can smile upon any one, especially a lowly young woman such as Mary.

We must also recognize that by this Gabriel did not mean, as Roman Catholic doctrine teaches, that there was something, (some perfection), in Mary by which she deserved to receive this grace, and that as a result of this perfection, she was able to show grace to others because in herself she was full of grace. No, Gabriel meant that she had received God's grace. She is the recipient, not the dispenser, of grace. God bestowed His free unmerited, gracious favor upon her to an exceptional degree in choosing her to be the mother of His Son.

Then when Gabriel says, "**The Lord is with you,**" he was using an OT greeting that conferred that the Lord would guide and protect her. Gabriel is preparing Mary for Divine service with the assurance, "The Lord will help her," which too is part of His grace. Therefore, God's grace not only gives us "something," but it also helps us or provides for us in the reception and application of the grace thing we have been given.

The grace of God means that none of us can earn or deserve even one blessing from God. God does all the work; we do not earn or deserve anything from God. We are not blessed because we do something. We are blessed because God has done and continues to do something for us. We never earn or deserve anything from God except condemnation. Yet, because of who and what God is, His grace is greater than our failures, our sins, our flaws, our self-righteous legalism, our human good, and our dead works.

Grace is all that God is free to do for mankind without compromising His Divine essence. It is the free, unmerited favor and love from God alone, and is not from our works or because we are attractive to God. Many times it shows itself in favor, kindness, and mercy, therefore, man thinks he earns or deserves it. But, grace is unearned and undeserved, a total gift of and from God.

Grace means that all things from God, including salvation by grace through faith, are received from God as a free gift totally apart from any form of human merit or any system of human works. They are never merited or earned by mankind, cf. **Eph 2:8-9**.

Eph 2:7-9, "So that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast."

Grace is also the manifestation of God's holiness, power, virtue, efficacy, mercy, compassion, indulgence, forbearance, pardon; unmerited favor based on the exclusive work of God. It includes three categories of Divine blessing from God; His unmerited favor and divine provision for mankind before, during, and after salvation, including our past, present, and future salvation.

Vs. 29

Luke 1:29, "But she was very perplexed at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was."

"**Perplexed**" is the Aorist, Passive, Indicative of the Verb DIATARASSO, διαταράσσω that means, "agitates, greatly troubled, or confused." The term includes an acute level of distress and mental anguish, (Louw and Nida, Greek-English Lexicon, 1:315), and possibly even fear. This is the only time it is used in the NT. It is an hapaxlegomena. This word comes from DIA, which means "through or through out," and TARASSO, "to stir up, disturb, throw into confusion."

Back in **vs. 12**, we saw that Zachariah was "troubled" TARASSO at the appearance of the Angel of the Lord. But here, Mary was "greatly or thoroughly troubled." She was more startled than Zachariah at the appearance of the Angel of the Lord. That does not mean anything regarding "sinfulness," it just means as a young lady she was a bit

more startled than an older-gentlemen who has seen much in his life.

“Kept pondering” is the Imperfect, Middle Deponent, Indicative of the Verb DIALOGIZOMAI, διαλογίζομαι that means, “Consider, ponder thoroughly, reason carefully and deliberately.” This deponent verb (a verb with a middle form but an active sense) is a compound from DIA, “through,” and LOGIZOMAI, “reckon, count, compute,” and essentially means, “consider, reason, discuss, etc.” in classical Greek. In many circumstances, it has the technical meaning of “balance accounts.” So, we could say she was “weighing” all the information she was receiving; the angel, the greeting, the time of day, the place, what she saw, etc., etc. To be so honored by the heavenly messenger was staggering to the mind of this lowly young woman. This is similar to what we see of Mary at the messages given by the shepherds upon the birth of Jesus, **Luke 2:19**.

Luke 2:19, “But Mary treasured all these things, pondering (SUMBALLO) them in her heart.”

Vs. 30

Luke 1:30, “And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God’.”

Gabriel’s announcement begins as it did with Zachariah in vs. 13, **“do not be afraid,”** ME PHOBEO in the Present, Middle Deponent, Imperative. As with Zachariah, Gabriel could either sense or see the startled reaction of Mary and wanted to calm her fears. He applied grace to her by helping to ease her fears.

Then Gabriel addresses her directly, **“Mary,”** Maria or Mariam meaning, “rebellious,” is the recipient of his message. Then he states, **“You have found favor with God.”** In Zachariah’s case, God was answering his prayer. In Mary’s case, it was that she had **“found favor,”** with God.

“Found” is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb HEURISKO, εὕρισκω that means, “find, discover, obtain, ascertain, contrive, etc.”

“Favor” is the Noun CHARIS, χάρις that means, “grace, graciousness, kindness, favor, etc.” As we noted above, “grace” is the free unmerited favor of God. So, we see that Mary is the recipient of God’s grace once again, but in the Active voice she is to apply this grace, first in her thoughts, so that she would no longer be confused, frightened, or perplexed, and then later in her actions as she applies this message she is receiving. In other words, God was about to grace her out of her mind and she is to receive it and apply it. She was to apply the Bible Doctrine she was receiving to her life.

A similar statement is found in **Gen 6:8**, regarding Noah who also is said to have **“found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”** For both, this grace was the catalyst of a Divine salvation-related event. In both cases, God chose them to fulfill an important task that resulted in the salvation of many. Therefore, by the grace of God, He ordained Mary to carry His Son and raise Him.

Now, in vs. 31-33, we have a wonderful description of who and what Mary’s baby will be. Gabriel announces the babe’s eternal reign and kingdom.

Vs. 31

Luke 1:31, “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus.”

Here we see the main message of grace Gabriel brought to Mary. The opening phrase of Gabriel’s message is similar to the angelic announcements made to Hagar, **Gen 16:11**, and the wife of Manoah (Sampson’s mother), **Judges 13:3-5**. The phraseology seems to be an adaptation of the Greek LXX text of **Isa 7:14**.

Isa 7:14, “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”

Interestingly, the Future, Middle Deponent, Indicative of the Verb SULLAMBANO means, “to take hold of,

conceive, or help.” “Conceive,” in terms of becoming pregnant, is the particular application here, yet, the other two meanings also give nuance to the application of this word in regard to what this pregnancy meant.

The name of this child was of great importance. While Luke does not place emphasis on the meaning of names, the parallel passage in **Mat 1:21**, includes the purpose clause, “**for He will save His people from their sins.**” This purpose is born out in the meaning of the name Jesus, which is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew name Joshua that means, “the Lord saves,” as “**Jesus,**” IESOUS, Ἰησοῦς means, “Savior.”

Even though this was the name He was given, it was also a title as He is the Savior or Jesus of the world. It comes from the Hebrew Jehoshua, meaning “Jehovah or YHWH is salvation,” and is contracted to Joshua. “Jesus” also emphasizes our Lord’s humanity, as is appropriate here, since we are talking about His human birth; God being born as a man. Therefore, by name and title, Mary’s baby boy would be the God-man and Savior of the world.

The first words to Mary about the birth were simply that she would “conceive in her womb, and bring forth a son.” As she listened to the angel’s words disclosing His name, His greatness, His deity, His royalty, and His eternal kingdom, her heart must have been filled with even further bewilderment and wonder.

The fact that she, a virgin, would become a mother was staggering, but to learn of the greatness of the One she would bear must have been even more staggering. The entire program of the Messiah was flashed before her in a few words, and she was to be the mother of the long desired Deliverer of her people. He is the answer to God’s grace plan of salvation for the entire world.

As we see, she was given a most difficult announcement to comprehend and then service to perform for God, perhaps as difficult as has ever been asked of any servant of the Lord. Virgins do not give birth. Who would believe her? Even Joseph, a righteous man, thought that he should hide her, so that she would not be an object of shame, **Mat 1:19-21**. Yet, as we see in **vs. 38, 46-55**, in humility, Mary accepted the grace Word of God from the angel Gabriel and the task chosen for her. Nevertheless, the grace of God would see her through it all, as she was the “**graced out one,**” **vs. 28**, who “**obtained grace**” from God, **vs. 30**.

In the next two verses, Gabriel predicted 5 things about Mary’s son. Five is the number of “grace.”

Vs. 32

Luke 1:32, “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.”

1. He will be great.

Here, we have more superlatives for our Lord and another title. “**He will be great**” is HOUTOS EIMI MEGAS. Usually, MEGAS is a superlative related to something like power, authority, an emotion, spatially, influence, fame, etc. But here, it stands alone; signifying that in all aspects, Jesus would be great. Given the further descriptions of Him related to His deity and earthly kingship in these passages, we see His greatness as God and as the King of Israel and the entire world, **Titus 2:13**.

Titus 2:13, “Looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus.”

Further, Jesus is referred to as the “**great high priest,**” **Heb 4:14; 10:21**, and the “**great shepherd of the sheep,**” **Heb 13:20**.

Heb 4:14, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.”

Heb 13:20, “Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, even Jesus our Lord.”

This may also be a reference to the Messianic prophecy of **Micah 5:4**, installing the Messiah as the supreme heir to the Davidic throne.

Micah 5:4, “And He will arise and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD His God. And they will remain, because at that time He will be great to the ends of the earth.”

2. He will be called the Son of the Most High.

“**Will be Called**” is the Future, Passive, Indicative of KALEO, which does not just mean “called by men,” here, but understanding it in its Passive form, as including the OT idea, where a name expresses the character or existence of something. Thus, Jesus was not simply thought to be the Son of God, He is the Son of God.

“**The Son of the Most High**” is the Nominative Noun HUIOS and the Superlative Genitive Noun HUPSISTOS. This title, in contrast to John as prophet, is Luke’s first note that Jesus will be unique in His relationship to God. Gabriel affirmed both the deity and the humanity of Jesus. As Mary’s son, He would be human; as Son of the Highest, He would be the Son of God. Luke declares the hypostatic union of Jesus Christ.

HUIOS means, “son, offspring, or descendant.” Here it speaks of Jesus being the offspring and son of God Himself. Since it will be God the Holy Spirit who adds the necessary 23 chromosomes to Mary’s 23 chromosomes, **vs. 35**, allowing her to conceive, Jesus is legitimately the Son of God, cf. **Psa 2:7-9**; cf. **Psa 89:26-29**.

Psa 2:7-9, “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, ‘You are My Son, today I have begotten You. ⁸Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. ⁹You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware’.”

In addition, the fact that her baby was to be called the “**Son of the Most High**,” pointed to His equality with YHWH; The Lord God. In Semitic thought, a son was a “carbon copy” of his father, and the phrase “son of” was often used to refer to one who possessed his “father’s” qualities. Therefore, Jesus was the offspring or Son of the God, The Most High! As such, He is heir to the Heavenly Throne while in His humanity. Since He is already one with God, He is already the Most High! But, in His humanity, He is also qualified to sit upon the heavenly throne of God.

HUPSISTOS, ὕψιστος that means, “the highest or most high,” is used in classical Greek literature to denote the highest of all heights. In Scripture, it is used as a reference to heaven, the abode of God or to designate the name of God, as the Hebrew ELYON, “Most High,” also did. Here, it is used by Gabriel in the naming and veneration of God, the God of the heavens as “The Most High”, cf. **vs. 35, 76**, who is above all rule and authority, **Eph 1:21**; **Mat 28:18**; **Col 1:16**.

Eph 1:21, “Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.”

It is used by another angel, albeit a fallen one, when Jesus is identified as the Son of God in **Mark 5:7**; **Luke 8:28**. We will also see this word when worship is expressed by the angelic hosts at the birth of Jesus in **Luke 2:14**. cf. **Acts 7:48**; **16:17**; **Heb 7:1**.

Mark 5:7, “And shouting with a loud voice, he said, ‘What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God, do not torment me!’”

3. He will be given the throne of His father David.

In this passage, we not only see Jesus’ heavenly reign, but we see His earthly one as, “**the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**” Here, we see that Jesus is also the “son” of David, as David is his “**father**,” PATER. Notice that Jesus has two fathers. The first is God the Father from heaven. The second is king David from earth. Another way to say it is that He has dual “sonship,” which means He has dual “heirship.” Not only is He qualified to sit upon the heavenly throne of God, He is qualified to sit upon the earthly throne of David, as the King of Israel. It tells us Jesus will have human roots in the house of David, the royal line of Israel which shows His

humanity and qualifies Him to be Messiah.

Having these two “fathers” means He has two reigns; a heavenly one and an earthly one. This statement by Gabriel was in fulfillment of the prophecies concerning David’s Son’s eternal rulership, **2 Sam 7:12-13, 16; Isa 9:6-7; 11:1-5; Jer 23:5; Dan 7:27.**

2 Sam 7:12-14, “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. ¹³He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ^{14a}I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me.”

2 Sam 7:16, “And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”

Isa 9:6-7, “For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.”

Isa 11:1-5, “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit. ²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. ³And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear; ⁴but with righteousness He will judge the poor, and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; and He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. ⁵Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, and faithfulness the belt about His waist.”

Jer 23:5, “Behold, the days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land’.”

His birth is the beginning of fulfilling the Davidic covenant God made with David; he would have a son to be King and sit on a throne forever. Because He was the son of Joseph in a legal sense, as specifically mentioned by Luke in **vs. 27**, Jesus is also the son of David. David as His “father,” emphasizes Jesus’ legitimate role as the Messianic heir to David’s throne. Matthew was content to confine the angel’s message to one of salvation, but Luke’s version includes strong statements validating Jesus’ right to sit on the throne of David, thus establishing Him as the Messiah. As such, God is fulfilling His kingdom promises to the people of Israel, **Isa 9:1-7; 11-12; 61; 66; Jer 33.**

Therefore, both phrases of **vs. 33**, provide a type of parallelism reinforcing that Jesus is the fulfillment of the promise made to David in **2 Sam 7:13**. Whereas Jesus’ legal lineage through Joseph gave Him the right to sit on the throne, His relationship as the Son of God makes this reign eternal. In not so subtle of terms, Luke is identifying Jesus as God, the King, the Most High, and as the rightful heir to the prophetic eternal throne of David.

Today, Jesus is enthroned in heaven, **Acts 2:29-36**, but is not on David’s throne. One day, Jesus will return and establish His righteous kingdom on earth, and then these promises will be fully fulfilled.

Vs. 33

4. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever.

Luke 1:33, “And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

No human ceremony crowned Him King except the mocking ceremony at His trial and crucifixion, **Mark 15:16-20, 26, 32**. Yet, God pronounced Him King at His birth and will reveal His royal splendor when He returns to rule the world.

So, here we see the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant that God made with Abraham, that he would have a people and nation forever.

Mat 1:1, “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

“**Reign over**” is the Future, Active, Indicative of the root Verb BASILEUO, βασιλεύω with the Preposition EPI that means, “to reign over, to rule as king, to have authority over, or govern.” The NT uses it to declare God’s sovereign authority over all other rulers and powers. Ultimately, all rebellion and evil will be overthrown, and God will reign in righteousness unopposed, forever.

“**Kingdom**” is the Noun BASILEIA, βασιλεία that means, “kingdom, domain, rule or reign.” This is the object of that which is ruled over; the kingdom. Although the main emphasis here is on the eschatological (future) kingdom or throne of David, Jesus’ kingdom includes the here and now of the earthly, as well as the spiritual kingdom lived within your soul. And as stated, it will exist forever and ever.

This rulership and kingdom is over, “**the house of Jacob**” HO OIKOS IAKOB, which in essence means, the Hebrew people and nation of Israel. As Jacob, who is also called Israel, was the Son of Isaac, who was the son of Abraham, **Luke 3:34; Mat 1:2**. This phrase is only used here in the NT. It is an OT phrase referring to the nation of Israel as a whole, **Gen 46:27; Exo 19:3; Psa 114:1; Isa 2:5; 14:1; Jer 2:4; 5:20; Ezek 20:5; Micah 3:9**.

Exo 19:3, “Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel.”

Interestingly, when the name “Jacob” is used, it typically is reflecting his humanity and sinfulness, or that of the people of Israel. When “Israel” is used, it typically represents the spiritual life, or that of the people, cf. **Gen 32:28; 35:9-12; Acts 2:36; Heb 8:8, 10**.

Acts 2:36, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified.”

Therefore, using “the kingdom of Jacob,” also emphasized Jesus’ humanity and His earthly reign that will last forever. As we know from Scripture, entrance into Jesus’ kingdom only comes to those who believe in Him as their Savior. Only by being born again can one enter this Kingdom, **John 3:3-5**. So, the Cross of Jesus Christ, where in His humanity He took of the sins of the entire world, is also in view.

John 3:3-5, “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.’⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? He cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born, can he?’⁵ Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God’.”

When Jesus began to minister, He associated His message with the Messianic expectations of the people, as He picked up on John’s announcement that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” cf. **Mat 3:1-2; 4:17**. Jesus announced that the time of fulfillment had come when He was preaching the gospel, **Mat 4:23f.; 2:28**.

5. His kingdom will never end.

Gabriel also made an announcement of prophetic fulfillment, when he states that Jesus’ kingdom will be “**forever**” and “**have no end**.” “**Forever**,” is EIS HO AION, literally, “to the ages,” and “**will have no end**,” is EIMI OUK TELOS that describes the time aspect of the promised Kingdom of Israel and David that Jesus Christ would reign over. We could also say, “for all of eternity,” cf. **2 Sam 7:13, 16; Psa 89:36-37; Dan 2:44; 7:14, 18, 27; Mat 28:18; Heb 1:8; Rev 11:15**.

Conclusion:

In the grace plan of God for the salvation of the entire world, He did something fantastic. He sent His Son into the

world so that:

1. He would be great.
2. He would be called the Son of the Most High.
3. He would be given the throne of His father David.
4. He would reign over the house of Jacob forever.
5. His kingdom would never end.

These are all titles and superlatives related to Jesus the Savior that fulfill God's promises to Israel and to mankind.

Vs. 34-35

In these passages, we see Mary questioning Gabriel about all that he told her and his response. Mary expresses no doubt in what Gabriel says, but only asks about the conception. She is not asking, "Can you do it?" She is not questioning the validity of her pregnancy. She is asking, "**How will you do it?**" Her question builds on faith, not unbelief. This is why Gabriel does not rebuke.

Remember that Zachariah too questioned Gabriel about his announcement regarding the birth of John the Baptist in **vs. 18**, "**How will I know this for certain?**" There, Zachariah first shows his doubt, and then his second response is a question about the conception, which we can assume was not from a place of faith and inquisitiveness. In addition, based on Gabriel's responses to Zachariah and Mary, Zachariah's was done in doubt, whereas Mary's questioning was done in an inquisitive manner, as Gabriel punished Zachariah with muteness, yet Mary only received more information.

"The youthful village maiden, amid her humble daily duties, shows a more ready faith in the far more startling message than the aged priest in the holy place of the temple in the atmosphere of the sacred incense."
(The Fourfold Gospel: or A Harmony of the Four Gospels.) cf. **vs. 45**.

She also states, "**since I am a virgin,**" which in the Greek is EPEI ANER OUK GINOSKO, which is literally, "since a man I have not known." The Present Tense of GINOSKO is a retroactive progressive present, which is an action begun in the past that continues into the present, with emphasis on the present time. It means, she has not, in the past right up to this present moment, had sexual relations with a man. Therefore, she was, and still is, a virgin.

Sensing this conception to be near, and knowing that she was a virgin, and her wedding date was month's away, and that she did not want to break the Law, she rightly inquires "How can this be done." Clearly, the Lord did not expect her to sin, so Gabriel will tell her in the following verses.

In **vs. 35**, Gabriel does not attempt to explain the details of this miracle, as I tried to in the Meiosis and Polar Body discussion above. Instead, he tells Mary, "**The Holy Spirit will come upon you**" HAGIOS PNEUMA EPERCHOMAI. cf. **Mat 1:18-20**.

EPERCHOMAI, ἐπέρχομαι that means, "come upon, approach, or overtake," is used in **Luke 1:35; Acts 1:8**, regarding the Holy Spirit who "comes upon" those blessed by God. This "coming upon" from above by the Holy Spirit brings "**power**" DUNAMIS. In Mary's case, the power to conceive and in **Acts 1:8**, the indwelling enabling power of the Holy Spirit for Church Age believers.

This power is from "**the Most High,**" HUPSISTOS once again, that means from God Himself, who will "**overshadow**" Mary, EPISKIAZO, ἐπισκιάζω that means, "to shade or to overshadow." It is used in a metaphysical sense as an obscuring that distorts the true perspective of an object to be known. It was used in the LXX for the cloud pillar that overshadowed the meeting tent of Moses, which was a visible manifestation of God, our Lord Jesus Christ for Israel, **Ex 40:35**. It also brings to mind **Gen 1:2**, where the Holy Spirit was "hovering over" the face of the deep in creation. In the NT, it symbolizes the presence of God overshadowing or being with and providing power. In this case, it was the power to create a body for the Lord Jesus Christ in Hypostatic Union. It was also the word used at the transfiguration. And, in all five NT usages, it speaks to God's power and glory, **Mat 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 1:35; 9:34; Acts 5:15**. Therefore, by the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of God the Father, a body was

prepared for God the Son who would be brought forth by Mary.

The Importance of the Virgin Birth by the Holy Spirit:

1. Two categories of omnipotence were involved in the preparation of the true humanity of Christ in hypostatic union: the omnipotence of God the Father and the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit.
2. The Old Sin Nature (OSN) resides in every cell in the human body save one, and that is the female egg when released in ovulation. Through Meiosis and Polar bodies, the 23 chromosomes in the egg are free from the Old Sin Nature. The 23 male chromosomes provided in copulation carry the Old Sin Nature.
3. The virgin Mary had an OSN. Both males and females are carriers of the OSN, but only the male can transmit it in copulation. Therefore, God the Holy Spirit provided 23 perfect male chromosomes, meaning they were without the OSN, to Mary's 23 female chromosomes.
4. Our Lord was born as true and perfect humanity exactly as Adam was created true and perfect humanity. Our Lord was born trichotomous, having body, soul, and spirit; Adam was created trichotomous, having a body, soul, and spirit.
5. When Adam and the woman sinned, they became dichotomous, and spiritual death replaced the human spirit.
6. At our physical birth, God simultaneously imputes human life to our soul and Adam's original sin to the OSN. Therefore, we are born into the world physically alive and simultaneously spiritually dead. Being spiritually dead means we are totally cut off from God, having only a body and soul.
7. However, our Lord's physical birth was definitely unique; for the omnipotence of God the Holy Spirit fertilized Mary's egg with 23 perfect male chromosomes. Therefore, our Lord was born without the OSN; therefore, there could be no imputation of Adam's original sin.
8. Being born perfect and trichotomous with body, soul, and spirit, our Lord was born into the prototype spiritual life. He was filled with the Holy Spirit from birth. He remained inside the prototype spiritual life throughout His life, even though He was tempted far beyond anything we have ever known.
9. Having no OSN and no sin of His own, He qualified as the perfect sacrifice, "without spot or blemish," for our sins upon the Cross.
10. Therefore, the virgin birth is a major issue. Without the virgin birth, our Lord was not qualified to become our Savior in true humanity.

Next, we see that as a result of the Holy Spirit's overshadowing, Mary will give birth to a "**holy offspring**" HAGIOS GENNAO. HAGIOS means, "holy," but also "set apart." Jesus was set apart for special ministry during His life, as we know. GENNAO is the word used for "begat, begotten, or father of," in the lineage passages of Matthew and Luke. Therefore, because Jesus would be conceived by "the Most High," or God, and be "the Holy offspring" or son, He could legitimately "**be called**" KALEO, "**the Son of God**" HUIOS THEOS.

This is the first time the term "**Son of God**," would be used for Jesus, which became a distinctive term for Him. And, as we noted above, in Jewish thought being called, "the son of," made the offspring equal to the father in essence and attribute. Therefore, Jesus, the Son of God, is considered to be God Himself, which He is as the 2nd member of the Trinity.

God, through Gabriel, reveals two of the greatest mysteries in the universe: the incarnation and the Trinity. Interestingly, Luke gives us a Trinitarian account in these passages.

1. The Most High = God the Father.
2. He tells us directly of the Holy Spirit.

3. The Holy offspring and Son of God tell us of Jesus Christ.

Gabriel refers to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit each having a part. But it is God the Son who will take on Himself human flesh in the humility of a babe.

Heb 10:5, “Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, ‘SACRIFICE AND OFFERING YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, BUT A BODY YOU HAVE PREPARED FOR ME’.” cf. Psa 40:5.

Because of the Future Tense, some have interpreted “He shall be called the Son of God,” as implying that He became the Son of God at His birth, thus denying His eternal Sonship. Yet, the Scriptures teach that He was the Son before He was sent; not only was one of the persons of the Godhead sent, but the One sent was the Beloved Son of the eternal Father, **1 John 4:14 “the Father sent the Son.”** Many other such verses teach that it was the eternal Son who came, **John 1:1, 14, 18; 3:16, 31-36; 4:34; 5:24, 30; 17:24; Heb 1:1-3; 7:1-3; 1 John 4:9-10.**

Because Jesus Christ is fully God and fully man, He is the perfect Savior. He needed to be God to supply the righteousness humans could not achieve. He needed to be man to supply to God the sacrifice we owe. So, He became the only mediator between God and man; the God-man, Christ Jesus. He is the only way for men to come to God.

As such, we find three aspects to Jesus being called the Son of God:

1. Because of His eternal, immutable, and unparalleled relationship with God the Father, **John 1:1, 14, 18.**
2. Because He was born into the world in a supernatural manner; overshadowing of the Holy Spirit.
3. Because by His resurrection He was begotten from the dead, **Rom 1:4; Acts 13:33; Psalms 2:7**, signifying His purpose for coming into the world and His victory won at the Cross, cf. **1 Cor 15:54-57.**

Rom 1:4, “Who was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness, Jesus Christ our Lord.”

The Hypostatic Union of the God-man:

1. The pre-incarnate person of Christ is classified as undiminished deity. He is co-equal, co-infinite, and co-eternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit.
2. The post-incarnate person of Christ is classified as hypostatic union. He is undiminished deity and true humanity in one person forever.
3. Because of the virgin pregnancy and resultant virgin birth, the true humanity of Christ was trichotomous, having a body, soul, and spirit like Adam at creation.
4. Jesus Christ is God, and as God, He is coequal and coeternal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. All three members of the Trinity have identical essence. When speaking of the attributes of God, God is said to be one. But there are actually three persons in the Godhead, all having identical attributes. Each one has coequal, coeternal, and co-infinite sovereignty, holiness, justice, righteousness, love, eternal life, omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, immutability, veracity, etc. So, God is one in essence, but three in persons.
5. But Jesus Christ became different from the Father and the Holy Spirit at the point of the virgin birth, because He now became true humanity; hence, the God-man. This is the doctrine of the hypostatic union.
6. In the person of the incarnate Christ are two natures, inseparably united, without mixture or loss of separate identity, without loss or transfer of properties or attributes, the union both personal and eternal.
7. In other words, since the incarnation, our Lord Jesus Christ is both true humanity and undiminished deity in one person forever. So, Jesus Christ is different from the Father and the Spirit in that He is true humanity. He is different from true humanity in that He is God.

8. Whoever is the mediator between God and man must be equal with both parties. Jesus Christ is both God and true humanity. Therefore, as God He is equal with the party of the first part, God the father. As true humanity, He is equal and superior to all members of the human race, the part of the second part. So, as the God-Man, He becomes the mediator between God and man.
9. The pre-incarnate person of Christ was Deity. But once His First Advent occurred at the point of the virgin birth, Jesus Christ became the unique person forever, the God-man in hypostatic union
10. In the Incarnation, no attribute of essence was changed. The union of the Divine and human natures of the incarnate Christ must be considered hypostatic and personal. The Greek noun HUPOSTASIS means, “substance, essence, standing under, taking a thing upon oneself.” Christ took upon Himself true humanity since hypostatic refers to the whole Person of Christ as distinguished from His two natures; Divine and Human also called theanthropic, the God-man, **John 1:1-2, 14; Rom 1:3-4; 9:5; Phil 2:5-9.**

The False Interpretation of the Hypostatic Union: Gnosticism:

Gnosticism implies that the deity of Christ is possessed by the humanity of Christ or indwelt the humanity of Christ, saying that the union is only harmony or sympathy. In truth, the union is personal. The two natures have been combined into one essence which is personal and eternal.

Vs. 36-37

Gabriel, in grace, continues to provide Mary information about her pregnancy to further bolster and strengthen her faith. Interestingly, even though Mary did not ask for a miraculous sign or confirmation as Zachariah did in doubt and unfaithfulness, the angel provided her with something to build her confidence and sustain her hope and faith through the difficult days to come.

Gabriel tells Mary that her “**relative**,” SUNGENES, that means, “blood relative or related,” (we do not know if she was an aunt, cousin, or even a sister-in-law), was also pregnant, “**conceived**,” SULLAMBANO.

This too, was part of the grace plan of God for Mary’s benefit. What had happened to Elizabeth was an extra assurance to Mary that all the words spoken to her would be fulfilled in their time. In God’s grace, He provided this information to Mary so that she could gain faithful assurance in His Plan.

In addition, Mary was given a task to perform that would leave her open to false charges and accusations, as Mary would become pregnant prior to completing the marriage contract with Joseph. It would have potentially brought great ridicule, or even death, upon her from the society. As such, it was grace on God’s part that she was informed of the one person who would understand what God was doing. In addition, it gave Mary a chance to escape to her relative’s home that was near Jerusalem and avoid any unwarranted shame, cf. **vs. 39-45, 56.**

Our Father in heaven knows what we can take and what we cannot take; He is never slow in giving full assurance, even when we might be “**slow of heart to believe**,” **Luke 24:25.**

Then, in **vs. 37**, Gabriel assured Mary even further by stating, “**For nothing will be impossible with God**,” PARA THEOS OUK PAN RHEMA ADUNATEO. Literally it states, “for God not anything will be impossible.” It was a common religious saying among the Jews and early Christians, **Gen 18:14; Job 42:2; Jer 32:17, 27; Mat 19:26; Rom 4:21.**

Gen 18:14, “Is anything too difficult for the LORD? At the appointed time I will return to you, at this time next year, and Sarah will have a son.”

Job 42:2, “I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted.”

Jer 32:27, “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?”

The Noun RHEMA means, “a thing spoken, word, saying, thing, matter, or event.” Here it has the dual connotation of, “What God says He will do,” and “Nothing is impossible for God to do.”

The Verb ADUNATEO, ἀδυνατέω, “to be impossible,” is in the Future, Active, Indicative. Its root is DUNAMIS for “inherent power or ability.” With the negative prefix it means, “without power, without ability, or impossible.” When referring to persons ADUNATEO is used to speak of a “lack of strength or being unable to do something.” Linked with the Greek negative Particle OUK it means, “not without power, not without ability, or not impossible.” ADUNATEO is only used here and **Mat 17:20**. In **Mat 17:20**, it is used for those who have faith the size of a mustard seed.

Mat 17:20, “And He said to them, ‘Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you’.”

In other words, God is omnipotent and able to do all things, including cause two women to become miraculously pregnant in highly unique ways. The 1901 American Standard Version reads: **“For no word of God shall be void of power.”**

Therefore, this is a statement of faith that we should live by every day. Many times we limit God as to what He can and cannot do; we put Him in a box. But, our God is the all-powerful, all-mighty, omniscient God, where nothing is impossible for Him to perform in time or space. We have to remember that and call upon Him with that assurance in our times of need, as Gabriel is reminding Mary of this same grace principle for her to apply in faith.

This phrase also means that every single word or item noted by Gabriel will be fulfilled, not merely the general content of the promise. The purpose is to build Mary’s faith in God’s ability to do what is humanly impossible, not only for now, but throughout the rest of her life, as she will face many daunting challenges throughout her life.

“The moment you admit the existence of God, you must deny the impossible. With God it’s nothing that a barren woman and a virgin woman would both conceive. In fact, that’s just like God!” (Christ-Centered Exposition.)

Vs. 38

Take note of how both Elizabeth and Mary responded to the miraculous activity of God. Mary felt stunned, surprised, humbled, and curious, but never once did she say, “This is impossible! I do not believe what I am hearing.” Nor did she object, “There is no way I am going to stand before the people of Nazareth and listen to them call me a harlot or my son illegitimate. I refuse to spend the rest of my life defending myself and my honor!”

Instead, we see Mary’s willing acceptance from faith in God’s Word and His plan for her life. She considered herself rightly as a DOULE, **“servant, bond slave,”** (the feminine of DOULOS), **“of the Lord,”** KURIOS. cf. Hannah in **1 Sam 1:11**.

1 Sam 1:11, “She made a vow and said, ‘O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head’.”

Mary also replied, **“be it done to me according to your word.”** **“Word”** here is RHEMA once again, and **“be it done”** is the Aorist, Middle Deponent, Optative of the Verb GINOMAI that means, “to be, to come into being, to be made, be done, etc.” The Optative is rarely used in the NT; only 70 times. It is said to be the Mood used when the *“speaker wishes to portray an action as possible,”* (Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics).

Therefore, Mary is not just resigning to the fact of occurrence of the things told to her, she implies a desire that they should happen. It indicates her full acceptance and participation in the matter, as well as her excitement about it. In great faith, she not only believes the promises, but prays for their fulfillment. In faith, she not only bowed to the will of God, but she whole heartedly and enthusiastically accepted it.

Here, we see that faith leads to servanthood, which she was and would continue to be. Mary has the exemplary attitude of God's servant, despite what this might cost her in reputation from those who do not appreciate what really happened. Therefore, we see that a right appreciation of the Lord, leads to a correct assessment of self.

Mary's response is one of the greatest testimonies in Scripture of faithful, humble obedience. Her submission to the message is most touching. Even though the angel said that she was highly "graced out," (favored), she said that she was the "bond slave of the Lord," in His hand to do with her according to His will.

- It reminds us of what Isaiah said in **Isa 6:8**, "**Here I am. Send me.**"
- It reminds us of what Esther said in **Esther 4:15**, "**If I perish, I perish.**"
- It reminds us of what Ruth said to Naomi in **Ruth 1:16**, "**Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.**"
- It reminds us of what Job said in **Job 13:15**, "**Even if he kills me, I will hope in him.**"
- It reminds us of what her Son would one day say in **Luke 22:42**, "**Father, ... not My will, but Yours be done.**"

This is how faithful people respond to God's plan, even when they do not understand it. The only way a person can genuinely say what Mary says in **vs. 38**, and does in **vs. 39**, is to believe that God's plan is better than their plan for themselves.

Even though she knew she would be accused of adultery, an offense punishable by stoning to death, **Deut 22:13-21**; cf. **John 8:3-5**, she willingly and graciously submitted to the will of God, as Mary's believing response was to surrender herself to God as His willing servant.

She experienced the grace of God, **Luke 1:30**, and believed the Word of God, and therefore, she could be used by the Spirit to accomplish the will of God. She belonged totally to the Lord, body, **Luke 1:38**, soul, **Luke 1:46**, and spirit, **Luke 1:47**.

While not understanding all the particulars, she responded with immediate belief, complete submission, and total trust in her Lord. Luke also records no hesitation from Elizabeth in believing the Lord could accomplish a miracle. Both she and Elizabeth lived in the horizontal dimension, but they never forgot the vertical. They lived in the realities of a broken, sinful world, but they remained open to the intervention of God's grace.

What an example for us to follow, **Rom 12:1-2**. Like Mary, we cannot truly be servants of Christ unless we accept His plan for our lives. Faith is nothing more than responding to God's grace in your life. He cannot be your Lord, if you insist on ruling yourself. If he is Lord, then you are a servant, a glad servant of God. This is how faith replies to grace. Do you have this kind of faith? Mary and Elizabeth did, and I pray that you do too.

Vs. 39-56

In **vs. 39**, "**arose**" is the Greek Verb ANISTEMI ἀνίστημι that is used literally here and in many other passages. But, it is also used for Jesus Christ "rising from the dead," i.e., the resurrection of Jesus Christ, **Matthew 17:23; 20:19; Luke 9:22; 18:33**, and the promise of resurrection for the Church, **1 Thes 4:14, 16**. So this "rising" of Mary may be an allusion to the resurrection of Christ, giving us the bookends of His life story, from conception to resurrection.

Next, we note that "**haste**," is the descriptive Genitive Noun SPOUDE, σπουδή that means, "haste, speed, zeal, effort, earnestness, diligence, eagerness, etc." It describes external action, "to hurry or to be quick," to fulfill a task. But it can also describe an internal attitude or response, "to be eager, earnest, or diligent." In our application, the external action is in view due to the internal joy and excitement Mary had in faithful response to the Word of God given to her. It describes something that is done.

Luke 2:16, "**And they came in haste (having hurried) and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby**

as He lay in the manger.”

Here, the word “**haste**” is the Aorist, Active, Participle, Nominative, Plural of the Verb SPEUDO, σπεύδω that means, “to hurry, hasten, desire earnestly, strive (for).” It is only used three times in Luke, twice in Acts, (which was also authored by Luke), and once in **2 Peter 3:12**. It describes the way in which the shepherds went to see the babe.

These words are telling us that God’s Word and messages are important and should be treated as such with urgency and diligence in response. His Word should not be taken lightly, but must be acted on immediately and without hesitation. These words are also used by Luke to portray the kind of commitment expected of all Christians in virtually every aspect of our lives, cf. **Rom 12:1-2, 11; Heb 4:11; 6:11; 2 Peter 1:5-7, 10; 2:15; 3:14**.

Rom 12:1-2, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Rom 12:11, “Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

Heb 4:11, “Therefore let us be diligent to enter that rest, so that no one will fall, through following the same example of disobedience.”

Heb 6:11, “And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence so as to realize the full assurance of hope until the end.”

2 Peter 1:5-7, “Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, ⁶and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, ⁷and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love.”

2 Peter 1:10, “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble.”

2 Tim 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”

2 Peter 3:14, “Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.”

This is another Lukan theme found in his text, i.e., that God’s Word, (especially the messages regarding the giving of the Savior), always carries with it a challenge to respond in faith.

Notice that neither Mary, nor the shepherds, stop to ponder about their earthly responsibilities, relationships, wealth, etc., but immediately got up and went in haste to serve the Lord. This is how faithful people respond to God’s Word and Plan, even when they may not fully understand it. When God gives us an assignment or direction to do something, we should make haste to complete it.

The only way a person can genuinely do and say what they did, (Mary in **Luke 1:38-39**, the shepherds in **Luke 2:15-17**), is to apply faith with immediate action in their life, believing that God’s plan is better than their plan for themselves.

In both instances, they willingly and graciously submitted to the will of God, especially in Mary’s believing response, as she surrendered herself to God as His willing “**bondservant**,” being ready to “**have done to her according to God’s Word**.”

They experienced the grace of God, **Luke 1:30**, and believed the Word of God, and therefore, they could be used by

the Spirit to accomplish the will of God, as Mary belonged totally to the Lord, body, **Luke 1:38**, soul, **Luke 1:46**, and spirit, **Luke 1:47**.

Even while not fully understanding all the particulars, they responded with immediate belief, complete submission, and total trust in their Lord. Luke also records no hesitation from Elizabeth in believing the Lord could accomplish a miracle. Mary, Elizabeth, and the shepherds all lived in the horizontal dimension, but they never forgot the vertical. They gave vertical praise to God and affirmed the horizontal effect of His grace. They lived in the realities of a broken, sinful world, but they remained open to the intervention of God's grace.

So, from these stories we are reminded of two things:

1. Respond immediately to opportunities God gives you. Do not wait for special occasions to talk about the Lord. Speak up whenever the opportunity arises. You do not have to be obnoxious by forcing a conversation, but remain continually transparent about your relationship with Christ. Watch for open doors. Do not hesitate; speak freely.
2. Share your experience with others. God did not call these people to teach or preach. They had neither the training nor the skills. Instead, the Lord charged them with the responsibility to share what they had seen and heard, to describe their experience.

Remember, you do not need formal training to tell others about Jesus Christ, any more than you need medical training to tell a friend about a good doctor. If you are a believer, you have a "before-and-after" story of your experience with Jesus Christ. Before you placed your faith in Christ, your life looked one way. After trusting in Him, your life changed. Your "testimony" is simply a description of the before-and-after change you experienced. Therefore, respond immediately to opportunities and share your experience, because faith is nothing more than responding to God's grace in your life. If two lowly women and a group of lowly shepherds could do it, so can you.

The exact timing of this visit is left uncertain by the vague phrase "**at this time.**" The journey from Nazareth to Zachariah's house was approximately 80 miles, a four or five day journey, as she traveled from Nazareth to the "**hill country of Judah,**" which might have been the city of Hebron or near it, when comparing **Joshua 20:7; 21:11**; cf. **Luke 1:65**.

Joshua 21:11, "Thus they gave them Kiriath-arba, Arba being the father of Anak (that is, Hebron), in the hill country of Judah, with its surrounding pasture lands."

It was one of the Levite cities located in the hill country of Judah about 19 miles southwest of Jerusalem. The city is near the ridge of the hills, and at an altitude of 3040 ft. above sea level. Hebron is the highest town in Palestine. The archaeological record shows almost continuous occupation at Hebron from the Early Bronze Age to modern times. It may be the oldest walled city in the world to possess that distinction.

In **vs. 41**, we see Elizabeth's joy and excitement when she heard Mary's greeting of which we have no details, but from what is said in the next few verses it most likely included Mary's account of Gabriel's visit. When these two women met together, Elizabeth heard this news they erupted with joy. They were not just joyful because they were both having babies. No. They know the Lord has shown them favor. They know the inside scoop on God's plans for their children.

When Elizabeth heard this news, she was overjoyed and her baby, "**leaped in her womb.**"

"**Leaped**" is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb SKIRTAO, σκιρτάω that means, "leap, jump joyously, or gambol, (to leap or skip around playfully)." It is only used in this narrative, see also **vs. 44**, and **Luke 6:23**, for joyous leaping in Luke's version of the Beatitudes.

This is a very interesting portrayal, as babes in the womb do not have the intellect to comprehend outward communications, though they are able to hear by this stage of pregnancy, six months, and respond to sounds. These verses also do not say that John the Baptist was conscious at this point and had the filling of the Holy Spirit to comprehend, as some say he had the filling of the Holy Spirit from conception. That is a myth. This reaction was a

response to Elizabeth's reaction of joy and excitement when she heard Mary's greeting. Babies in the womb at this time in pregnancy do respond to sounds, but it is one of non-comprehension. And no one is filled with the Holy Spirit from conception or even from the day of their birth, because they are spiritually dead from birth until they are born again!

In vs. 44, the phrase, "**when it reached my ears,**" tells us that it was Elizabeth's comprehension of what Mary stated and her joyous reaction that the baby in her womb responded to. If it were the babe, John the Baptist's reaction, she would have said, "when it reached the babe's ears in my womb," which it does not. Nevertheless, Elizabeth was overjoyed to hear of the information Mary was sharing with her about the conception and future birth of the Messiah. The question we can ask ourselves is, "do others respond to the joy I express in my Lord?"

Now, the interesting part about the "leaping," is that this word was used in the LXX in **Malachi 4:2**, for joy expressed by the righteous when the judgment of God comes upon evildoers in the end times: they will "**skip about and leap like calves released from the stall.**" The context there is that this leaping is a characteristic of the last days with the appearance of "Elijah" as an end-time witness. Therefore, the appearance of SKIRTAO in **Luke 1:41, 44**, suggests the destiny of the new Elijah, (John the Baptist), "leaping" in response to the voice of his mother who was responding to the voice of "**the mother of my Lord.**" This is the eschatological joy triggered by the coming of Divine judgment against an evil world. Similarly, in **Luke 6:23**, those who are experiencing persecution should "**Be glad in that day and leap for joy,**" because persecution is a sign of God's impending judgment and vindication of His servants. Also, causing the lame to leap, and healing generally, is a sign of the kingdom of God breaking into this age, **Isa 35:6**, fulfilled in **Luke 7:22; Acts 3:2-8**. Therefore, before John the Baptist could walk or talk or even comprehend, God was using him as a sign of Elijah as the forerunner of the Messiah to announce the Kingdom of God come in Christ.

We also see in vs. 41, that Elizabeth received the Age of Israel type endowment of the Holy Spirit, "**was filled with the Holy Spirit,**" whereby she was inspired to make a Divine prophetic proclamation in vs 42-44, just like Deborah who gave a Spirit inspired utterance over Jael, **Judges 5:24**. This type of inspired speech coming as the result of Spirit infilling is a primary Lukan theme, e.g., Zachariah, **Luke 1:67**; Simeon, **Luke 2:27**; Jesus, **Luke 4:14, 15**; those in the upper room, **Acts 2:4**; Peter, **Acts 2:15**; Peter, John, and their friends, **Acts 4:31**; and Stephen, **Acts 6:8-10; 7:55, 56**. As such, Mary's unborn son is recognized as the Lord, and Mary becomes a model of faith.

In vs. 42, "**she cried out**" is the verb ANAPHONEO ἀναφωνέω that means, "to cry out with a loud voice, cry aloud." It is only used here in the NT. This is a variation of the more common root word PHONEO meaning, "to cry out, to speak forth, or to sound forth loudly." It is sometimes used in the LXX in contexts of worship and praise, **1 Chron 15:28; 16:4-5, 42; 2 Chron 5:13**. Therefore, it represents both enthusiasm and confidence in expressing one's joy in God and His plan.

"**Blessed among women**" is similar to Deborah's response to Jael, **Judges 5:24**. "Blessed," here is the Perfect, Middle, Participle of the Verb EULOGEO, εὐλογέω that means, "speak well of, praise, honor, extol, or bless." In other words, God's Divine favor has been bestowed on her, and as a result, she will be praised and honored among all the women of the world. Mary is not blessed "above women," as one who could then impart grace to others, or that we should pray to her. No, she is blessed "among women" as the "graced out" one who received the greatest blessing of any woman next to their own personal salvation. So, this phrase means she will be recognized for the fantastic blessing God bestowed on her, as she rightly should. She will be honored, but we should never pray to her or treat her in any way like we would God. Finally, given the Greek construction of this verse, the phrase could be understood as, "of all women most blessed are you."

Elizabeth's reference to Mary's unborn child as, "**the fruit of your womb,**" also has OT precedent, cf. **Gen 30:2; Deut 7:13; Lam 2:20**, and implies that by this time Mary had already conceived.

In vs. 43, Elizabeth is showing humility as a servant of the Lord by stating in essence, "How can I have been thought worthy of such an honor?" We also see her faith being applied as she recognizes that Mary's baby is "**my Lord,**" which is also an early witness to the Divinity of Jesus, as well as a witness of Elizabeth's faith and salvation as she believed Him to be God and the Messiah in one.

Nowhere in the NT is Mary called, "Mother of God." She was, however, the mother of Jesus the Messiah and Lord,

who was also God incarnate. But God does not have a mother. He has always existed and is self-sustaining. He does not have or ever needed a mother. But, the humanity of Jesus did have a mother and she is Mary.

In **vs. 44**, Elizabeth reiterates what we noted in **vs. 41**. Therefore, we have a double emphasis of this fact, in which the second iteration is espoused when she was filled with the Holy Spirit. As such, it is a Divinely inspired proclamation for the benefit of Mary to hear, as well as us. Therefore, it is further encouragement, by the grace of God, for Mary, so that she would be sustained while at peace throughout her entire ordeal.

The leaping here is noted as **“for joy,”** which is the Dative Noun AGALLIASIS, ἀγαλλίασις that means, “rejoicing, exultation, joy, gladness, etc.” It names that emotion from hearing the news of the Messiah. It was used regarding hearing the news of John’s birth in **vs. 14**, here, and in **Acts 2:46; Heb 1:9; Jude 1:24**.

Heb 1:8-9, “But of the Son He says, ‘Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom. ⁹You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions’.”

Jude 1:24, “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.”

In **vs. 45**, Elizabeth’s joy and faith are further noted in her proclamation, **“And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”**

Here, Elizabeth becomes the first woman, among all women, to honor Mary by proclaiming the grace bestowed upon Mary, as well as Mary’s faith.

“Blessed” here is not one of the cognates of CHARIS “grace,” as “favored” was in **vs. 28, 30**. Nor, is it EULOGEO of **vs. 42** that meant, “spoken praise and honor.” Instead, it is the Greek Noun MAKARIOS, μακάριος that means, “blessed, fortunate, or happy.” It means, “the gracious favor of God being upon someone.” It is the word used in the “Beatitudes,” in **Matthew 5**.

Heb 11:6, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

This is Elizabeth’s pronouncement that Mary had received a grace blessing from God. This word also carries the connotation that someone has acted upon God’s Word for their life, **John 20:29; Rev 22:7; cf. Rev 1:3**.

John 20:29, “Jesus said to him (Thomas), ‘Because you have seen Me, have you believed? Blessed are they who did not see, and yet believed’.”

So, we see both the faith of Elizabeth, who did not see or hear Gabriel yet believed, and of Mary, who did see and hear Gabriel’s announcement and also believed. They both are acting upon the Word of God they have received by believing it.

Rev 22:7, “And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is he who heeds the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Mary is blessed because she believed, **“believed”** PISTEUO, πιστεύω, God’s Words and is now acting upon them. PISTEUO means, “believe, have faith in, be convinced of, trust, rely on, have confidence in, etc.” In other words, this is “faith in action,” resulting in Mary being a blessed individual by God. Remember, faith is the first blessing by God we receive.

At the same time, we see Elizabeth’s faith, in that she too believed what God had told her through Zachariah, and now through Mary. Her proclamation, **“that or because there will be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord,”** tells us that Elizabeth absolutely believed them too.

“Fulfillment” is the Noun TELEIOSIS that means, “fulfillment or perfection.” Aristotle and Philo used the term in

the sense of actualization or execution of a resolve or an oath. It was also used for the execution or completion of a plan, and that is how it is meant here. In other words, everything said by Gabriel will come to completion or come to perfection in the sense of being done. This word is only used here and in **Heb 7:11**. In **Heb 7**, it references the “perfection” of Jesus Christ’s Priesthood to save, in the order of Melchizedek, as the King-Priest, compared to that of the Levitical Priesthood through the Law. Therefore, in the only other use of this word, Jesus’ Priesthood, Kingship, and Messiahship are noted, which are also found in the prophetic words of Gabriel told to Mary about her Son.

Vs. 46-56, Mary’s Great Proclamation of the Savior:

In these passages, there are 20 or so discernable OT quotations and allusions. It shows how much Mary knew of her Scriptures and how cherished they were in her home. She blends quotations and allusions to Messianic psalms and OT prophecy.

In addition, this is very similar to the great exaltation of Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel, found in **1 Sam 2:1-10**. In **vs. 46**, we see a quote from **Psa 34:2-3**.

Psa 34:2-3, “My soul will make its boast in the LORD; The humble will hear it and rejoice. ³O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.” cf. **Psa 35:27; 69:30**.

These passages are typically called “the Magnificat,” from the first word found in the Latin translation of this great exaltation by Mary, “Magnificat anima mea Dominum” that comes from the Greek word for “**exalt**,” which is the Present, Active, Indicative of the verb MEGALUNO, μεγαλύνω that can be translated, “magnify, enlarge, lengthen, extol, make great, or praise.” This word is used in **vs. 58** for “displayed,” and is also used in **Mat 23:5; Acts 5:13; 10:46; 19:17; 2 Cor 10:15; Phil 1:20**. It is related to the Greek word MEGAS for “great,” and is used in the NT for “to extol, magnify,” e.g., “to make great by word, or to acclaim.” So, it means, “to praise a person in terms of that individual’s (God’s) greatness.”

Therefore, this is a praise psalm where God is to be praised and the reason for that praise is given in what is said. Personal reasons appear in **vs. 46-49**, while in **vs. 50-56**, corporate reasons applying to certain types of people are noted. In this praise, we see three recipients of blessings: 1) Mary, **vs. 46-49**, 2) All of mankind, **vs. 50-53**, 3) Israel, **vs. 54-55**. The main reason for this praise is that God is honoring His covenant.

As such, Mary is exalting or magnifying “**the Lord**” KURIOS, within her “**soul**” PSUCHE, which is now being expressed verbally. Hers was a joy that compelled her to lift her voice in this hymn of praise. The fullness of the Spirit should lead to joyful praise in our lives too, **Eph 5:18-20**, and so should the fullness of God’s Word in your Soul, **Col 3:16-17**.

In **vs. 47**, we see quotes from **Psa 35:9; Hab 3:18**, that completes the thought which began in the previous verse. See also **Psa 24:5; 25:5; Isa 12:2; Micah 7:7**. Here, we have the word “**rejoice**,” which is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb AGALLIAO, ἀγαλλιάω that means, “rejoice, be overjoyed, exult.”

Habakkuk 3:18, “Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.”

Luke also used this verb in **Luke 10:21**, as our Lord Jesus rejoiced in the Spirit as He exalted God the Father. As a later Hellenistic word, it meant, “to rejoice exceedingly,” and is only being used in the Bible; it primarily means, “religious exuberance,” and denotes “rejoicing” to the fullest extent, cf. **Acts 2:26; John 8:56**.

Exceeding joy is the mark of the people of God, despite the fact that they may be experiencing persecution and hardship, and this type of joy is based upon confidence, faith, and trust in God, **Mat 5:12; 1 Peter 1:6, 8; 4:13**.

1 Peter 4:13, “But to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.”

It is also linked to rejoicing exceedingly because of the fulfillment of eschatological expectation and hope, **Rev 19:7**.

Like the Lord Jesus in **Luke 10:21**, Mary was filled with the Holy Spirit and accomplishes this rejoicing from her human spirit, PNEUMA. Both these terms, PSUCHE and PNEUMA are used throughout Scripture as expressions for the entire person. Therefore, we see Mary fulfilling the OT and NT command to **“love the Lord with all our soul and body,” Luke 10:27; Deut 6:5; Lev 19:18.**

Luke 10:27, “And he answered, ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’”

The object of Mary’s rejoicing also notes her personal statement of faith and trust by proclaiming, **“God my Savior,”** THEOS MOU HO SOTER. In Hannah’s song, He is “YHWH’s King;” in Mary’s song, He is my Savior. Mary recognized her son to be her Lord and Savior. And, as such, she is not any different than the rest of fallen humanity, all of whom need Jesus the Savior.

This phrase, **“God my Savior”** is used 6 other times in the NT, **1 Tim 1:1; 2:3-4; Titus 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 1:25.** It declares God as the savior of all men. This emphasizes the Plan of God the Father for our salvation, and the Deity of Jesus Christ who became man to provide us with salvation. The salvation for all of mankind is found only in and by God.

Luke 2:11, “For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

1 John 4:14, “We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world.”

“God my Savior” is the theme of this proclamation, and all of the following verses support or define God’s provision of salvation.

In **vs. 48**, we see quotes from **Psa 138:6** and **Gen 30:13**. Here, Mary once again shows tremendous humility as a willing **“bondservant”** DOULE, cf. **vs. 38**, by noting her **“humble state”** TAPEINOSIS, as a young unknown maiden of the insignificant town of Nazareth in Galilee, who would become the virgin mother of the promised Savior as prophesized in **Isa 7:14**. God is close to the broken and the lowly.

She also recognizes Elizabeth’s prophecy that Mary would be **“blessed among women,”** in **vs. 42**. But here, Mary takes it a step further and states that all people will bless her for all generations. In **vs. 42**, “blessed” was the verb EULOGEO meaning, “spoken well of, praised, extolled,” and in **vs. 45**, she was “blessed” using the noun MAKARIOS for the good fortune, guidance, and protection God would give to her during her hardships of carrying and raising the Savior. Here, we have a cognate, the verb MAKARIZO in the Future, Active, Indicative that means, “to pronounce happy, blessed, or fortunate,” and “to congratulate someone.” It really consolidates the first two “blessed” into one. It is the praise she receives because of God’s watchful care, i.e., grace being in her life. Therefore, Mary’s words of praise are her recognition of God’s watchful, BLEPO care over her life.

MAKARIZO is only used here and in **James 5:11**.

James 5:11, “We count those blessed who endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome of the Lord’s dealings, that the Lord is full of compassion and is merciful.”

This also reminds us of Leah’s plight when she stopped bearing children and God blessings her with two more sons through Zilpah, **Gen 30:13**. So, MAKARIZO gives us the sense that all men will recognize God’s blessing and favor upon Mary and will congratulate her, holding her in high esteem.

In **vs. 49**, we see quotes from **Psa 24:8; Zeph 3:17**, as Mary extols two attributes of God’s Deity that have been applied to her in grace.

1) He is the Mighty One, DUNATOS meaning, “having power, mighty, etc.” This is His Omnipotence. This reminds us of the principle found in **Luke 18:27, “But He said, ‘The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.’”**

In the OT, God's might, from Hebrew term GIBBOR, is described in terms of His actions as warrior/king carried out on behalf of His people, **Psa 24:8**.

Psa 24:8, "Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle."

Mary sees her event as another example of God's mighty hand working in behalf of His people.

2) His name is Holy, HAGIOS which means, "holy, consecrated, perfect, pure, etc." This is His holiness, and reminds us of who God and Jesus Christ are, cf. **vs 35; Luke 4:34**.

Finally, God's "**name**" ONOMA is according to the common ancient Greek meaning, His whole reputation or character.

As we noted above, "**God my Savior**" is the theme of this proclamation, and all of the following verses support or define God's provision of salvation. In this praise, we are noting three recipients of "blessings" or better "God's provision for salvation:" 1) Mary, **vs. 46-49**, 2) All of mankind, **vs. 50-53**, 3) Israel, **vs. 54-55**. We now note the second recipient, "all of mankind."

In **vs. 50**, we see an allusion to **Psa 103:17**, and a third attribute noted, "**mercy**" ELEOS, ἔλεος that means, "mercy, compassion, sympathy, or pity." We will see God's faithfulness in **vs. 54-55**. ELEOS is further used in this narrative in **vs. 54, 58**, and is used of the Lord by Zachariah in **vs. 72, 78**.

ELEOS is a response to someone else's condition of distress. It is the Lord's activity on behalf of His people rooted in His compassion and mercy. Therefore, it means God's response to our condition of distress; being under sin and its penalty of death. It is the expression of God's covenant love. Having mercy upon man, God did something about our distress by sending His Son to save the world from their sin. This is what Mary is proclaiming here.

As she states, this mercy "**is upon generation after generation**" GENEAI KAI GENEAI, cf. **Psa 103:17**, that means for all of mankind.

Psa 103:17, "But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children."

Mary then notes the recipients of this mercy, "**toward those who fear Him**," even though it is available to all. This is the 1st condition in this passage, cf. **vs. 52**. "**Fear**" is the Verb PHOBEO that means, "fear, be afraid, become terrified; worship, reverence, respect." It is the heartfelt awe and reverence of God that is essential to the Christian faith. It means we believe in Him and His Word and respond to it. Those who do receive His mercy, the salvation of their souls, because God's mercy reached down to our time and place. cf. **2 Sam 22:3, 47; Psa 24:5; Micah 7:7; Titus 3:4-6; 2 Peter 1:11**.

2 Sam 22:3, "My God, my rock, in whom I take refuge, My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold and my refuge; My savior, You save me from violence."

2 Sam 22:47, "The LORD lives, and blessed be my rock; and exalted be God, the rock of my salvation."

Psa 24:5, "He shall receive a blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation."

Micah 7:7, "But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me."

Titus 3:4-6, "But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, ⁵He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, ⁶whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior."

2 Peter 1:11, “For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.”

Vs. 51

The seven Aorist verbs that appear in **vs. 51-54**, (EPOIESEN, DIESKORPISEN, KATHEILEN, HUPSŌSEN, ENEPLESEN, EXAPESTEILEN, and ANTELABETO), are all Gnostic.” i.e., They describe God’s customary way of acting in the past, as a pattern for all future actions. Some contend that these Aorist tenses reflect the influence of the Hebrew Perfect tense, and thus prophetically treat the future as though it were already present.

Luke 1:51, “He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart.”

This passage is a reference to the great “dispersion” of Israel. In this verse, we have quotes from **Psa 98:1**, where in **vs. 2-3**, it speaks of salvation, and in **Psa 118:15**.

Psa 98:1-3, “O sing to the LORD a new song, for He has done wonderful things, His right hand and His holy arm have gained the victory for Him. ²The LORD has made known His salvation; He has revealed His righteousness in the sight of the nations. ³He has remembered His lovingkindness and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.”

In Luke, “**might deeds**” is the Noun KRATOS that means, “strength, power, might, dominion, authority.” It refers to His “manifested strength.” It is the power to rule. As God has all authority to rule, His power will be real, seen, heard, felt and perfect. It typically is translated, “might or dominion,” and in the NT, it always refers to “authority” above that of humans.

1 Tim 6:16, “Who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.”

With this is the word “**arm**” the Dative Singular of BRACHION, βραχίων. This refers specifically to the shorter part of the arm from the shoulder to the elbow, because of its relationship to the word BRACHUS, meaning “short.” It references the strongest part of the arm.

In its three occurrences in the NT, it is used metaphorically of the power of God, **Luke 1:51; John 12:38** quoting **Isa 53:1**; and **Acts 13:17**. The expression occurs often in Deuteronomy, the Psalms, and Isaiah, **Deut 4:34; 5:15; Psa 44:3; 77:15; 98:1; Isa 30:30; 40:10-11; 52:10; 59:16**.

Therefore, combined, Mary is praising God for His working strength in providing salvation for Israel against her enemies, especially the enemy of sin, with a view to what He is now doing for all of mankind, by bringing His Son Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, into the world to save mankind.

And more specifically, we see in the second half of this verse, a reference to the Lord “**scattering**” nations and the people of Israel in the past for their rebellion, with the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the verb DIASKORPIZO, διασκορπίζω that means, “scatter, disperse, waste, winnow.” The sense of “scatter” or “disperse” predominates the NT understanding. cf. **Mat 26:31; Mark 14:27**; with **Zech 13:7**.

This also has a prophetic view to what He will do to Israel for rejecting the Messiah, Jesus Christ. This is a reminder! Yet, Jesus would die not only for the Jewish nation but for the “dispersed” children of God in order to unite them together into one, **John 11:51-52**. This may apply to the Jews of the Dispersion, but in the light of the universalism of this Gospel, it probably also refers to the anticipation of the ingathering of the Gentiles, who become the children of God when they acknowledge the saviorhood of Christ, **John 1:12; 10:16**.

John 11:52, “And not for the nation only, but in order that He might also gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.”

John 1:12, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name.”

This past “scattering” was of “**those who were proud** (*HUPEREPHANOS – proud, arrogant, or haughty*) **in the thoughts** (*DIANOIA - mind, understanding, intellect, feelings, or disposition*), **of their heart** (*KARDIA*).”

DIANOIA is also used in **Luke 10:27** for “**loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.**” Therefore, because they did not heed the great commandment, the Lord scattered and will scatter them.

Therefore, quoting **Psa 98:1**, with reference to God’s strength to gain salvation for all of mankind, and speaking to God’s scattering of the arrogant peoples who reject Him, Mary is reminded of the great strength of God that is merciful, righteous, and just.

Vs. 52

Alluding to **Job 5:11**, “**So that He sets on high those who are lowly, and those who mourn are lifted to safety,**” Mary continues to exalt God’s power to rule, by speaking further about His past examples of righteousness, just, and mercy.

Luke 1:52, “He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble.”

“**Brought down rulers**” uses the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb KATHAIREO, καθαίρω that means, “take down, tear down, destroy, or demolish.” Interestingly, this word also references the Cross of Jesus Christ, the seat of His power to rule, as it was used in **Mat 15:36, 46; Luke 23:53** and **Acts 13:29** in reference to taking the Lord’s body off of the Cross after His work for salvation was completed. Because of our Lord’s victory on the Cross to provide salvation for the world, He has the power to rule and judge. cf. **Mark 16:19; Acts 2:33; Rom 8:34; Col 3:1; Heb 10:12; 1 Peter 3:22.**

Heb 10:12, “But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of god.”

Mark 16:19, “So then, when the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.”

Acts 2:33, “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.”

Rom 8:34, “Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.”

Col 3:1, “Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.”

1 Peter 3:22, “Who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.”

Now, in Mary’s proclamation, our God took down the “**rulers from their thrones,**” that not only speaks of the various arrogant kings of nations, including Israel, who rejected the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, but also of the elite fallen angels who are rulers of Gentile nations. The Cross of Jesus Christ accomplished the latter.

“**Rulers**” is the Greek Noun DUNASTES, δυνάστης where we get our English word “dynasty” from that means, “ruler, sovereign, court official, prince, or potentate.” In our passage, it is speaking of wicked or evil rulers who have rejected God and His plan for salvation. It is only used here and in **Acts 8:27; 1 Tim 6:15.**

1 Tim 6:15, “Which He will bring about at the proper time (*Christ’s 2nd Coming*)—He who is the blessed and only Sovereign (DUNASTES), the King of kings and Lord of lords.”

Notice, Jesus is the “only sovereign,” as opposed to the false-god’s of the ancient pagan world that were backed by elite fallen angels, cf. **Eph 6:12**.

Eph 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

“**Thrones**” is the Noun THRONOS that means, “throne, seat (of power), or dominion.” Compare KRATOS from vs. 51. It speaks to the seat of authority, power, and dominion. It speaks of human rulership, as well as signifying angelic powers, **Col 1:16**, including the “throne” (i.e., authority) of the dragon which will be handed over to the beast; Antichrist, cf. **Rev 13:2**.

Col 1:16, “For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.”

Rev 13:2, “And the beast which I saw was like a leopard, and his feet were like those of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. And the dragon gave him his power and his throne and great authority.”

Therefore, as God the Father will give His Son “**the throne of David,**” vs. 32, He will also tear down the rulers and their thrones of both men and angels that have rejected Him.

Yet, God “**exalted those who were humble.**” “**Exalted**” is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb HUPSOO, ὑψώω that means, “to exalt or raise on high.” This is another word in reference to the Cross of Jesus Christ, as we see Jesus speaking about Moses lifting up the Brazen Serpent in the wilderness, and likened this to His own lifting upon the Cross and its consequent effect of delivering men to eternal life, **John 3:14**.

This is a paradox, because in Jesus being physically lifted up, He was also humiliated because the lifting took place in His execution as a criminal. Yet, that very same humiliation produces salvation and eternal life for those who will look to Him and live, as the Israelites who looked to the Brazen Serpent lived to escape the fiery serpents who were slaying them in the wilderness. Also note that the fiery serpents in the wilderness are analogous to the false pagan demon backed gods of the ancient foreign nations that represented sin and rebellion against God.

Note too, that as a result of being lifted up on the Cross, Jesus is now lifted up in glory being seated upon a throne at the right hand of God, as noted above.

That paradox is not lost in Mary’s statement either. Because with this, we have the Adjective TAPEINOS, ταπεινός that means, “**humble**, lowly, undistinguished, poor, downcast, or subservient.” When speaking about people it includes the ideas of “despised, rejected, or poor.” This is the 2nd condition we see in this proclamation, cf. vs. 50.

Like our verse, James sharply contrasts the lowly and the proud, the lowly are exalted, the proud brought down. Yet, those who are “lowly” can “boast,” knowing that their Father loves them, **James 1:9; 4:6**.

James 4:6, “But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, ‘God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble’.” cf. **Psa 138:6; Prov 3:34**.

James 1:9, “But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position.”

Being “**humble**” is tantamount to “submitting yourself to Christ as your Savior and others in service of Christ,” **1 Peter 5:5**; cf. **Eph 5:21**. It means acknowledging that you are a sinner and are in need of a Savior. Thereby, you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior.

This is how believing man is exalted and enthroned. Those who accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, will sit upon His throne, being in union with Him, cf. **Rev 3:21; 4:4; 2 Tim 2:12; Mat 19:28**.

Vs. 53

Luke 1:53, “He has filled the hungry with good things; and sent away the rich empty-handed.”

The first half is a quote from **Psa 107:9**, “**For He has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.**” cf. **Psa 22:26; 34:10; 146:7.**

“**Hungry**” is the Present, Active, Participle of the Verb PEINAO, πεινάω that means, “to hunger or be hungry.” By extension it also means, “to long for or have an intense desire for something which is necessary for the sustenance of life.” This is our longing for a Savior, which is absolutely necessary for salvation and eternal life. It is also an intense desire for spiritual nourishment which is necessary for the continuance of living the spiritual life.

Mat 5:6, “**Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.**” cf. **Isa 55:1; Luke 6:21a; John 4:14; 6:35, 48f; 7:37.**

This implies recognition of personal deficiency and a desire to live a godly life. The one who is hungry finds all of his actions motivated by his hunger. Jesus said, He himself is that Bread of Life who appeases the gnawing spiritual hunger of humanity. The one who comes to the person, work, and word of Jesus Christ for spiritual satisfaction, will never experience the pangs of this kind of “hunger” again, **John 6:35.**

John 6:35, “**Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst’.**”

And as Mary stated, they are “**filled with good things**” EMPIMPLEMI, “to fill quite full or satisfy.” It is a “satisfied” condition because one has had plenty. And it has the sense of to “enjoy something” by having your “fill” of someone’s company, **Rom 15:24.**

AGATHOS means, “good” of intrinsic value. It is speaking here to all the spiritual sustenance God has provided; His Son, His Word. Therefore, this phrase is speaking about all aspects of salvation and the spiritual life, both in time and eternity. Yet, it does not leave out God’s physical sustenance that He also provides to all.

In contrast, those who are “**rich**,” is the Present, Active, Participle of the Verb PLOUTEO that means, “to be rich or wealthy,” primarily in a material way. The stem of this verb goes back to a root common to many languages meaning, “to fill” or “to be filled.” So we see a contrast. Those who are filled with Satan’s cosmic system will ultimately be “**empty handed**,” regarding the salvation and spiritual life, both in time and eternity.

Luke 6:25, “**Woe to you who are well-fed now, for you shall be hungry. Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.**”

Luke 12:20-21, “**But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?’** ²¹**So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**”

Rev 3:17, “**Because you say, ‘I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing,’ and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked.**”

Keep in mind that the mere fact of being rich is not in view here, as the theme of “wealth” itself will reveal that temporal wealth ought also to be viewed as a gift of God and used properly, cf. **1 Tim 6:17-19.** But in our passage, it refers to those who are living for self and the world, and do not see the necessity of a Savior or to live properly the spiritual life.

Therefore, the arrogant rich are “**sent away**,” the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb EXAPOSTELLO ἐξαποστέλλω, that means, “send forth, or send away.” In every instance of this word, including here, there is a clear emphasis on the sender and on the purpose for which the one sent is being sent. For example, in contrast to our verse, **Gal 4:4**, tells us God sent His Son into the world to save the world.

Gal 4:4, “**But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law.**”

In this case, the Sender is God who sent forth His Son, Jesus Christ. It speaks of the historical condition that has to do with the mode of His coming; 1) “made of a woman,” i.e., the Virgin Mary, and 2) “made under the law.”

These are related to the cultural, spiritual, and physical matrix in which the Lord was born and grew up.

As such, for those who reject what the Father has sent, namely His Son Jesus Christ, they will be sent away “**empty handed**,” which is the Adjective KENOS, κενός that means, “empty, without content, worthless, vain, in vain, or ineffective.” In other words, their spiritual life will be “empty, worthless, vain, in vain, and ineffective.” Many times, this word is used for those who show up empty handed or without gifts. Therefore, if in arrogance we reject the Messiah and the things of God, we will have nothing to offer up to Him in the form of the “fruit of the Spirit.”

We noted this word in **Eph 5:6**, that speaks of God’s judgment against those who are empty handed because of receiving the false doctrines of the world, “**Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.**”

Therefore, in the second part of Mary’s great proclamation of God the Savior in regards to all of mankind, she speaks of His Mercy to save, His power to save, and His righteous and just judgment against those who reject His salvation, including the fallen angels. Yet, He exalts and enthrones those who have humbled themselves in recognition of their need for the Savior, which He has abundantly provided to those who desire it, while rejecting those who do not, leaving them with nothing to show for their lives.

“In these verses Mary’s hymn picks up the theme of the reversal of places in the kingdom. In the new age, those who feel they have no need of God and have established themselves by their own power (i.e., the proud, the mighty, and the rich) will be “put down” (i.e., their self-made thrones will be destroyed). Those who recognize their need for God and depend on Him (i.e., those of “low degree” and the “hungry”) will be rewarded by being pulled up from their oppressed condition. This theme is present in the Old Testament as well (1 Samuel 2:4, 7; Job 12:17-25; Ezekiel 21:31).” (Complete Biblical Library).

As we noted above, “**God my Savior**,” is the theme of this proclamation, and all of the following verses support or define God’s provision of salvation. In this praise, we are noting three recipients of “blessings” or better “God’s provision for salvation:” 1) Mary, **vs. 46-49**, 2) All of mankind, **vs. 50-53**, 3) Israel, **vs. 54-55**. We now note the third recipient, “Israel.”

In both verses, there is no direct quote, but heavy reliance upon the principles found in many OT passages.

Vs. 54

Luke 1:54, “He has given help to Israel His servant, in remembrance of His mercy.”

“**Given help**” is another of Luke’s unique terms that gives special meaning to Mary’s proclamation. It is the Verb ANTILAMBANOMAI, ἀντιλαμβάνομαι in the Aorist, Middle Deponent, Indicative that means, “help, support, or benefit by.” It is only used here and in **Acts 20:35**, and by Paul in **1 Tim 6:2**.

In **Acts 20:35**, Luke is quoting Paul and our Lord, “**In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”** cf. **Lev 25:35**.

It is a compound word from ANTI “against, opposed to, or mutually,” and LAMBANO “take, take hold of, grasp, seize, get, or obtain.” It is the opposite of taking or seizing, so it means, “to give or help others, or to take hold of another mutually as by the hand.”

In the LXX, it is used in the Psalms metaphorically to describe how the Lord “supports” or “helps” His people, **Psa 18:35; 63:8; 119:116**, and how He “protects” them, **Psa 41:11; 69:29**. Often the subject in these texts is “the Lord’s right hand,” pointing back to ANTILAMBANO’s literal meaning. Therefore, Mary uses it, as in the Psalms, to describe God’s support of His people, Israel, Ἰσραήλ.

Next, we see that the Greek word for “**servant**” is not the typical DOULOS or feminine DOULE, as Mary called herself, but is instead the Noun PAIS, παῖς, and not HUIOS that means, “servant, child, son, or daughter.” It is also used in **vs. 69**. This word is a term that defines human relationships. In relation to family, it means, “son or daughter.” In relation to age, it means, “child.” And, in relation to social position, it means, “servant or slave.” So here, it is reflecting the family relationship God has with the people of Israel, as well as they being His working hand.

In the LXX (Septuagint) and NT, the use of PAIS denotes relationship to God as a “servant of God.” This usage is not found in classical Greek. Yet, it is significant in the NT, because it is used of Jesus as the servant of God. **Mat 12:18** identifies Jesus with the Suffering Servant spoken of by the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, “**Behold my servant,**” **Isa 42:1; 52:13; Mat 12:18**, and **Isa 53:11**, “**Because of the affliction of His soul, He shall be satisfied; Through His suffering, My servant shall justify many, and their guilt He shall bear.**” cf. **Isa 41:8-10; 42:18f; 43:9f; 45:4; 48:20**.

In PAIS, we have a blending of “sonship” HUIOS, with “servanthood” DOULOS. The concept of the sonship/servanthood of Jesus and its extension to the lives of believers is prominent in the NT. Christians are sons and daughters of God, and therefore servants following the example of Jesus.

Nevertheless, Mary is speaking about Israel’s relationship to God as His son/servant, a picture which Jesus fulfilled in His First Advent, which Israel brought forth through Mary. Jesus is the Son/Servant brought forth by Israel through Mary. It is this Son/Servant who has and would “give help,” to Israel, i.e., salvation.

Mary is speaking of the close familiar relationship God has with the people of Israel, and the help, guidance, and protection He provided to them.

In the second half of this verse, Mary gives the reason why God has helped His servant/son, Israel, “**in remembrance of His mercy,**” which in the Greek is simply the Verb MNAOMAI and the Noun ELEOS, which we noted in **vs. 50**.

MNAOMAI is in the Aorist, Passive, Infinitive for receiving ongoing action in the past. The action was God “being mindful of and remembering,” His mercy towards the people of Israel, i.e., providing a Savior. This mercy is still in view for you and I today, so that we can rely upon it.

This word reminds us of the Cross of Jesus Christ regarding forgiveness of sin. For example, it is used for:

1. The disciple who “remembered” that a brother had a dispute with him, he should immediately seek reconciliation, even if it meant a temporary delay in his worship, **Mat 5:23-24**.
2. Peter “remembered” the prophetic words of Jesus after he had denied Him three times, **Mat 26:34**. He wept “bitterly” because of realizing what he had done, **Mat 26:75**.
3. One of the thieves crucified alongside Jesus realized the just condemnation of his crimes and acknowledged the innocence of Jesus when he said, “Lord, remember me when you come into your kingdom,” **Luke 23:42**.
4. The writer of Hebrews speaking of the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, tells us of God’s new covenant in which He would “remember no more” the sins and iniquities of believers, **Heb 8:12; 10:17**; cf. **Jer 31:31-34**. That is because they have been paid for by Jesus upon the Cross.

Heb 8:12, “For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more.”

Vs. 55

Luke 1:55, “As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his descendants forever.”

In this passage, Mary is remembering the words spoken by God to her forefathers that encompassed all of the promises and covenants He made with Israel. By saying this, Mary is telling us that she is not just making these things up, but that she is quoting the Scriptures that conveyed to her and all of Israel God’s covenant promises,

especially in providing and sending the Messiah.

The phrase, “**to Abraham and his descendants**, (SPERMA - “seed, offspring, descendants”), means the people of Israel. But the fact is not lost on the Gentile and Jewish believer of the Church Age, as we too are the spiritual seed of Abraham through faith, **Rom 4:9-12, 18-22**, that participate in the fulfillment of His covenant mercy, giving us eternal life.

And, as she states, “**forever**” AION, she is saying that these promises are for all of eternity, forever, for all the ages to come. She is saying that God does not lie; He is faithful and veracity, keeping and fulfilling His promises by sending the Savior, her son.

Thus, “remembrance” in connection with “mercy,” provides a striking picture of God’s faithfulness to respond according to His love and according to His covenant. And, the example of such action is the level of intimate communion that took place between Abraham and the Lord. Both “Abraham” and “his seed” are in the Dative of Advantage, and express a greater degree of personal interest. It is a reference to God’s merciful dealings with His people.

Vs. 56

In **vs. 56**, we see that Mary, MARIAM, stayed with her relative Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. This would place Mary either very close to the birth of John the Baptist or being there for his birth and then leaving, but the Scriptures do not give us that information, only the time frame. So, we are left to conjecture. This also places Mary at about 3-4 months, more likely closer to 4 months in her own pregnancy, when she returned home. “**Returning to her own house**” may suggest she was not yet married to Joseph. As we will see in **Chapter 2**, she would remain in Nazareth for up to 5 months before beginning the journey to Bethlehem where she would give birth to her, and our, Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

In our outline of Chapter 1, we have already noted:

- I. Preface: The Method and Purpose of Writing, **vs. 1-4**.
- II. The Identification of the Son of Man with Men, **vs. 5 - 4:13**.
 - A. The Announcement of the Birth of John the Baptist, **vs. 5-25**.
 - B. The Announcement of the Birth of the Son of Man, **vs. 26-56**.

And now we conclude the chapter by noting:

- C. **The Advent of John the Baptist, vs. 57-80.**

This section is made up of three parts:

- 1. **The Birth of John and rejoicing, vs. 57-58.**
- 2. **The Circumcision and Naming of John, vs. 59-66.**
- 3. **Zachariah’s Proclamation and Prophecy, vs. 67-80.**

1. The Birth of John and resultant rejoicing, vs. 57-58:

Luke is the only Gospel writer to provide the events of John’s birth, just as he was for the announcement of John’s conception. In **vs. 57-58**, we see the fulfillment of the prophecy of Gabriel given to Zachariah back in **vs. 5-25**. This reminds us that every prophecy God makes, He fulfills, whether a short time duration prophecy such as this, or the longer durations prophecies like the 1st and 2nd Advents of Jesus Christ. God always fulfills His prophecies, and God always keeps His Word, even the promises given to you and I found in the Scriptures.

In **vs. 58**, we see that even though Elizabeth stayed in seclusion for the first 5 months of her pregnancy, **vs. 24**, shortly after Mary’s arrival they went public with the information to their “**neighbors**” PERIOIKOS, from the Preposition PERI “around,” and OIKOS “house.” It means, “around the house, living or dwelling around,” in the sense of physical location, not personal relationships, and therefore means, “neighbor.” It is only used here in the

Bible; a hapaxlegomena. It is used only once in the LXX too for **Deut 1:7**.

With this, she also told her “**relatives**” SUNGENES, cf. **vs. 36**, as was used regarding Elizabeth’s relationship to Mary. So, Elizabeth had other relatives living near her in the hill country of Judea.

Both her neighbors and relatives were told about her pregnancy, and now at giving birth to John, “**the Lord**,” KURIOS, “**displayed**” MAGALUNO, (cf. **vs. 46**), or better “magnified and showed the power of,” something about Himself. This time the thing magnified was God’s, “**mercy toward her**,” HO ELEOS AUTOS META AUTES.

Remember, “mercy” is a response to someone else’s condition of distress. Here, it is the Lord’s activity on behalf of Elizabeth rooted in His compassion and mercy towards her. It is also an expression of His love. This mercy and expression of His love/compassion, was shown or magnified by allowing an older barren woman, Elizabeth, to conceive and give birth. And not just any birth, but to give birth to the forerunner of the Messiah.

Then we see that “**they were rejoicing with her**.” “**Rejoicing**” is the Imperfect, Active, Indicative of the Verb SUNCHAIRO that means, “rejoice with or congratulate.” It includes a strong element of participating in the joy and well-being of another person. This also partially fulfills what Gabriel prophesied in **vs. 14**. The Progressive Imperfect tense is for ongoing past action that is in simultaneity with the birth of John, from Luke’s viewpoint, “**they kept on rejoicing**.” It is from the prefix SUN “with,” and the Verb CHAIRO that means, “rejoice, be glad, welcome, or greet.”

Now, when a baby is born, everyone typically rejoices. Here, we have an older woman who was not able to conceive prior who has given birth, so the rejoicing is great. But, in this passage, we also see a community of faithful believers, as the context of their rejoicing is “**they heard that the Lord magnified His great mercy**.” “**Heard**” is the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb AKOUO, and many times in Scripture means learning God’s Word through the ear gate. That is what they did, along with believing it, as now being expressed in their rejoicing. What a wonderful thing to have a community of faithful believers rejoicing in the Lord.

Principle:

- In a community of faithful believers, we are to rejoice at the blessings others receive, regardless of our own situation.

J. C. Ryle wrote, “*There was mercy in bringing her safely through her time of trial. There was mercy in making her the mother of a living child. Happy are those family circles, whose births are viewed in this light—as special instances of the mercy of the Lord.*”

The word “**rejoice**” using SUNCHAIRO is used in only 7 verses in the NT; the number of Spiritual Perfection. By reading each verse in the order it appears, we see the application of rejoicing that should also be in our lives.

- We are to rejoice at the salvation of every unbeliever.

Luke 15:6, “And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep which was lost!'”

Luke 15:9, “When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin which I had lost!'”

- We are to rejoice when our fellow believers are blessed by God.

1 Cor 12:26, “And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.”

- We are to rejoice in and with the Word of God.

1 Cor 13:6, “Does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth.”

➤ We are to rejoice when enduring underserved suffering for blessing for the Lord.

Phil 2:17, “But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all.”

Phil 2:18, “You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.”

As every one of these Scriptures tells us, we are to rejoice with others; our friends, relatives, co-workers, community, and especially our fellow members of the body of Christ. And remember, all children are gifts of God’s mercy, no matter the circumstance. **Psa 127:3, “Behold, sons are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.”** We all should receive children with the joy that Elizabeth received John. We all should recognize children as God’s mercy to us, be thankful, and rejoice in them and in Him.

We can also take away from this that Elizabeth’s prior caution was most likely unfounded, as the community celebrates what the Lord has done. Rather than being concerned that they would reject the Word of God, she should have told them right away. It appears that Mary’s presence and further encouragement with her own news caused them to be emboldened to share the Word with others.

Principle:

Sometimes, our hesitation to witness is unfounded too, when in fact people will respond to our witness. So, stop trying to over analyze the situation by gauging whether people will accept your witness or not, and just let the words flow, leaving it in God’s hands to take it from there.

Religious Freedom Day is this Wednesday, January 16.

January 16 is nationally recognized as Religious Freedom Day, commemorating Thomas Jefferson’s landmark Statute for Religious Freedom. Jefferson drafted it in 1777, it was introduced in the Virginia Assembly in 1779, and ultimately shepherded by James Madison through the Assembly and enacted on January 16, 1786. George Mason’s Virginia Declaration of Rights in 1776 and Jefferson’s Statute laid the foundation for the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which enshrines in law the freedom of religion for all Americans.

Here is a short video to commemorate our founding father’s establishment of religious freedom within our nation.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWo4Om94pQA>

2. The Circumcision and Naming of John, vs. 59-66:

Here we have the story of John’s circumcision and naming. Circumcision was a mandate from God first to Abraham to represent the covenant God made with him to provide a great nation from him. **Gen 17:9-14;** and secondly, to be in accordance with the Mosaic Law that came hundreds of years later to ratify that relationship, **Lev 12:3; Acts 7:8.**

Acts 7:8, “And He gave him the covenant of circumcision; and so Abraham became the father of Isaac, and circumcised him on the eighth day; and Isaac became the father of Jacob, and Jacob of the twelve patriarchs.”

It was a physical representation of being entered into the new racial species God had created in Abraham, the Jewish race called Israel. It was a commemoration of that great grace blessing from God. That physical representation of a new racial species was a type of the New Spiritual Species, (new creation, new creature, **2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15**), God creates in the Church Age believer upon salvation. It is a picture of regeneration; Abraham’s sexual regeneration typifies our spiritual regeneration found in Jesus Christ. Therefore, circumcision was also a picture of salvation. Yet, as a ritual, circumcision has no meaning to the Jew who rejects Christ as Savior, for ritual without reality is meaningless. Unfortunately, many believing Jews after Christ’s ascension, falsely insisted upon Gentile believers being circumcised, **Acts 15:1-34**, which Paul soundly refuted, **Rom 2:25-29; Gal 5:1-6; 6:12-15; Col 2:11.**

Gal 5:2, “Behold I, Paul, say to you that if you receive circumcision, Christ will be of no benefit to you.”

Gal 5:3, “And I testify again to every man who receives circumcision, that he is under obligation to keep the whole Law.”

Gal 5:6, “For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.”

Gal 6:15, “For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.”

Col 2:11, “And in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ.”

The believer receives a spiritual circumcision upon faith in Jesus Christ. It is the removal of the sin barrier that kept us from a relationship with God. The Baptism of the Spirit at salvation and the resultant Positional Sanctification is the only circumcision of the Church Age.

Phil 3:3, “For we are the true circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh.”

Circumcision as a ritual, in the ritual plan of God for the dispensation of Israel, no longer exists. Yet, at that time, for the Jew, (as it continues to be today), circumcision was the memorial sign between God and the Jewish race. But, only with Bible doctrine in the soul was circumcision meaningful to them. This too was an OT doctrine. Because of the tendency to rely on the mere physical outward sign of inclusion in the covenant, to the neglect of the demand to believe in and serve God, several passages of the OT reiterate the need to be “**circumcised in the heart,**” **Deut 10:16; Jer 4:4, cf. Rom 2:29.** It is not enough to show only outward adherence to God; one must believe and live as a faithful servant of God. So, even in the OT, circumcision identified a relationship with God spiritually.

Deut 10:16, “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.”

Jer 4:4, “Circumcise yourselves to the LORD and remove the foreskins of your heart, men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, or else My wrath will go forth like fire and burn with none to quench it, because of the evil of your deeds.”

That is why we see Zachariah and Elizabeth taking their son to be circumcised at this time, because they understood their relationship to God, to Abraham, the Law, and more importantly, the meaning behind the ritual, just as we will see Jesus being circumcised in **Chapter 2**. It was a great demonstration of their faithfulness, which is also shown in the rest of this section.

Next, we see the process of naming Zachariah’s and Elizabeth’s baby. “*Typically, Jewish children were named at birth (cf. **Genesis 4:25; 21:3, et al.**). Some have suggested this account more closely resembles the Hellenistic custom of waiting seven to ten days before naming a child. In addition, there is no written record of naming children in association with circumcision until the Eighth Century A.D. In addition, while there is no record that it was common at this time for friends and family to be involved in the naming of a child, a similar scenario appears in **Ruth 4:17.**” (Complete Biblical Library Commentary)*

Remember, at this time Zachariah was still mute and deaf from the discipline he received for wavering in his faith back in **vs. 18-20**. They both wanted to call their son John, according to Gabriel’s command from **vs. 13**, but the people thought he was going to be named after his father, Zachariah. So, in **vs. 60**, Elizabeth speaks up and tells them his name would be “John.” Because of Zachariah’s muteness, he was not able to speak up at this time, so Elizabeth had to. The people thought this name to be strange, **vs. 61**, since no one in their family was named John.

Naming children based on family names, especially after the father or grandfather, was a common practice of the day. In addition, naming was sometimes associated with dominion or rule; this child will be under God’s rule, not man’s as God is the one who named him John.

But, in **vs. 60**, Elizabeth strongly objected “**No indeed**,” with the emphatic OUCHI, when in accordance with the angel’s message, Elizabeth instructed everyone what he would be “**called**,” using the Future, Passive, Indicative with an imperative force of the Verb KALEO, “**called**, named, etc.” She stated that her child’s name would be “**John**,” IOANNES, Ἰωάννης, which is a proper noun transliterated from the Hebrew YOCHANAN that means, “YHWH-given or YHWH has been gracious.”

In **vs. 61**, part of the reason for the people questioning this name was that no one in their family had the name John. Typically, people were named after their relatives in honor of their “**relatives**,” the Noun SUNGENEIA, only used here and in **Acts 7:3, 14**, where it refers to relatives in the extended families of Abraham and Joseph respectively.

In, **vs. 62**, because no relatives had the name John and it was not customary for the mother to name the child, to confirm this, because he was also deaf, they “**made signs**” to Zachariah to ask him what to name the boy. This was ironic given that at the announcement of the pregnancy of Elizabeth, Zachariah was looking for a sign to be certain that what Gabriel was telling him was true, due to his lack of faith, **vs. 18-20**. So here, they are giving him “signs” to ask what his son’s name would be. “**They made signs**” is the Progressive Imperfect, Active, Indicative for ongoing simultaneous action of the Verb ENNEUO, ἐννεύω that means, “to nod, make signs, or signify.” It is only used here in the NT.

Next, in **vs. 63**, Zachariah asks for something to write on, PINAKIDION, (a small wooden tablet with a wax or possibly a parchment coating, which too is only used here in the NT), so he could respond to their signaled question. I love the forcefulness of Zachariah’s response. He could have just written, “John,” but he writes, “his name is John,” Boom! End of discussion!

When he wrote this, “**they were all astonished**,” using the Verb THAUMAZŌ, θαυμάζω that means, “to wonder, marvel at, admire, be astonished, or be amazed.” The people’s reaction reflects the finality and authority of Zachariah’s response. It also continues the aura of mystery and wonder that Luke gives to the birth and life of John the Baptist. Interestingly, most of the usages of the word THAUMAZO have to do with people’s reaction to the healing activity and miraculous power of Jesus Christ. And, don’t you know that Zachariah was healed of his muteness and deafness right after this, **vs. 64**.

In **vs. 64**, following Zachariah’s faithfulness to the message of Gabriel, he was healed “**at once**” or “**immediately**,” the Adverb PARACHREMA, (that is also used predominately in healing narratives). The words of the angel Gabriel from **vs. 20**, came true. His prophecies are once again fulfilled; God is faithful to His Word!

“Luke adds emphasis to this event by means of a literary device called a zeugma (i.e., the use of a word [“opened”] with two other words in a given context [“mouth,” and “tongue”] of which only one is appropriately used [“mouth”]).” (Complete Biblical Library Commentary).

So, we see that at the precise moment of Zachariah’s faith and obedience to the Word of God, in mercy, God lifted his punishment and freed Zachariah’s mouth, and we can assume restored his hearing too. Just as when the unbeliever demonstrates faith in Jesus Christ by believing in Him, God frees him from the slave market of sin and gives him salvation. Likewise, when we demonstrate faith in God to rebound, **1 John 1:9**, and recover, God restores our fellowship with Him and turns our discipline into blessing.

Principle:

- When we are faithful and obedient to God’s Word, His mercy comes into our lives, even when under judgment or discipline.

Then, as is also customary in Luke’s writings, the first thing Zachariah does is “**praise God**,” EULEGEO THEOS. We have noted this verbal aspect of praise in **vs. 28** and **42**.

Here, we have a principle of suffering and enduring God’s discipline. Our suffering will either make us bitter or make us better. It made Zachariah better. He had learned more about his own heart and about God, than he ever knew before. The proof of that is the praise for God that leaped from his mouth that very instance.

How are we handling our suffering? Is it working in us deeper thoughts of God's goodness, or harder thoughts about our circumstance? Are we growing warmer or colder toward God?

Now at this point, Luke could have gone on to give us Zachariah's great proclamation found in **vs. 67-79**, and in fact, the "**speaking**" LALEO Luke references in this verse is just that. But, before Luke gives us the proclamation, he tells us of the impact all of this had on Zachariah's relatives, neighbors, and those living in the surrounding region in **vs. 65-66**.

In **vs. 65**, as a result of Zachariah's healing and speech, "**fear**" PHOBOS "**came on all those living around them,**" using the Verb PERIOIKEO, "**dwelt around,**" which is only used here in the NT, as we noted the Adjective in **vs. 58**. We could say, "their neighbors," which is the group we noted in **vs. 58**.

Yet, this "fear" reached even more people than did the previous rejoicing of their neighbors, as it included all those living in the "**hill country of Judea**" ORIENOS HO IOUDAIA, of which ORIENOS, "hilly or mountainous" is only used here and in **vs. 39**, in the NT, as we noted previously. The reaction of those gathered was one of a deep reverence and awe at what God had done, cf. **Luke 5:26; 7:16; Acts 2:43; 5:11; 19:17**.

The phrase, "**being talked of**" is the Progressive Imperfect, Passive, Indicative of the Verb DIALALEO that means, "discuss or converse together," that is only used here and **Luke 6:11**. In **Luke 6:11**, it is used for the Pharisees plotting to get rid of Jesus, so it carries somewhat of a negative connotation of "continuous talk back and forth between people." We do not see the rejoicing here by the people, but more of a perplexity as to what was going on, as also seen in **vs. 66**. Nevertheless, we do see in their hearts a respect and awe at what God was doing.

Another important Lukan theme begins to appear in this verse, i.e., miracles as catalysts for the proclamation of the good news, "**Luke 2:17; 4:37; 5:15; 7:17; 8:39; etc.**" This event had moved the people deeply. Their awe over what had happened to Zachariah and Elizabeth caused them to commit these things to their memory and speak about them to others.

"**Kept in mind**" in the Greek, it says, "laid up in their heart." This is an idiom meaning, "to store information in the mind, with the implication of its being valuable." Mary would later respond in a similar way at Jesus' response to her and Joseph when they found Him in the temple, **Luke 2:51**. Hopefully, the people of the hill country of Judea were cycling this doctrine in the right lobe of their souls. The question they were pondering was, "**What then will this child turn out to be?**" Luke used PAIDION for "child" that means, "young child or infant," and the Future, Middle Deponent, Indicative of EIMI for "**will be?**" This reflects that they were not quite sure what this child would do or accomplish, maybe only in detail, but still understanding he was to be the forerunner to the Christ.

Principle:

- When you receive the Word of God, it should cause you to want to delve further into it, with a desire to know more. Questioning is not a sign of unbelief. It may be if the questioner has an attitude of antagonism. Yet, those who question typically have a heart and desire to know more, which God will provide to those who are positive in their volition.

Then we have Luke's closing comment, which hopefully was also in the heart of the people of the hill country. It was, "**for the hand of the Lord was *certainly* with him.**" cf. **Acts 11:21; 13:11; Ezek 1:3; 3:14, 22**, as the "**hand of the Lord,**" CHEIR KURIOS, was the Greek translation of a common OT phrase. It is only used three times in the NT, here and in **Acts 11:21; 13:11**. This means that the demonstrated power of God was with John the Baptist for all to see and know, and that God had a plan for his life. This is also true of every believer. God's power is available for you 24/7, and He definitely has a plan for your life!

Acts 11:21, "And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a large number who believed turned to the Lord."

3. Zachariah's Proclamation and Prophecy, vs. 67-80:

This is Zachariah's great psalm of praise called in religion, "The Benedictus," because the Latin translation of **vs. 67**, begins with the word Benedictus that means, "blessed or praise;" as the Latin or Vulgate translation is "Benedictus Dominus Deus Israel." This, like much of Zachariah's praise, is right out of the OT, as David praised God when his son Solomon was installed as his successor on the throne, **1 Kings 1:48**. This praise was made by Zachariah regarding what God was doing through Mary's son and his own. This section can be broken down into four segments:

- a. Praise to God for keeping His promise to David, (the Davidic covenant), **vs. 68-71**.
- b. Praise to God for keeping His promise to Abraham, (the Abrahamic Covenant), **vs. 72-75**.
- c. Praise to God for keeping His promise to Zachariah, in giving him a son to be the forerunner to the Messiah, **vs. 76-77**.
- d. Praise to God for the coming of "the Sunrise," the giving of the Messiah, **vs. 78-79**.

Like Mary's "Magnificat," Zachariah's "Benedictus" is rich in OT terminology and symbolism. Some believe at least 33 OT passages can be alluded to in his psalm of praise. In addition, this praise also sets up what would be unfolded in the rest of Luke's gospel.

In **vs. 67**, like his wife Elizabeth in **vs. 41**, we see that he had the endowment of the Holy Spirit, (PLETHO PNEUMA HAGIOS), which is the temporary empowering, enabling ministry of God the Holy Spirit for Jewish Dispensation saints. With this empowerment, he "**prophesied**," the Verb PROPHETEUŌ προφητεύω that means, "prophesy, speak by Divine inspiration, foretell the future, or be a prophet." It is used about 30 times in the NT to mean, "proclaim a revelation or message received from God." Here, it was the message of the coming Messiah and His forerunner.

a. Praise to God for keeping His promise to David, (the Davidic covenant), vs 68-71.

In **vs. 68**, "**Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people.**" Zachariah begins by praising God, just as we all should begin our prayers or psalms with praise to God. Here, Luke used the Adjective EULOGETOS that means, "blessed or praised." The object of his praise is, "**the Lord God of Israel**," KURIOS HO THEOS ISRAEL. As noted above from the Vulgate translation, we gain the naming of this praise, "The Benedictus." In addition, this was a similar praise that David made regarding his son, **1 Kings 1:48**, in praise of God fulfilling His promise to David in fulfillment of the "Davidic Covenant," **2 Sam 7:11b-13**. Isaiah gave immortal expression to this promise in **Isa 9:6-7**. We also see this praise phraseology in the Psalms, **Psa 41:13; 72:18; 104:48; 106:48**, etc., cf. **1 Sam 25:32, 39; Psa 66:20; 89:52**.

In the Hebrew, the word for "**blessed**," is BARAKH. It is an acknowledgment and formalized means of expressing thanks to God for His faithfulness and kindness as revealed in all His saving and sustaining acts.

Zachariah then states the reason for this praise, which is also the main principle that runs throughout the proclamation, "**He visited us and accomplished redemption for His people.**"

This "**visited**," is not directly speaking of the First Advent of Jesus Christ, per se. It is speaking more of the mercy that God has had and is now displaying towards man. It is the Greek Verb EPISKEPTOMAI, ἐπισκέπτομαι that means, "look for, inspect, visit, look after, etc.," that is also used in **vs. 78**, for "**visit**." Here, it is referencing God the Father "looking down on" or "inspecting" man and finding him wanting due to sin.

In the OT, God is said to "visit" mainly for judgment, cf. **Exo 4:31; Zech 10:3**, but in the NT, His visitation is for mercy. Therefore, because of this need and God's great mercy, He will provide a Savior in His Son that is emphasized throughout this psalm of praise, as we see in **vs. 78**.

With that backdrop, in **Luke 7:16**, we see the crowd also uses the word after Jesus raises a widow's son from the dead: "**God has visited his people.**" Similarly, in **Acts 15:14**, reference is made to "**how God first concerned**

(visited) **Himself about taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name.**” Therefore, God is seen in Luke and Acts as actively visiting the world to inspect and provide redemption through the work of Christ and His church. And later, it is said that Israel did not recognize the time of its **“visitation,” Luke 19:44**, where the cognate Noun EPISKOPE is used. Israel rejected the opportunity God offered to the covenant people in Jesus, with disastrous consequences.

Then we see what God will do, **“accomplished redemption,”** that uses the Aorist, Active, Indicative of the Verb POIEO meaning, **“the work”** of God **“completed.”** The work that God had completed was “redemption,” the payment of our sins.

It is wonderful how Zachariah praised God from a past tense view point, even though God was just now sending the Savior and His forerunner into the world. Zachariah knew of and proclaimed God’s great plan of salvation through redemption from the view point of God’s perspective; omniscience. Zachariah was viewing it from the view point of eternity past, as already being completed or accomplished, just as God views it as completed from the foundation of the world, cf. **Heb 4:3; 9:26; 1 Peter 1:20; Eph 1:4.**

Heb 4:3, “For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said, ‘As I swore in My wrath, they shall not enter My rest,’ although His works were finished from the foundation of the world.”

Heb 9:26, “Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

1 Peter 1:20, “For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you.”

Eph 1:4, “Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him, in love.”

Zachariah was now standing in great faith, as opposed to his previous doubting unfaithfulness. He learned a lot about God and His great plan during his time of silence.

“Redemption” is the Noun LUTROSIS that means, “release, deliverance, or redemption.” It comes from LUTROO, which means, “to release by paying a ransom or to redeem.” LUTROO is from the root LUO, a primary verb meaning, “to loose, to release, or to dissolve.” So, LUTROSIS comes to mean, “a ransoming, a redemption.” It is only used here and **Luke 2:38; Heb 9:12.**

Heb 9:12, “And not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.”

In the NT, “redemption” is typically the Greek Noun APOLUTROSIS that means the same as LUTROSIS, with the emphasis of a ransom paid. It means to release on payment of ransom, so APOLUTROSIS comes to mean a release affected by payment of ransom. The prefix APO means, “off or away.” It usually denotes separation, departure, cessation, completion, reversal, etc., **Luke 21:28; Rom 3:24; 8:23; 1 Cor 1:30; Eph 1:7, 14; 4:30; Col 1:14; Heb 9:15.**

We also have the word “ransom,” which is the Greek noun LUTRON, from LUO, “to loosen with,” that is, a redemption price that figuratively means atonement. So, LUTRON comes to mean, “ransom.” Used in **Mat 20:28; Mark 10:45.**

The Verbs AGORAZO, “to buy or to purchase in the market,” (AGORA = slave marketplace), and EXAGORAZO, “to purchase from the slave market or to completely and totally liberate a slave from the slave market.”

AGORAZO, ἀγοράζω is used thirty-one times, meaning to be in the AGORA or place of assembly and market, hence to buy for one’s self by a price freely paid, cf. **1 Cor 6:20; 7:23; Rev 5:9.**

1 Cor 6:20, “For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.”

1 Cor 7:23, “You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.”

Rev 5:9, “And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation’.”

EXAGORAZO, ἐξαγοράζω used four times meaning, “to purchase out of the market not to return,” cf. **Gal 3:13; 4:5; Eph 5:16; Col 4:4,**

Gal 3:13, “Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’.”

Gal 4:5, “So that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

Therefore, in the use of LUTROSIS, it is linked to God’s mercy and grace, and the resulting redemption. Thus, it can overlap with SOTERIA, “salvation” or “deliverance.” It is speaking of the payment of our sins. APOLUTROSIS is also used that way, but can also emphasize the eschatological redemption, which is not the forgiveness of your sins, **Eph 1:7; Col 1:14,** but the final future salvation from the present evil world, **Gal 1:4.** But to get to the eschatological redemption, God through Jesus Christ had to first redeem our sins, which is Zachariah’s emphasis.

Redemption

In the Doctrine of Salvation, there are three key concepts; redemption, reconciliation, and propitiation. The phrase, “The blood of Christ” applies to all three doctrines.

1. Redemption is toward sin. There are three theological words that actually describe this concept: redemption, expiation, (to make amends, show remorse, or suffer punishment for wrongdoing), and unlimited atonement, (the making of reparation for a sin). These always deal with sin as a problem in our relationship with God.
2. Reconciliation is always directed toward mankind. Man is reconciled to God by the death of His Son.
3. Propitiation is directed toward God, meaning that the justice of God the Father is satisfied with the work of Christ on the cross.

Redemption emphasizes the fact that we are sinners, not only by choice or volition, but long before that we were sinners at the point of birth because of our Old Sin Nature and the imputation of Adam’s original sin. We had to be condemned before we could be saved.

Redemption is viewed from the standpoint of a ransom paid on the Cross for our salvation. Redemption views mankind as born into the slave market of sin through the imputation of Adam’s original sin at birth, and redemption is the saving work of Christ on the Cross by which He purchases our freedom or salvation. The currency used for this ransom purchase is called the “blood of Christ,” **Eph 1:7; 2:13; Col 1:14; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Heb 9:12-15; Rev 1:5; 5:9.**

Eph 1:7, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our sins, according to the riches of His grace.”

Col 1:14, “In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

1 Peter 1:18-19, “Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, ¹⁹but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.”

Rev 1:5, “And from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the

earth. To Him who loves us, and released us from our sins by His blood.”

The blood of Christ depicts, by analogy, the saving work of Christ on the Cross, **2 Cor 5:21; 1 Peter 2:24**. It also depicts unlimited atonement, propitiation, and reconciliation.

2 Cor 5:21, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

1 Peter 2:24, “And He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.”

In order to become our Redeemer, Christ had to become a member of the human race. He could not save us as God, because whoever is the redeemer must be judged for the sins of the world and God cannot be judged for sin. Therefore, through the virgin birth, by becoming a man without sin of His own, and remaining impeccable, **2 Cor 5:21**, Jesus Christ was qualified to be our Redeemer. cf. **Lev 25:25-26; Jer 32:8-15**.

In Zachariah’s psalm of praise, he was proclaiming the Doctrine of Redemption as taught in the OT by means of the animal blood sacrifices, **Heb 9:22**.

Heb 9:22, “And according to the standard of the law, nearly all things are cleansed with animal blood, and without the pouring out of blood there is no forgiveness.”

OT believers like Job applied the Doctrines of Redemption and Resurrection to their circumstances, **Job 19:25**.

Job 19:25, “I know that my redeemer lives, and that He shall stand in the latter day upon the earth.”

In recalling redemption, he was looking at the spiritual death of Christ on the Cross; in recalling resurrection, he was looking at the somatic or physical death of Christ on the Cross, which anticipated His resurrection.

David said in **Psa 34:22, “The Lord redeems the soul of His servants.”** It is the soul of the believer that is redeemed at salvation, not the body; otherwise we would never die physically. There is no human spirit until after salvation.

As such, redemption removes the condemnation of the Mosaic Law, **Gal 3:10-13; Gal 4:5-6**; cf. **Deut 21:23**.

Gal 3:13, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us. For it stands written, (Deut 21:23), ‘cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.’”

In **Gal 4:5-6**, redemption from the condemnation of the Law results in the Biblical Doctrine of Adoption into the eternal family of God, cf. **Rom 8:23**.

Gal 4:4-5, “But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

The Results of Redemption:

1. Redemption propitiates God the Father, **Rom 3:25**.
2. We are delivered from the curse of the Law, **Gal 3:13; 4:4-7**.
3. We have the forgiveness of all sin, **Isa 44:22; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14; Heb 9:15**.
4. Redemption is the basis for our Justification, **Rom 3:24; 5:9**.
5. Redemption is the basis for our Sanctification, **Eph 5:25-27**.
6. Redemption is the basis for Eternal Inheritance of believers, **Heb 9:15**.
7. Redemption is the basis for the strategic victory of Jesus Christ in the Angelic Conflict, **Col 2:14-15; Heb 2:14-15**, (the passage for rendering Satan and his legions powerless).
8. Redemption is the basis for the mediatorship of Jesus Christ, **1Tim 2:5-6, Heb 9:14-15**.
9. Redemption of the soul in salvation results in redemption of the body in resurrection, **Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; 4:30**.

Redemption views salvation from the standpoint of the complete payment of our sins, giving man the option to believe in Christ for eternal life. This is what Zachariah knew. This is what he was proclaiming!

Isa 44:22, “I have wiped out your transgressions like a thick cloud and your sins like a heavy mist. Return to Me, for I have redeemed you.”

Let us not lose the great symbolism seen in this storyline. As Zachariah was under the bondage of sin within his soul, (unfaithfulness to God’s word resulting in Divine discipline – mute and deaf), he is now freed, (able to speak and hear once again), because of God’s great plan of redemption through Jesus Christ, which he praises here.

Also remember, that when we rebound and recover from sin, God will still use us in wonderful ways, as He does with Zachariah. As long as we are alive, we are never out of the potential to be in God’s directive will and plan for our lives.

Vs. 69

Luke 1:69, “And has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David His servant.”

Here, Zachariah praised God for sending the Savior into the world, in similar fashion to the messianic Psalms, **Psa 18:2; 132:17-18.**

Psa 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.”

Psa 132:17-18, “There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed. ¹⁸His enemies I will clothe with shame, but upon himself his crown shall shine.”

It begins with “**raised**,” another past tense Aorist, Active, Indicative use of the Verb EGEIRO that means, “raise, be raised, rise, appear, wake up, arouse!” It is used extensively throughout the NT. Here it is in parallel with **vs. 78, “Sunrise”** in this great chiasmic psalm of praise. It means bringing the Savior into the world, as noted in the Attributive Noun used as an adjective for “**salvation**” SOTERIA that means, “salvation, deliverance, preservation.”

In theology, salvation is the deliverance of man or his soul from the power or penalty of sin; redemption. When we think about salvation, we also see the doctrines of; substitution, redemption, reconciliation, propitiation, conviction, calling, election, predestination, sovereignty, free will, grace, repentance, faith, regeneration, forgiveness, justification, sanctification, preservation, and glorification.

Salvation has two fundamental ideas inherent in the meaning of the word; on the one hand, to be saved is to be rescued from a lost estate, while on the other hand, to be saved is to be brought into a saved estate, vitally renewed, and brought close to God as a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Psa 3:8, “Salvation belongs to the LORD; Your blessing be upon Your people! Selah.” cf. Isa 45:17; Jonah 2:9

Luke also uses the Noun KERAS in this verse that means, “**horn**.” He only uses it here. Otherwise, it is only used in the book of **Revelation** 11 times. It is a Semitic symbol of strength and power, and was used in the OT as such, cf. **Psa 18:2; 132:17.**

Psa 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.”

Psa 132:17, “There I will cause the horn of David to spring forth; I have prepared a lamp for Mine anointed.”

It means the horn of an animal that signifies power and strength, and the four corners of the altar that point in all four directions signifying the same and its all sufficiency.

In Revelation, it is first used for Jesus Christ, **Rev 5:6**, then the Golden Altar in heaven, **Rev 9:13**, and after that for the power and reign of Satan, the antichrist, and various evil kings and nations of the Tribulation, **Rev 12:3; 13:1, 11; 17:3, 7, 12, 16**. It is used extensively in the OT, also literally of animal horns and symbolically of power, cf. **Deut 33:17**.

The first time “**horns**” is used in the Bible is in **Gen 22:13** for the ram’s horns that were caught in the thicket that Abraham would sacrifice in the place of his son Isaac. That was a wonderful type of what our Lord would do for all of mankind.

The first time “**horn**” is used is **Exo 19:13**, for the Lord calling the people to assemble before Him; the gathering together of His people. In Salvation God calls and gathers His people, **Rom 11:29; 1 Cor 1:2; Eph 1:18; 4:1; Mat 13:47; 2 Thes 2:1**.

It is used for both the corners of the Altar of Sacrifice, **Exo 29:12**, and the Altar of Incense, **Exo 37:25**. So, it symbolically means, Christ’s sacrifice for redemption leading to salvation and His intercessory mediatorship in our prayer life, cf. **Rom 8:32-34**.

Lev 16:18, “Then he shall go out to the altar that is before the LORD and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar on all sides.”

It also symbolized a place of refuge, **1 King 1:50-51; 2:28**, which is the result of redemption and salvation for those who receive it.

Therefore, “**horn of salvation**” could be translated as, “powerful deliverer,” and speaks to the power of Jesus Christ to save, with the subsequent refuge and relationship we have with God in Him. That is why Paul stated in **Rom 1:16**, “**For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.**”

And, in **Heb 7:25**, we see the dual nature of the “horn of salvation,” for saving us from our sins and mediation. **Heb 7:25**, “**Hence, also, He is able to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.**”

Finally, this “salvation” is both from sin and the world, i.e., Satan’s cosmic system. In Christ’s First Advent, He defeated sin. As a result, in His Second Advent, He will culminate the victory by literally defeating Satan and his cosmic system, i.e., world governments like Rome. Israel was looking for both. But unfortunately, many confused the Scriptures and their need, and were looking for Jesus to defeat Rome in His First Advent, thereby missing His “visitation,” **Luke 19:44**.

This salvation and position of power is related to “**the house of David His servant**,” which speaks to the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant through the arising Messiah, as Jesus would be born in the line of David to fulfill the covenant promise, **Luke 3:31; Mat 1:1, 6**. Therefore, the reference to the house of David identifies this horn of salvation as the Messiah.

Vs. 70

Luke 1:70, “As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old.”

Here, Zachariah indicates that this “horn of salvation” that would provide “redemption,” was prophesied by the ancient writers of the Scriptures and others called, “**the prophets**,” PROPHETES, προφήτης. cf. **Acts 3:21; Rom 1:2**.

“**Of old**,” is the Greek Preposition APO “from, out of,” and the Noun AION that means, “long period of time, eternity, earliest times, age, era,” cf. **Luke 1:33, 55**. In other words, this is not new information; it has been around for generations, and that which was unfolding was not something unforeseen; it was part of the eternal plan of God.

Vs. 71

Luke 1:71, “Salvation from our enemies, and from the hand of all who hate us.”

This phrase uses the political implications of deliverance (SOTERIA) from worldly “enemies.” But remember, that our greatest enemy, as was Israel’s, was sin and Satan, as the Greek Adjective here indicates. It is ECHTHROS ἐχθρός that means, “hated, hostile, an enemy, or the enemy (Satan).” cf. vs. 74; 2 Sam 22:18; Psa 18:17; 106:10; Mat 13:39.

2 Sam 22:18 and Psa 18:17, “He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from those who hated me, for they were too mighty for me.”

This reminds us of the great Messianic Psalm of David, **Psa 110:1, “The LORD says to my Lord: ‘Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.’”** cf. **Luke 20:42-43.**

“**Hate**” is the Verb MISEO, μισέω that means, “hate, detest, abhor, or prefer against.”

Therefore, it references what Christ would accomplish in His Second Advent, based on what He would complete in His First Advent.

Psa 106:10, “So He saved them from the hand of the one who hated them, and redeemed them from the hand of the enemy.”

b. Praise to God for keeping His promise to Abraham, (the Abrahamic Covenant), vs. 72-75.

Vs. 72

Luke 1:72, “To show mercy toward our fathers, and to remember His holy covenant.”

“**To show**” is the Verb PIOEO once again, see vs. 68, “accomplished.” Basically, it means, “to make or do.” Here, it means, “perform or fulfill,” with a view to already being accomplished with the Aorist, Active, Infinitive. The Infinitive gives us purpose. This is the first of three purposes found in vs. 72, 74, as to why God provided salvation.

1. The first purpose was to perform “**mercy**” ELEOS, towards “**our fathers**” PATER. Again, the simple past tense Aorist views this from God’s perspective of being completed from eternity past.
2. The second purpose was for God to “**remember**” MNAOMAI, cf. vs. 54, “**In remembrance of His mercy.**” The thing remembered here is God’s “**Holy Covenant**” HAGIOS DIATHEKE. The Greek Noun DIATHEKE, διαθήκη means, “last will and testament, covenant, will, contract, or disposition.” Given its positioning in these passages, it encompasses both the Davidic and Abrahamic Covenants God made with them, cf. **Acts 2:30; 7:17**, but specifically the one He made to Abraham, as noted by the next verse. The Abrahamic Covenant came first, **Gen 22:16-18; 105:8-9, 42; 106:45**, and was enhanced by the Davidic.

“**Holy**” HAGIOS, “holy, consecrated, perfect, upright” is the insurance, guardian, or guarantee of God’s promises. His holy character demands that He keeps or fulfills His promises / covenants.

Vs. 73

Luke 1:73, “The oath which He swore to Abraham our father.”

“**Oath**” is the Noun HORKO and “**swore**” is the Verb OMNUO, ὀμνύω that means, “swear, make or take an oath, or confirm by an oath.” These are in parallelism with “covenant.”

The one God swore this oath to was “**Abraham**” ABRAAM, Ἀβραάμ indicating the Abrahamic Covenant, **Gen 22:16-18**, who is “**our father**” HEMEIS PATER, indicating the Jewish people in general, including Zachariah and

the ones around him at this time, i.e., his neighbors and relatives. Yet, Abraham is the spiritual father of all who believe, both Jew and Gentile, **Luke 3:8; John 8:39; Rom 4:12; James 2:21.**

Heb 6:13, “For when God made the promise to Abraham, since He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself.”

Therefore, Zachariah is praising God for keeping His word and fulfilling the Abrahamic Covenant through the Redeemer, Savior Jesus Christ.

Vs. 74

Luke 1:74, “To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear.”

3. The third purpose was for God to “grant us rescue / refuge from our enemies.” This goes back to **vs. 71**, in the chiasm. “**To grant**,” the third Aorist, Active, Infinitive of Purpose, this time of the Verb DIDOMAI, “**to give**,” in the sense of fulfilling His Covenant promises by “**rescuing**” Israel from her “**enemies**” ECHTHROS. Though using political language, our greatest enemy is sin which is from Satan and his cosmic system. In Jesus’ First Advent, we are rescued from our enemy – sin. In His Second Advent, we will be rescued from Satan’s cosmic system – world governments.

“**Rescued**” is the Aorist, Passive, Participle of the Verb RHUOMAI, ρύομαι that means, “save, rescue, deliver, set free or redeem.” It is synonymous to LUTROO. Matthew uses it in **Mat 27:43** for the mocking cries of the onlookers of the Crucifixion: “**He (Jesus) trusts in God. Let God rescue Him now.**” What these scoffers did not realize was that the Father was going to deliver Him from the grave and death itself. Their own words, although not verbatim, is a citation of the Septuagint that echoes **Psa 22**, and especially **vs. 8**; the psalm Jesus cited on the cross: “**My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?**” **vs. 1.**

Psa 22:8, “Commit yourself to the LORD; let Him deliver Him; Let Him rescue Him, because He delights in Him.”

In our passage, Zachariah uses language reminiscent of the OT, cf. **2 Sam 22:18; Psa 31:15; Joshua 22:31; Judges 6:9**, regarding the fulfillment of the Messianic promises. The Messiah would bring salvation to His people, deliverance for those seeking His mercy.

Then, the result of Jesus’ deliverance was so that Israel “**might serve Him (God the Father).**” “**Serve**” is the Present, Active, Infinitive of Result of the Verb LATREUO, λατρεύω that means, “serve or worship.” It means to perform the work or service of a servant or slave in religious service to God the Father. While LATREUO has its background in the OT ritual worship service of the temple, its use broadens in the NT to include service to God in prayer and worship, e.g., **Mat 4:10; Luke 2:37; 4:8; Rev 22:3; 7:15.** Therefore, it signifies religious service distinctively, the priesthood of the NT.

This service will be done “**without fear**,” the Adverb APHOBOS that means, “fearless, without fear, or boldly.” It is only used here and in **1 Cor 16:10; Phil 1:14; Jude 1:12.** It is used to speak boldly without fear the Word of God, including the gospel of Jesus Christ, except in **Jude 1:12**, where it reflects false teachers of the word. From this context, it means to preach the Word of God in the face of antagonism towards it. Zachariah is remembering Israel’s first objective, to preach the Word, and that is what God’s wants us all to do without fear. Therefore, the result of this deliverance is the complete freedom to worship God in absolute confidence in Him, as we exercise our Royal Priesthood and Royal Ambassadorship.

Vs. 75

Luke 1:75, “In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days.”

This passage alludes to the “how do we do this,” It speaks to our Positional Sanctification that gives us boldness to preach and serve without fear in the face of opposition, as we walk in our Experiential Sanctification of holiness and

righteousness. Therefore, the nature and quality of this service in worship is now elaborated.

“**Holiness**” is not the typical HAGIOS, but HOSIOTES that means, “holiness, piety, uprightness, devoutness, or sanctity.” It is related more to the keeping of the ordinances (experiential sanctification) than the character of life (positional sanctification). This is the faithfulness aspect of the believer’s life. It is only used here and in **Eph 4:24**, in the NT.

Eph 4:24, “And put on (Experiential Sanctification) the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created (Positional Sanctification) in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”

God promised Solomon that He would, “**Establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel forever,**” **1 Kings 9:5**, if Solomon would live with, “**integrity of heart, and in uprightness,” vs. 4.**

It is linked here and in **Eph 4:24**, with the commonly used word, “**righteousness**” DIKAIOSUNE that means, “righteousness, justice, or uprightness.” Righteousness, simply stated, is the fulfillment of God’s will in actions that are pleasing to Him. This is the virtue aspect of the believer’s life; the practical righteousness of everyday living and conduct.

Both of these words can mean our position before God in Positional Sanctification. But, the context of this passage and others, means that it is in the service and worship of God, which means the experiential aspect of our worship and service of God; our Experiential Sanctification.

“**Before Him**” is ENOPION AUTOS. ENOPION is a Preposition that means, “before, in the sight of, or in the presence of.” This shows our position in Christ and our relationship with God the Father, cf. Gabriel in **vs. 19**, and the description of John the Baptist in relation to Jesus Christ as “going before Him,” **vs. 17, 76**, as he, Zachariah, and Elizabeth all had a wonderful relationship with God being His children, **vs. 6, 15**, walking holy, blameless, and righteously before God. Such a life is the consequence of the new birth.

Therefore, because God has fulfilled His covenant promises to Abraham and David, by sending a Savior to redeem us from the slave market of sin, we are able to serve God freely and without fear in the face of our enemies in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our lives.

c. Praise to God for keeping His promise to Zachariah, in giving him a son to be the forerunner to the Messiah, vs. 76-77.

Vs. 76

Luke 1:76, “And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go on BEFORE THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS.”

In the Greek, this begins with KAI SU DE “**and you also,**” now pointing to Zachariah’s “**child**” PAIDON. This child “**will be called,**” the Future, Passive, Indicative of KALEO, “**the prophet**” PROPHETES also used in **vs. 70**, “**of the Most High**” HUPSISTOS, also used in **vs. 32, 35** for God the Father.

What a privilege this was for Zachariah. What a privilege it was for John! In fact, the Lord Jesus would later say in **Luke 7:28, “I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John; yet he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.”**

John was the greatest and last of the OT prophets. His ministry was to usher in a new Dispensation, the Age of Grace, a.k.a., the Church Age, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. John had the great privilege to announce the coming of the One who would “make the crooked paths straight and bring the salvation of God,” **Luke 3:5-6**. But, the Church Age believer has a special union with Christ and spiritual relationship with the Father that OT saints, such as John, did not have. Because of our union with Jesus Christ, being His body and bride, Church Age believers are “greater.”

Also, note **Luke 7:28** says, “**born of women,**” that is earthly speech. Yet, the believer is born of God, spiritually.

Therefore, as great as John was among humans, the believer, Old and New Testament, are greater spiritually than John's earthly. But remember, John too had a spiritual birth in the Dispensation of Israel and his spiritual is greater than his physical.

We can only imagine Zachariah's great joy at this point, as he focuses his eyes on the little baby boy in his arms and declares that he will be a great prophet to usher in the Messiah. There had not been a prophet for Israel in over four centuries. Now, his son would be a great and unique one, as he will be the forerunner. *"He will soften the ground. He will till the soil of Israel's heart. He will not be the Savior, but John will make things ready for the Savior by teaching people how they are to be saved. John will be a giant index finger pointing the way to God's salvation from sin."* (Christ-Centered Exposition.)

Then, we see something of John's ministry, **"you shall go"** is the Future, Middle Deponent, Indicative of the Verb PROPOREUOMAI, προπορεύομαι that means, "go before, precede." It comes from the Preposition PRO, "before," and the Verb POREUOMAI, "to go, depart, travel, walk, etc."

With this, we have a double emphasis using the Preposition ENOPION, ἐνώπιον that means, **"before, in the sight of, or in the presence of."** It is used quite extensively by Luke, Paul, and John, cf. **vs. 6, 15, 17, 19, 75.** Therefore, he was to **"go before in the presence of."**

PROPOREUOMAI is only used here and in **Acts 7:40**, in the NT. There, it is used of Israel who desired to "make false gods to go before" them, instead of waiting for Moses to come down from the mountain. Given the context in both passages, the word means more than just going before; it connotes preparing the way for someone who is to come, and that someone is a god. So, we see the deity of Jesus Christ in view as the God/man, who would come to bring redemption and salvation. That is also seen in this text as the word KURIOS for **"the Lord,"** comes next, which too speaks of the Deity of Jesus Christ. All of this is a double emphasis on John's ministry and the Deity of Jesus Christ, showing the great privilege and responsibility John had.

Sometimes we tend to underrate the work of John the Baptist. We think of him simply as the one who came to prepare the way of the Lord, and we forget that he also presented a message of grace, a definite proclamation of the gospel. It was he who said, **"Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world," John 1:29.** Could you get a clearer gospel message than that anywhere? That is the gospel of the grace of God in all its simplicity. It was given to John to point the Savior out, not merely as the King of Israel, not merely as the One who was to fulfill the promises and reign in righteousness over all the world, but as the One who was to provide salvation for sinful men. It is only through Him that salvation comes.

Then we have something of what John would do, **"prepare His ways,"** HETOIMAZO AUTOS HODOS. It means that John would witness and evangelize prior to Christ beginning His ministry, so that the people would be prepared or ready to receive Him. This is in fulfillment of the prophesy given in **Isa 40:3** and **Mal 3:1**, as John also stated in **Luke 3:4**, and of the Elijah figure foretold in **Mal 4:5** and **vs. 17**, cf. **Mat 17:10-13; Mark 9:11-13.**

Isa 40:3, "A voice is calling, 'Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a highway for our God'."

Mal 3:1, "'Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,' says the LORD of hosts."

Mal 4:5, "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD." cf. Mat 11:1, 14; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:27.

As Jesus stated in **Mat 11:14-15, "And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear."**

Therefore, in fulfillment of Isaiah's, Malachi's, and Gabriel's prophesy, **vs 17**, Zachariah now prophesied about his son.

Vs. 77

Luke 1:77, “To give to His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins.”

John will “**give**,” the Aorist, Active, Infinitive of DIDOMI, “**to his people**” LAOS AUTOS, “**knowledge**” GNOSIS, “**knowledge, doctrine, wisdom**,” “**of salvation**” SOTERIA.

Israel had a false idea that the Messiah’s salvation would be from political evil. John was needed to tell them that it was from sin that God proposed to deliver them. This would not be theoretical knowledge, but personal knowledge of the inward experience of salvation as the result of God’s Divine gift. This phrase, “**knowledge of salvation**” is unique in Scripture and Christianity. It implies the aspect of experience that would only be realized through the “**forgiveness of sin**.”

In this, John would bypass ritualistic religion and go right to the heart of spiritual life. Salvation that was earlier couched primarily in political terms, **vs. 69-75**, now takes on a spiritual quality.

This salvation is given, “**by the forgiveness of their sins**,” EN APHESIS AUTOS HAMARTIA.

“**Forgiveness**” is the Noun APHESIS, ἄφεσις from the Verb APHIEMI. It means, “release, forgiveness, deliverance, suspension of punishment, pardoned, etc.” Its roots mean, “to send away.” It is actually a synonym of APOLUTROSIS, “release, redemption, deliverance,” of **Luke 21:28**.

Luke 21:28, “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Figuratively, it was used in the Classical Greek language as a technical legal term for “releasing” someone from a legal obligation, such as the forgiving of a debt, and means, “remittance or forgiveness.” In the Bible, the LXX of the OT and the NT, both the noun and the verb are used 45 times in regard to our sins. The KJV uses, “remission.”

Forgiveness is the principle component of the expression of God’s mercy. Forgiveness is the principle result of redemption. The basic expression of salvation brought through Jesus is forgiveness, which is the taking away of our load of guilt and giving us freedom to reach the potential God created in us.

Therefore, the two major themes of these praises, (Mary’s and Zachariah’s), is God’s mercy and redemption that are clearly in view here, and the next verse. And remember, the name John means, “God is merciful,” and Zachariah’s whole song celebrates God’s wonderful acts of mercy which spring from the fact that the essence of His being is mercy. Therefore, God’s mercy is demonstrated and fulfilled in forgiveness.

The thing forgiven is “**our sins**” AUTOS HAMARTIA, ἁμαρτία that means, “sin, sinful deed, or sinfulness.” This implies that God will treat the sinner as if he had not committed sin.

This too fulfills prophecy; that found in **Jer 31:34**, “**‘They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,’ declares the LORD, ‘for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more’.**”

Of John it is stated in **Luke 3:3**, “**And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.**”

Luke shows that the key enemies are not other people, such as the Romans, but the devil and sin for which one needs forgiveness in order to find peace, **vs. 79**. Future “salvation” in Isaiah includes deliverance from political oppressors; but, as here, it is predicated upon Israel’s restoration to Divine favor through forgiveness of their sins.

Zachariah’s prophecy defines John’s life in relationship to Jesus’s life and mission. John’s task was a significant one in holy history; showing the Jewish people their need for salvation and directing the lost to the forgiveness of sins. John did not “prepare the way” by teaching that the true “salvation” was to be found in mere deliverance from the

yoke of the Roman Empire. To the contrary, he taught that salvation was found in the “forgiveness of sin.” He thus not only gave “knowledge of salvation” in the sense that he announced the fact that it would be given, but also in the sense that he clearly taught what it consisted of. John was not a preacher of revolt, as the turbulent and impure patriots of the day would have liked him to be, but of repentance. His work was to awaken the consciousness of sin and the need for a Savior, and so to kindle desires for a salvation which was deliverance from sin, the only yoke that truly enslaves.

Eph 1:7, “In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.”

From this we also see that, all lasting meaning is found when we define our lives as John did his. Greatness comes from serving the Lord, not from serving ourselves. Greatness comes when we, like John, say, **“We must decrease; Jesus must increase,” John 3:30.** The prophet of salvation never replaces the bringer of salvation.

Acts 5:31, “He (*Jesus*) is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince and a Savior, to grant repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”

“When John baptized it was for remission of sins. His baptism was the recognition, on the part of the people, that they were sinners and deserved to die. As they went down into the waters of baptism, they were saying as it were, “We ought to die for our sins.” But John told of One who was coming to pay the penalty for those sins, and the people believed the message, and so rejoiced in the knowledge of forgiveness.” (H.A. Ironside Expository Commentary).

d. Praise to God for the coming of “the Sunrise,” the giving of the Messiah, vs. 78-79.

Vs. 78

Luke 1:78, “Because of the tender mercy of our God, with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us.”

This verse begins the new segment but continues the praise of Zachariah regarding his son with the explanation as to the why and how salvation will come; **“because of,”** the Accusative Preposition DIA, **“the tender mercy of our God,”** SPLANCHNON ELEOS HEMEIS THEOS.

SPLANCHNON, σπλάγχνον is a Noun that literally means, “inward parts, intestines, heart, etc.” and figuratively for, “heart, **affections**, emotions, etc.” It is considered the seat of the emotions, hence, the figurative use means here “compassionate.”

This is the first time it is used in the NT, and the only time Luke uses it in his gospel. He uses it once more in **Acts 1:18**, literally for Judas Iscariot’s intestines that gush out when he fell off the cliff after hanging himself. It is used 9 other times in the NT for the figurative use of affection, compassion, or emotions as it is in our verse. By itself, it can be translated “mercy,” but here it qualifies God’s mercy.

SPLANCHNON is linked with ELEOS **“mercy”** that we have seen throughout these doxologies, to qualify and emphasize God’s love toward us in providing salvation through His Son. We call this an anthropopathism, which means ascribing to God a human emotion, i.e., “compassion, affection, etc.” God does not have emotions like we do. But to understand God’s intense love for us, sometimes human emotions are ascribe to Him, so that we can better understand Him and His actions. This is one of those times. As such, the forgiveness that would be offered by John was to be based in the affectionate (compassionate or loving) mercy of God.

Psa 103:11, “For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His mercy (lovingkindness) toward those who fear Him.”

The only reason anyone is ever forgiven of sin is because of God’s great mercy. You cannot earn forgiveness. You cannot demand forgiveness. You cannot swap forgiveness with a trade. There would be no peace in salvation if we had to earn, demand, or buy forgiveness. We would only worry if we had done enough, if we were strong enough,

or if we had paid enough. Forgiveness comes only by mercy. Which means forgiveness is free and undeserved. The only step we can take to find forgiveness with God is to ask for it.

Because of God's intense love shown by His "affectionate mercy," He is sending His Son into the World to redeem the sins of mankind. That is what the next phrase tells us, "**with which the Sunrise from on high will visit us,**" EN HOS ANATOLE EK HUPSOS EPISKEPTOMAI HEMEIS.

In the Greek, "**will visit us**" EPISKEPTOMAI HEMEIS comes first, which we have seen previously in vs. 68. There, it was the Aorist simple past tense. Here, it is in the Future, Middle Deponent, Indicative for what was going to occur subsequent to the time of Zachariah's psalm of praise. Later translations use the Aorist here, but the earliest and most reliable have the Future tense. Therefore, in the future, the near future, there will be, "the Sunrise from on high." Previously, the visitation had to do with God's inspection of man and finding him wanting due to our sin. Here, it is the result of God's mercy towards us because we were wanting because of our sin. Because of our need, God's mercy would send a Savior, His own Son, into the world.

"**From on high**" is the Preposition EK "from," and the Noun HUPSOS that reminds us of the "Most High" language, (the Adjective HUPSISTOS), from vs. 32, 35, 76, that extolled God as the one and only Sovereign God. HUPSOS, "height," is only used here and in **Luke 24:49; Eph 3:18; 4:8; James 1:9; Rev 21:16**. Figuratively, it refers to the concept of "royalty, dignity, grandeur, etc.," and to "the realm of God," i.e., "heaven." Therefore, it is a reference to the Messiah's heavenly origin and His coming from God. They are one and the same.

Eph 4:8, "Therefore it says, 'When He (*Jesus*) ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men'."

Luke 24:49, "And behold, I (*Jesus*) am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

Now, the visitor is classified as "**the Sunrise**," the anarthrous use of the Noun ANATOLE, ἀνατολή that means, "rising (of a star), rising (of the sun), ascent, or east." It is used 10 times in the NT, **Mat 2:1, 2, 9; 8:11; 24:27; Luke 1:78; 13:29; Rev 7:2; 16:12; 21:13**. In 9 out of the 10 usages, it stands for the location or direction of the sunrise, "east." Our verse is the one exception and is used literally for "a Sun-rising," from the heights of heaven. But even here, it is figurative, because it is speaking about the "Savior," our Lord Jesus Christ. Older English translations use "dawn or dayspring" here, because it refers to that region or those parts of heaven or earth where the solar light first springs up and appears, the east. Therefore, it is called the dayspring, dawn, or the rising sun.

Interestingly, the Septuagint, LXX, the Hebrew OT translated into Greek well before the NT was written, used ANATOLE in **Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:12**, for the figurative use of the Hebrew word TSEMACH that means, "branch or shoot," which speaks of David's offspring, our Lord Jesus Christ, cf. **Isa 11:1-10**. Therefore, we have a "tie-in" to the Davidic covenant being fulfilled by the "Sunrise," the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jer 23:5, "'Behold, the days are coming,' declares the LORD, 'When I will raise up for David a righteous Branch; and He will reign as king and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land'."

Jer 33:15, "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."

Isa 11:1, "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from his roots will bear fruit."

Isa 11:10, "Then in that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal for the peoples; and His resting place will be glorious."

Now, as you know, our literal sun is simply a star, and Jesus Christ is called throughout the Bible the "Morning Star," **2 Peter 1:19; Rev 22:16**, which is also the sun that rises every morning in the east. So, "Sunrise" is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Balaam prophesied in Num 24:17, “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, a scepter shall rise from Israel, and shall crush through the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth.”

Notice also, that in the encampment around the Tabernacle, to the east was the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Jesus Christ, Num 2:3.

Num 2:3, “Now those who camp on the east side toward the sunrise shall be of the standard of the camp of Judah, by their armies, and the leader of the sons of Judah: Nahshon the son of Amminadab.”

As well as Moses and Aaron’s to “performing the duties of the sanctuary for the obligation of the sons of Israel,” Num 3:38.

Jesus said to the apostle John in Rev 22:16, “I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

Peter stated in 2 Peter 1:19, “So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts.”

The Magi who were looking for the child born said in Mat 2:2, 9, 10, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

Mat 2:9, “After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was.”

Mat 2:10, “When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”

In addition, after Jesus’ resurrection, the woman came at “sun rise” and found the tomb empty, Mark 16:2.

Finally, the “morning star” is a reward the positive believer will receive in memorial to his relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, Rev 2:28, “I will give him the morning star,” as it was an emblem Satan once wore prior to his fall, Isa 14:12.

Therefore, “Sunrise” is a Messianic reference and Zachariah’s praise appears to be an allusion to a prediction of Malachi, in which Christ is called “the Sun of Righteousness,” and is said to “arise with healing in his wing,” Mal 4:2, that is, to bring health in His rays.

Mal 4:2, “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.”

We see this allusion in many other Old and New Testament passages including, 2 Sam 23:3-4; Isa 9:2; 30:26; 60:1-3, 19-20; Psa 19:4-5; 84:11; Mat 4:16; Luke 2:31; John 1:4; 8:12; Rev 21:23.

2 Sam 23:3-4, “The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me, ‘He who rules over men righteously, Who rules in the fear of God, ⁴is as the light of the morning when the sun rises, a morning without clouds, when the tender grass springs out of the earth, Through sunshine after rain.”

Isa 9:2, “The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them.”

In a Messianic prophecy, Isaiah stated in Isa 30:26, “The light of the moon will be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, on the day the LORD binds up the fracture of His people and heals the bruise He has inflicted.”

Isa 60:1-3, “Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. ³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

Psa 84:11, “For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.”

Luke 2:32, “A light of revelation to the gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”

John 1:4, “In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.” cf. John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46.

John 8:12, “Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life’.”

Mat 4:16, “The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned.”

Rev 21:23, “And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and its lamp is the Lamb.”

Christ’s coming was the dawn of a new day for Israel and for mankind, as salvation had now come to the world through the person and work of Jesus Christ on the Cross, which leads us to our next verse.

Vs. 79

Luke 1:79, “To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

In this passage, we have two more Infinitive of Purpose phrases regarding the “Sunrise.”

It uses a beautiful quotation from **Isa 9:2** and **60:1-3**, to carry forward the imagery of the dawning light (the Sunrise) and to offer hope of peace to those who were then outside the faithful remnant of Judaism, cf. **Eph 2:12**, read **vs. 11-22**.

The first purpose of the “Sunrise” is **“To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death.”**

The first half is taken from **Isa 9:2**, **“The people who walk in darkness will see a great light; those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them,”** and **Psa 107:10**, **“There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in misery and chains.”**

The prophecy of **Isa 9:1-2**, is directly quoted in **Mat 4:15-16**, in fulfillment, that Jesus would come from Zebulun, the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. Zebulun and Naphtali came under the yoke of Assyria, **2 Kings 15:29**. But Christ would later live and minister in Galilee, which is the same geographical area.

Mat 4:12-15, “Now when Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, He withdrew into Galilee; ¹³and leaving Nazareth, He came and settled in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali. ¹⁴This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: ¹⁵“The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles.””

Mat 4:16, “The people who were sitting in darkness saw a great light, and those who were sitting in the land and shadow of death, upon them a light dawned.”

This also reminds us of **Eph 5:8**, **“For you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light.”**

Then, we see the prophecy in **Isa 60:1-3**, “**Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. ²For behold, darkness will cover the earth and deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you. ³Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.**”

“**To shine upon**” is the Aorist, Active, Infinitive of Result Verb EIPHAINO, ἐπιφαίνω that means, “to appear, dawn upon, bring to light, become visible, known, etc.” It is used four times in Scripture, **Acts 27:20; Titus 2:11; 3:4.**

It is used literally for the light of the sun and stars in **Acts**, and figuratively for the grace and love (mercy) of God becoming visible to those who were in darkness in **Titus**, as it is in our verse. Therefore, it means the giving of knowledge or information in a poetical way, which tells of the ministry of John the Baptist, “**to give the knowledge of salvation,**” vs. 77.

In addition, the noun EIPHANEIA is used for the First Advent of Jesus in **2 Tim 1:10; 4:8**, and for His Second Advent in **2 Thes 2:8; 1 Tim 6:14; 2 Tim 4:1; Titus 2:13.**

“**Who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,**” in the Present, Middle Deponent, Participle of KATHEMAI, “sit, stay, settle, or reside,” with EN SKOTOS KAI SKIA THANATOS.

In classical writings, “**darkness**” SKOTOS, typically implied the inability to see and thus the inability to know how to walk. Metaphorically, “darkness” denotes “ignorance or obscurity,” and is used to describe the human condition or behavior, especially that of unbelief. From this, “darkness” implied a sense of anxiety or apprehension of what lay ahead. Therefore, sitting in darkness and its ominous character became linked to the ultimate anxiety, “**death,**” THANATOS, cf. **Psa 143:3.**

Psa 143:3, “For the enemy has persecuted my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me dwell in dark places, like those who have long been dead.”

Therefore, it means, “residing in ignorance,” that is, not knowing that they are spiritually dead.

SKOTOS is also used to describe how all men are being negatively influenced by Satan and his cosmic system as the principalities, (the rulers, powers, and world forces of “darkness,” along with the spiritual forces of wickedness), are aligned against us in **Eph 6:12.**

Eph 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

In Jesus’ commission to Paul, He stated Paul’s mission in **Acts 26:18**, “**To open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me’.**”

And the Light, Jesus Christ, has come into the world to save us from Satan’s dominion of sin, **Col 1:13-14.**

Col 1:13-14, “For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.”

“**Shadow of death,**” is found in the famous Psalm, **Psa 23:4**, for “**walking through the valley of the shadow of death**” that speaks of the trials and tribulations of life, and presents the realities of the devout life under the image of the Divine Shepherd and His Lamb, who is the Light come into the world, cf. **John 8:12; 9:5.**

John 8:12, “Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, ‘I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life’.”

John 9:5, “While I am in the world, I am the Light of the world.”

The valley of the shadow is not death itself; it is the world where death reigns by sin, **Psa 107:10**.

Psa 107:10, “There were those who dwelt in darkness and in the shadow of death, prisoners in misery and chains.”

The death shadowed valley also speaks to the OT description of salvation from it in, **Psa 107:14; 86:13**.

Psa 107:14, “He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death and broke their bands apart.”

Psa 86:13, “For Your lovingkindness toward me is great, and You have delivered my soul from the depths of Sheol.”

“**Shadow**” SKIA is used figuratively for that which is close to being like something else. In this case, it is close to being like “death,” and “shadow of death” is synonymous with “sitting in darkness.” It is used for the state of unbelief and rejection of God in our verse; having no spiritual life with God.

That was the condition of the world when Zachariah spoke these words. And that is the condition of a large part of the world today, and that is why we are entrusted to send the gospel out to the very ends of the earth, that men and women everywhere may hear it, so that it may give light to those in darkness, in the very shadow of death.

Although the Fall of Adam brought death into the creation, Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who was slain from the foundation of the world. The death of Jesus means victory over sin and death to those who believe in Him. Through His spiritual death on the Cross, Christ has created the certainty of eternal life for anyone who receives Him, **John 3:16**. Therefore, to shine upon those who “**sit in darkness and the shadow of death**” means to bring them salvation, **Eph 2:1, “And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,... ⁵Even when we were dead in our transgressions, He made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).”** Therefore, “to shine upon those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death,” is to bring salvation to their lives.

Isa 42:6-7, “I am the LORD, I have called You in righteousness, I will also hold You by the hand and watch over You, and I will appoint You as a covenant to the people, as a light to the nations, ⁷to open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon and those who dwell in darkness from the prison.”

Micah 7:8, “Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; though I dwell in darkness, the LORD is a light for me.”

“Zachariah points out the wretched state in which the inhabitants of Judea and the Gentile world were then found.

- 1. Their feet had wandered out of the way of peace, (Luke 1:79), of temporal and spiritual prosperity.*
- 2. They had got into a state of darkness—they were blind concerning the things of God, and the things which belonged to their salvation.*
- 3. They had become contented inhabitants of this land of intellectual darkness—they had sat down in it, and were not concerned to get out of it.*
- 4. They were about to perish in it—death had his dominion there; and his swift approaches to them were now manifested to the prophet by seeing his shadow cast upon them.*

Ignorance of God and salvation is the shadow of death; and the substance, eternal ruin, is essentially connected with the projected shadow.” (Adam Clarke’s Commentary.)

The ones who sit in darkness and the shadow do not know the peace of God, **Isa 59:8, “They do not know the way of peace, and there is no justice in their tracks; they have made their paths crooked, whoever treads on them does not know peace.”**

Yet, God has sent His Son, so that our darkness can be illuminated and peace be known. Therefore, through the mercy of God, we receive light. The light is Christ Himself. He is the Sunrise. In our sin, we sit in darkness like a prisoner locked in an underground dungeon. But when Christ comes into our hearts, He brings light. All of a sudden everything shines, darkness flees, and death is defeated.

The second purpose of the Sunrise is “**to guide our feet into the way of peace.**”

This is an allusion from **Psa 5:8, “O LORD, lead me in Your righteousness because of my foes; make Your way straight before me.”**

“**To guide our feet**” is HO KATEUTHUNO HO POUS HEMIES, which uses the Aorist, Active, Infinitive of Purpose for the Verb KATEUTHUNO, κατευθύνω that means, “direct, guide, lead.” It comes from the Greek Preposition KATA “according to,” and the Adjective EUTHUS that comes from ORTHOS that both mean, “straight, right, upright, or straight way,” cf. **Mat 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4-5**, for John’s ministry as forerunner for the Lord. In classical Greek, it meant, “keep straight or make straight,” and as a noun, it was used for a “carpenter’s line.” Interestingly, Jesus was the son of a carpenter, **Mat 13:55; Mark 6:3**; and reminds us of **Psa 19:4-5**.

Psa 19:4-5, “Their line has gone out through all the earth, and their utterances to the end of the world. In them He has placed a tent for the sun,⁵ which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber; It rejoices as a strong man to run his course.”

Gradually, the idea of “making something straight” shifted to the idea of “directing someone to something,” and included a sense of “success” or “prospering” in the process. It is only used here and in **1 Thes 3:11; 2 Thes 3:5**.

1 Thes 3:11, “Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you.”

2 Thes 3:5, “May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.”

This analogy of “being in darkness and directed to peace” is taken from travelers, who being overtaken by night do not know what to do, and therefore wait patiently for the morning light, that they may know which way to go. Then, when the sun rises in their heart, they know the way, as light shines brightly their way, and the road is open to the promised land of rest, to heaven itself.

This guidance leads “**into the way of peace,**” EIS HODOS EIRENE. EIRENE means, “peace, harmony, tranquility, or health.”

“The way of peace,” is to be seen in the Old Testament concept of SHALOM, i.e., “the cosmic harmony that exists where the world and all its inhabitants are reconciled with God. Israel described this state with its concept of covenant.... The qualities... are variously described as prosperity, peace, and righteousness, which taken together begin to describe SHALOM,” (Hanson, p. 3, note 2). (Complete Biblical Library Commentary)

Here, “peace” is peace with God, who we were at enmity with prior to our salvation because of our sin. Because of sin, (i.e., sitting in darkness and shadow of death,) Jesus Christ, the Sunrise / Morning Light, came into the world to shine upon us, (i.e., redeem our sins and give those who would believe in Him salvation with its eternal inheritance), thereby abolishing the enmity / sin, **Eph 2:14-16**, and giving us a new life in Christ with God the Father.

Eph 2:14-16, “For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,¹⁵ By abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace,¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.”

So, this “**peace**” means that the barrier of sin that kept us in darkness and the shadow of death has been removed by the finished work of Jesus Christ upon the Cross, especially for those who believe.

This “way of peace” is not known or found in the world or in worldly things, **Isa 59:8**, but in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

Isa 59:8, “They do not know the way of peace, and there is no justice in their tracks; they have made their paths crooked, whoever treads on them does not know peace.”

And, after our salvation, **“the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus,” Phil 4:7.**

Therefore, the peace into which He guides the feet of His own includes all the rich blessings that come to those whose sins are forgiven. The former enmity on our part is removed; thus there is peace with God, **Rom 5:1.**

Rom 5:1, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Yet, there is also the sense of **Phil 4:6-9**, for He guides our feet into the way of peace, so that we not only enjoy peace with God, but now, knowing the God of peace, the peace of God guards our hearts in our daily walk with Him.

In addition, though Zachariah was using political terms and the prophecies in the OT of eternal peace, this is first speaking of peace with God overcoming sin and then peace in government relationships that will have their total fulfillment in the Millennial Reign of Jesus Christ and the New Earth where righteousness lives, **2 Peter 3:13-14.**

2 Peter 3:13-14, “But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. ¹⁴Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless.”

Thus, this peace corresponds to the language of the OT; as peace is also the consummation of the eschatological salvation, **Isa 60:19-20.**

Isa 60:19, “No longer will you have the sun for light by day, nor for brightness will the moon give you light; but you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, and your God for your glory. ²⁰Your sun will no longer set, nor will your moon wane; for you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, and the days of your mourning will be over.”

Therefore, Zachariah highlighted the ministry of the coming One in terms of salvation, forgiveness, mercy, guidance, and eternal peace.

John the Baptist was to go before the Lord to proclaim the testimony God had given, in order to guide the feet of the people into the way of peace, which is the knowledge of salvation found in the Sunrise. This metaphor implies more than that, as it speaks to us of the special guidance the Light of Christ is to each individual soul to guide our feet and illumine our path in special manifestations of our duty and life’s pilgrimage.

Only those who walk in Christ’s footsteps have quiet hearts and are at amity with God; in harmony and peace with ourselves, our friends, and the circumstances of life. That means there is no strife within, no strained relations or hostile alienation to God, no gnawing unrest of unsatisfied desires, and no injuries of accusing conscience, because the man who puts his hand into Christ’s hand and says, “Order my footsteps by Your Word,” “Where You go, I will go,” and “What You command, I will do,” has this peace.

The mission of the Messiah is about giving people peace before God, as He leads them from death to life. The servant of God who lives that and knows that, points others who are residing in darkness and the shadow of death to Christ by showing them the way of peace.

“The question remains before us: How do we define life? Is it in power and in the ability to “take control,” or is it in following the one who is in control? The text leaves no doubt that we should follow the one who is the source of light. The only road to righteousness and peace, even for a righteous man like Zachariah, is to be prepared to see the light and follow it. The text raises the question and answers it with notes of praise. See the morning star, Jesus, and follow the light in the way of peace. What precisely that pathway involves is the rest of this Gospel’s story, for which this hymn serves as a guiding introduction. In a real sense, the application of this text is found in the entirety of this Gospel’s message.” (NIV Application Commentary.)

Summary:

Zachariah, the old priest, had not said anything for nine plus months, but when he regained his speech at the birth of his son, he certainly compensated for his silence when he sang this song of praise to God! How joyful he was that his son was chosen by God to prepare the way for the Messiah. In reviewing Zachariah's prophecy, many key notes of Luke's theology are seen:

1. The focus on the praise of God.
2. The importance of the Christ event, (God "has sent us a mighty Savior from the royal line of His servant David," vs. 69).
3. The fulfillment of God's promises given through the holy prophets.
4. The realization of the covenant made with Abraham being fulfilled.
5. The deliverance from enemies, (sin being the #1 enemy), by the gracious intervention of God.
6. The special role of his son, John the Baptist, in announcing the coming of the Messiah.
7. The new opportunity to serve God forever in peace, without fear, in holiness and righteousness.

As such, the "way of peace" refers to an entire life of peace. Salvation brings peace: peace with God, peace with man, and peace within ourselves. Do you have this peace? Has the Sunrise dawned in your soul yet?

John 8:12, "Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, 'I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life'."

Vs. 80

Luke 1:80, "And the child continued to grow and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel."

This first chapter of Luke ends with a summary statement about John that will later be matched by a summary statement about Jesus, cf. **Luke 2:52**.

"**Continued to grow**" is the Imperfect, for ongoing action, Active, Indicative, of the Verb AUXANO ἀυξάνω that means, "grow, increase, or become greater." It is also used for Jesus in **Luke 2:40**, after His circumcision account.

"**Becoming strong in spirit**" is the Imperfect, Passive, Indicative of the Verb KRATAIOO, κραταιόω that means, "to strengthen, become strong, empower," with the Dative Noun PNEUMA "spirit." KRATAIOO is only used here and in **Luke 2:40**, for Jesus, and **1 Cor 16:13; Eph 3:16**, regarding our spiritual growth.

Eph 3:16, "That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man."

Combined, they mean John the Baptist took in the Word of God, Bible Doctrine, and grew to spiritual adulthood, while he grew physically to human adulthood. This phrase may also allude to the fulfillment of the promise made to Zechariah in vs. 15.

"**He lived in the deserts**" uses the Pronominal Adjective EREMOS that means, "desolate, abandoned, desert, or solitary (place)." Though it literally means desert or wilderness, it is mostly used in the NT for a solitary place. It is predominately used in the synoptic gospels and in **Acts 1:20; 8:26; Gal 4:27**. So, for John, we could take this literally, but more importantly understanding it as, "being alone with God, to teach and train him." This was in fulfillment of the prophecy found in **Isa 40:3**, as noted in **Luke 3:4**.

Isa 40:3, "A voice is calling, 'Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness; make smooth in the desert a

highway for our God’.”

Luke 3:4, “As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness, ‘make ready the way of the Lord, make His paths straight’.”

In **Luke 3:4**, “**straight**” comes from EUTHUS that we noted above in **vs. 79** that means, “straight, right, upright, or straight way,” cf. **Mat 3:3; Mark 1:3**, for John’s ministry paving the way as forerunner for the Lord.

Taking EREMOS literally, based on John’s parents being old when he was born, it is likely that they died before he was an adult. Therefore, he apparently grew up in the wilderness of Judea, cf. **Mat 3:1**, located between the Dead Sea and Jerusalem, probably in the general vicinity of the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.

Mat 3:1, “Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying...”

“Some scholars have attempted to establish that John was a member of the ascetic Jewish sect called the Essenes who lived in the same hill country of Judea. While certain aspects of John’s message are similar to those of the Essenes (e.g., eschatological emphasis and practice of ritual washings), and while it is possible John grew up near the area of Qumran, it is doubtful that he was a member of the Essenes, though he may have known of them and may even have been influenced by their teaching.” (Complete Biblical Library Commentary.)

In **vs. 80**, “**until the day of his public appearance to Israel**” uses a hapaxlegomena for “**public appearance**,” which is the Noun ANADEIXIS, ἀνάδειξις that means, “a public announcing or installation.”

Though we could render this literally as a “public appearance,” it is better to think of it as his commissioning, appointment, or installation as a prophet when he began his visible and public ministry as forerunner of the Christ. The emphasis would fall upon John’s being officially “appointed” by God as the Messianic forerunner. In any case, it represents the time frame from John’s circumcision to the beginning of his ministry, some 25-28 years.

“**To Israel**” indicates the scope of John’s ministry, to God’s chosen people primarily, even though he might have influenced other gentiles.

So, Luke ends his narrative of the early life of John in a way similar to the way he concludes the narrative of Jesus’ early life, **Luke 2:52**, “**And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.**” This should be the narrative of our lives too!

“Our minds are naturally curious and there are a great many things of which we have no record in the Gospels concerning which we would like information. We would like to know something of the training of this child. We would like to be permitted to look behind the scenes and see something of the home-life of John the Baptist as a little child and as a youth growing up. We would like to know what led him, eventually, into the wilderness, and how God spoke to him. But the Lord has not been pleased to gratify our curiosity in regard to these things. He tells us all that is important for us to know, and the rest He leaves. We shall find them out by-and-by when we get home to heaven.” (H.A. Ironside Expository Commentary.)