

The Gospel of Luke

Lesson 02

Luke, in the preface of his letter to the most excellent Theophilus, is careful to emphasize the thoroughness with which he has written his gospel or goods news of Jesus Christ. As a good historian, he notes that “having followed all things closely and having “carefully investigated everything from the beginning” with eyewitnesses of the “things that have been accomplished among us,” he was in a position to write an “orderly account” not only for Theophilus but for others as well. Thus, we also can know the “certainty of the things” that have been taught.

Luke begins with the foretelling of the birth of John the Baptist by recounting that the priest Zechariah is visited by the angel Gabriel during the time Herod was king of Judea. Even though Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth are childless and advanced in years, he is told by the angel that they are going to have a son, who they are to name John. The child will be a joy and delight to them, he will be great in the sight of the Lord, he is never to take wine or fermented drink, he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth, he will bring many of the people of Israel back to God, and he will go on before the Lord in the power and spirit of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children. After expressing doubt to Gabriel, Zechariah is chastised. Because he did not believe the angel, Zechariah would not be able to speak until Gabriel’s promise of a son came to pass.

The Birth of Jesus Foretold

As you begin your study, take a moment to pray, asking God to help you grow in the understanding of His Word, for indeed “man does not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.”

1. Read Luke 1:26-38.
 - A. Luke is very careful to give certain details about Mary (verses 26-30).
 - (1) What are they?

 - (2) Why are they important?

 - (3) From verse 28, what does the angel Gabriel say to Mary and how are we to understand this greeting?
 - B. From verse 31, what does Gabriel predict regarding Mary? What else is she to do?
 - C. Scripture is internally consistent with itself. One of these consistencies is found in comparing verse 31 with Matthew 1:21. What is the consistency? Is there anything unusual about it?

D. From verses 32-38.

(1) What five things does Gabriel predict concerning Mary's son?

(2) Considering the internal consistency of Scripture and the fact that God means what He says, how do the following passages confirm Gabriel's statement: "He will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of his father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end"? 2 Samuel 7:16; Psalm 89:1-4; Romans 1:1-4; Revelation 1:8, 17 and 18 and 3:7.

(3) From verse 38, what is Mary's response to the angel?

E. Using a dictionary and considering verses 26 and 27 and Matthew 1:18-25:

- (1) What does it mean to be *pledged* or *betrothed*?

- (2) How binding was this commitment during the time of Mary and Joseph?

- (3) What was Joseph intending to do? How was this cultural issue ultimately resolved for Joseph and Mary?

Mary Visits Elizabeth

2. Read Luke 1:39-45

A. What stands out to you about Mary's visit to Elizabeth?

- B. For reflection. In verse 45, Elizabeth exclaims, “Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord says to her will be accomplished!” What has the Lord “said” to you that you believe will be accomplished (either already or yet to be fulfilled)? Please share.

Mary’s Song, the Magnificat

- 3. Read Luke 1:46-55. In her song of praise,
 - A. What does Mary declare and acknowledge that God has done for her and her people?

 - B. What attributes of God shine through Mary’s song of praise?

4. What does Mary do after staying with Elizabeth for three months? (verse 56) What is significant about her action?

The Birth of John the Baptist

5. What is in a name?
 - A. Read Genesis 2:19-23 and 3:20. There are three illustrations of names being given. Describe what is going on. In terms of line of authority, what is significance about this?

 - B. Read Philippians 2:5-11. Refer back to Matthew 1:20-21 and Luke 1:31-33. What is the significance of naming the son born to Mary?

 - C. Read Luke 1:57-66 and refer back to 1:13.
 - (1) Considering the line of authority, what is significant about the naming of the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth?

(2) What is the three-fold result of Zechariah's obedience?

Zechariah's Song

6. Read Luke 1:67-80.

A. From verses 67-75, list several reasons why God is worthy of praise.

B. Since the name *John* means "God is gracious," what do you think Zechariah might have been feeling and thinking as he issues a prophetic word about his son?

