

The Coming of the Herald
Luke 1:5-80

Introduction

A study of the life of Jesus Christ in the various gospel accounts begins prior to His birth. As we saw in our study of John 1 last Christmas, it begins in eternity past. (See: John 1). The eternal Word became flesh so that He might redeem sinful man. Those who believe in His name are given the right to become children of God. Our desire is to proclaim the Lord Jesus Christ so that those who do not know Him may come to believe, and that those who do know Him might become stronger in their faith in Him and become better servants for His glory.

As explained a couple of weeks ago in the introduction to the gospels, each account has a slightly different emphasis which when taken together gives us a much fuller understanding of our Lord. Luke tells us in his introduction that he is writing to his friend, Theophilus, and giving him a carefully investigated account of Jesus' life gained by talking to eyewitnesses (Luke 1:1-4). This is one reason his gospel account includes some material not included in the other gospel accounts. It is reasonable to assume he would have talked with people such as Mary, the mother of Jesus, and so gained knowledge of events that occurred before Jesus' birth. We will be examining some of those events this morning in Luke 1:5-80.

This is a large section of Scripture that could be broken into separate sermons if all of the details were examined closely, but my purpose today is only to point Luke's identification of Jesus as the Son of God through the fulfillment of the ancient Hebrew prophecies concerning His herald, John the Baptist, and the additional revelation given about the Messiah through the angel Gabriel and the Holy Spirit speaking through Elizabeth and Mary.

The Prophecy of the Herald's Birth (Luke 1:5-25)

The Herald's Parents (Luke 1:5-7) Luke begins this section by identifying the parents of John who would be the herald of the Messiah.

Luke 1:5-7, *"In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶ And they were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. ⁷ And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years.*

Zacharias and Elizabeth are both Levites that are descended from the priestly line of Aaron. Since Zacharias, whose name means, "Yahweh has remembered," is in the division of Abijah, it can be calculated about what time of year the next events take place. We learn from 1 Chronicles 24 that the priests were separated by lot into twenty-four divisions with each one serving twice a year for one week. Edersheim (*Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah*) notes that Abijah's division has been calculated to have served October 2-9 in the year 748 A.U.C. (6 BC).

Luke notes that the character of both Zacharias and Elizabeth as being righteous before God and blameless in keeping the commandments, yet they were childless which was generally viewed as a punishment from God. He also notes they were "advanced in years." It would take a miracle for them to have a child.

The Angel's Announcement (Luke 1:8-17). In the next section, Zacharias is visited by the angel Gabriel while he is performing his ministry in the temple.

8 Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God in the [appointed]

order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. 11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. 12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw [him,] and fear gripped him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb. 16 "And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 "And it is he who will go [as a forerunner] before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous; so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Let me quickly point out some of the significant things within this text. First, verse 9 points out Zacharias was chosen by lot to burn the incense. It was a great honor to be chosen to burn the incense in front of the veil within the temple. This would have been the pinnacle of his service as a priest since many priests would never receive the honor and those that did were only allowed to do it once. While the priest was in the temple in the morning and the evening offering the incense, verse 10 points out that the rest of the priests and worshipers remained outside and prayed showing the seriousness which attended this ministry.

In verse 12 we find that Zacharias was “troubled” (ταράσσω tarassô) when he saw the angel. People becoming agitated, anxious, fearful, in the presence of an angel is the common response seen throughout the Scriptures, and no doubt it would be the response of any of us if we had such an experience. (This is one of the reasons I do not believe those who make casual claims to have seen or talked with an angel).

In verse 13 we find that Gabriel is giving them good news that God is granting their request. Though they were old, they had still been praying to have a child. Gabriel told them they were to name him John, which means, “Yahweh has shown grace.” In verses 15-17 Gabriel explained that he would be filled with Holy Spirit even before he was born and he was to be raised to follow at least some of the Nazarite restrictions - no wine. His ministry would be in fulfillment of Malachi 4:6. He would be the forerunner who would prepare the way for the Messiah.

The Sign (Luke 1:18-23). As you might imagine, not only is the sight of an angel a shock to Zacharias, but so is what he is told resulting in him having a hard time believing the angel.

18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this [for certain]? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." 19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. 20 "And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which shall be fulfilled in their proper time." 21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute. 23 And it came about, when the days of his priestly service were ended, that he went back home.

That was probably not the kind of sign he was hoping to receive, but it made the point not only to him, but also to the people when he came out because it became obvious by the delay and his actions that something dramatic had happened to him. Zacharias continued to fulfill his ministry in the temple for the rest of the week and then returned home where Luke 1:24-25 notes a miracle took place.

The Miracle (Luke 1:24-25)

24 And after these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant; and she kept herself in seclusion for five

months, saying, 25 "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked [with favor] upon [me,] to take away my disgrace among men."

The prophecy given by Gabriel was fulfilled and Elizabeth, though advanced in age, was now with child. She praised the Lord for His granting their petition to Him and removing her disgrace.

The Prophecy of the Messiah's Birth (Luke 1:26-38). Only six months later, the angel Gabriel makes another appearance and gives a startling announcement to a young woman.

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. 28 And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord [is] with you." 29 But she was greatly troubled at [this] statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. Luke carefully notes that Mary was a virgin and was betrothed to a man who was a descendant of King David. This not only shows her good character, but both were important points necessary to fulfill the prophecies concerning the Messiah.

Mary is even more "troubled" (διατράσσω / diatarasso) than Zacharias when she sees Gabriel, but she also "ponders" (διαλογιζομαι / dialogidzomai) Gabriel's greeting. She gives careful consideration to what Gabriel says. In what way would she be "favored"? And what did he mean that the Lord was "with her"?

Gabriel is direct in his explanation. *30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 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; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end. "*

Unlike Elizabeth, Mary is young, she is engaged and fully expects to have children in the future, but this is a description of a son that would be anything but ordinary. First, the name Jesus, which means "Yahweh saves," was not that extraordinary since it and related forms such as Joshua were common, but Mary would have been wondering in what way Jesus would fulfill the meaning of his name.

Second, by some means He would be called the Son of the Most High. As in the Psalms, this title is a direct reference to God in His exalted position. This child would in some way be deity.

Third, this son would receive the Davidic throne. True, both Mary and Joseph were descendants of king David, but there had not been a descendant of David on the throne since the Babylonian captivity. And fourth, related to this, his kingdom would be ever lasting. It is not surprising then Mary has some confusion and asks in verse 34, *And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"*

Gabriel not only answers Mary's question but also gives her even more information. *35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God. 36 "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."*

Mary would be with child through a miracle performed by the Holy Spirit so that she would remain a virgin. That is how it would come to be. It is also why the child would be the holy son of God. When it became obvious that Mary was pregnant, there were many that scoffed at this explanation and there are many that still do today. They see this as just a very lame excuse used by Mary to try to avoid the shame and consequences of getting pregnant before she was married, and Joseph was not the father. In fact, Matthew 1:18–25 records that Joseph did not believe Mary when he found out and so was seeking to divorce. That fact also reveals that betrothal was more serious than a couple getting engaged in our society. Joseph did not believe Mary's story until an angel revealed the truth to him in a dream. Only then did he take Mary as his wife keeping her a virgin until after Jesus was born. That is why some took

Jesus to be Joseph's son (Matthew 13:55) while others thought He was the result of fornication and possibly by some unknown Roman soldier (John 8:41).

The rest of Gabriel's answer was the additional verification Mary would need as she considered what had been revealed to her. A miracle had already occurred because her relative Elizabeth, possibly a cousin or aunt, who had been barren and was in her old age was now pregnant. This was proof of the truth that indeed, "*nothing will be impossible with God.*"

Mary's answer demonstrates her humble, godly character. *38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

Mary & Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56)

Perhaps prompted by this news, Mary travels to see Elizabeth. What happens when she gets there is an incredible revelation of the nature of human life that goes beyond the physical. Keep in mind that Elizabeth at this time is about six months pregnant and Mary is newly pregnant.

Elizabeth's Proclamation (Luke 1:39-45)

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 And she cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed among women [are] you, and blessed [is] the fruit of your womb! 43 "And how has it [happened] to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 "For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. 45 "And blessed [is] she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

It is critical to note in verse 41 that what Elizabeth says here is due to being filled by the Holy Spirit. This is not an emotional outburst or the speculation of a religious fanatic. This is direct revelation coming from God through her. Note these incredible facts revealed in her response.

First, there is no indication that Mary had sent word to Elizabeth prior to coming about her encounter with the angel Gabriel or that she was pregnant, yet, by the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth knows not only that Mary is pregnant, but also the identity of that child was her Lord.

Second, Elizabeth knew the emotional reason that the child within her had leaped. Pregnant women can get very good at figuring out some of the things that cause their baby to move around a lot such as eating particular things, but they cannot know the emotions of the baby. This was revealed by the Holy Spirit. John the Baptist leaped in the womb for joy when Mary, pregnant with Jesus, entered the room and greeted Elizabeth.

Third, these revelations prove that a child in the womb is fully human. Those who promote abortion will use the term "fetus" or "product of conception" in the effort to remove the humanity of the baby within the womb. Humanity begins at conception, not some point later on. John is only six months along and Jesus has only recently been conceived, yet He is recognized as Lord by Elizabeth and the cause of joy for John in her womb.

Those of you from a Roman Catholic background may recognize some of the phrases in this passage because they are used in the first section of the "Hail Mary" prayer. Mary certainly was blessed among women to have the great privilege to be the mother of the Messiah. However, the second part of the prayer is certainly not Biblical as is seen in Mary's own proclamation in Luke 1:46-55.

Mary's Proclamation (Luke 1:46-55)

And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. "For the Mighty One has done great things for me; And holy is His name. "And His mercy is

upon generation after generation Toward those who fear Him. "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered [those who were] proud in the thoughts of their heart. "He has brought down rulers from [their] thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. "He has filled the hungry with good things; And sent away the rich empty-handed. "He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his offspring forever."

Mary's godly character is seen in this response. She knew the Scriptures well making reference to many different passages in what she says, but more important, she sought to submit herself to what God had revealed. Being pregnant without a husband is no longer a scandal in our sinful society since close to half of all children in the nation are now born out of wedlock. However, for Mary, she was not only in danger of scandal, ridicule and shame in her society, but also of losing her fiancé, Joseph, and even of being stoned. Yet despite these very real dangers, Mary rejoiced in what God was going to do through her. She saw past the immediate circumstances and recognized the eternal future of the blessings that would come as God fulfilled His promises to Abraham to bless all nations through his descendants (Genesis 12:3; 22:18; 26:4). The child she would bear would be that blessing.

Mary did not exalt herself. She exalted the Lord. She considered herself the bonds slave of God to be used by Him however He desired. She recognized that she would be blessed and that the Mighty One was doing great things for her, but her focus is on God and not herself.

It is important to note in verse 47 that Mary is rejoicing in "*God my Savior.*" This is in contrast to the teaching of Roman Catholicism that Mary was without sin and so enabled to be co-redemptrix with Jesus and meditrix. Mary saw herself as a sinner like any other human and in need of a savior. The mental gymnastics used to get around this are interesting, but false such as one Roman Catholic apologist that wrote, "*[Mary] was given the grace to be 'saved' completely from sin so that she never committed even the slightest transgression.*" There has only been one human without sin, and that is the God-man, Jesus Christ (Hebrews 4:15; 7:26). Jesus is also the only redeemer, for He who knew no sin took on man's sin so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21; 1 Peter 1:18). There is also only "*one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus*" (1 Timothy 2:5). Mary was especially blessed to be the virgin mother of Jesus, but only in that was she different from any other godly woman. God continued to bless her by giving her at least six more children by Joseph (Matthew 13:55-56).

Mary's Departure (Luke 1:56)

In verse 56, Luke notes how long Mary stayed with Elizabeth. "*And Mary stayed with her about three months, and [then] returned to her home.*" Since Elizabeth was six months along when Mary came, she apparently stayed until John was born. I think we can safely assume that she would have been very helpful to her elderly relative during that last trimester of her pregnancy.

The Birth of the Herald (Luke 1:57-66)

Luke next brings out the details of the birth of John and the unusual events that followed. "*Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she brought forth a son. And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her.*"

The birth of a child is usually a cause of rejoicing to relatives and friends, but that joy would have been even greater by the birth of this child to a couple that were so elderly. Their great joy would be turned to great wonder when the parents brought the child to the temple to be dedicated according to the Mosaic Law.

59 And it came about that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father. 60 And his mother answered and said, "No indeed; but he shall be called John." 61 And they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by that

name." 62 *And they made signs to his father, as to what he wanted him called.* 63 *And he asked for a tablet, and wrote as follows, "His name is John." And they were all astonished.* 64 *And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue [loosed,] and he [began] to speak in praise of God.* 65 *And fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea.* 66 *And all who heard them kept them in mind, saying, "What then will this child [turn out to] be?" For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.*

The usual custom was to name a child, especially the first son, after a relative. When Elizabeth followed Gabriel's instructions to name him John, the relatives wanted it confirmed by the father. Zacharias could not speak so he wrote it down and it astonished them he would name his son, John, but they were even more amazed when Zacharias' voice was returned to him and he began to praise God. The news of this spread rapidly causing the people to recognize that God's hand was upon the family and wondering what John would turn out to be. In the last section of this passage, Luke answers that question by recounting what Zacharias said as he was praising God.

Zacharias' Prophecy (Luke 1:67-80)

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 "Blessed [be] the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn of salvation for us In the house of David His servant-- 70 As He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from of old-- 71 Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us; 72 To show mercy toward our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 To grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness and righteousness before Him all our days. 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; 77 To give to His people [the] knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, 78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, With which the Sunrise from on high shall visit us, 79 To shine upon those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, To guide our feet into the way of peace."

In verse 67 we again find that it is the Holy Spirit that is speaking through a person to give praise to God and revelation from God. Though Zacharias is speaking in response to the birth of his son, John, what he says is focused on the Messiah.

In verses 68-70 Zacharias gives praise to God for the fulfillment the prophecies concerning the Messiah that were now taking place. As is common in prophecy, future events are so certain they are spoken of as having already been accomplished. The birth of John was proof to Zacharias that all that the angel Gabriel had previously told him would now take place. God was present and redemption would be accomplished because a horn of salvation was being raised up in the house of David as prophesied from old. (This cannot be John since he is of the tribe of Levi and the house of Aaron, not Judah through David). Zacharias then cites some of these prophecies in verses 71-75. Israel would be delivered from her enemies and the holy covenant God made to Abraham (Genesis 15) would be fulfilled so that they might serve the Lord without fear in holiness and righteousness. The final fulfillment of this will take place in the Messianic kingdom.

In verses 76-77 Zacharias turns his focus to his son John as the first prophet of God, the Most High, in four centuries and the one that would prepare the way for Messiah by declaring the knowledge of salvation and forgiveness of sins. Verses 78-79 declare this salvation that will bring peace will come by the tender mercy of God. Salvation is the action of God, not man. He is the one that brings light to those in darkness. Those in darkness cannot bring light to themselves.

Verse 80 concludes, "*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.*" John grew physically and spiritually. Luke also points out that he lived in the deserts in fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3 that he would be "*the voice*

of one crying in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord; Make straight in the desert a highway for our God'' (See: Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4; John 1:23).

Conclusions

The purpose of this sermon series is so that “*you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name*” (John 20:31), and so that in coming to know Him, you will love Him and live for His glory. The identification of Jesus as the Son of God is strengthened by the fulfillment of both the ancient Hebrew prophecies and those given to Zacharias that John the Baptist was the Messiah’s herald. The revelation given to Elizabeth and to Mary also further strengthen that claim. Jesus would be born of a virgin by the power of the Holy Spirit, and He was Lord even while in Mary’s womb. Jesus is the one that would bring salvation to mankind in fulfillment of all the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah.

Sermon Notes - 3/17/2013
The Coming of the Herald: Luke 1:5-80

Introduction

We proclaim Jesus so that the unsaved will _____, and those who believe will be stronger in their faith
Luke would have talked to people such as Mary and gained knowledge of events _____ to Jesus' birth
Luke identifies Jesus as the _____ who fulfilled the ancient prophecies - which include His herald

The Prophecy of the Herald's Birth (Luke 1:5-25)

The Herald's Parents (Luke 1:5-7)

Zacharias (*Yahweh has remembered*) is a priest in the division of Abijah serving in Temple ~ Oct. _____
Zacharias & Elizabeth (*God is my oath*) are both righteous and blameless, but _____ and old

The Angel's Announcement (Luke 1:8-17)

Vs. 10 - Zacharias was chosen by lot to have the great honor to burn the _____ in the Temple
Vs. 12 - He is "_____" (agitated, anxious, fearful) when he sees the angel - the common response
Vs. 13 - Gabriel reveals he would have a son, name him _____, who would be the forerunner of Messiah

The Sign (Luke 1:18-23)

Zacharias has doubts and is given the sign of becoming _____ until John would be born

The Miracle (Luke 1:24-25)

The prophecy is fulfilled, and though Elizabeth is advanced in _____, she is now with child

The Prophecy of the Messiah's Birth (Luke 1:26-38)

Six months later, Gabriel visits Mary, a virgin betrothed to a descendant of King _____ (vs. 26-29)
Mary is "very troubled" (_____) seeing an angel, but also ponders (contemplates) Gabriel's greeting
Vs. 30-33 - Gabriel's description of what would take place is _____
The name _____ (Yahweh saves) was common, but how would He fulfill the meaning of the name?
The title "Son of the Most High" meant He would in some way be _____
This son would receive the Davidic throne - and it would be an _____ kingdom
Vs. 34-37 - _____ answers Mary's question "*How can this be?*" and gives her even more revelation
Mary would be with child by the power of the _____ and so would be the Son of God
The fact that Elizabeth was pregnant in her old age was proof that "*nothing will be _____ with God*"

Mary & Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-56) (Elizabeth is a relative - possibly a cousin or aunt)

Elizabeth's Proclamation (Luke 1:39-45)

What Elizabeth says is due to being filled by the Holy Spirit - it is revelation from _____
Elizabeth knew by the Holy Spirit that Mary was pregnant and that the child was her _____
Elizabeth knew by the Holy Spirit the _____ reason the child in her womb had leaped - for joy
A child is fully human at _____

Mary's Proclamation (Luke 1:46-55)

Mary's godly character is displayed in her knowledge of the Scriptures and willingness to _____ to God
Mary exalts _____, not herself. She considers herself a bondservant to God to be used as He desires
Mary is rejoicing in "God my Savior" - she is a _____ in need of redemption
Jesus is the only _____ human (Heb. 4:15; 7:26)

Jesus is the only _____ - taking man's sin so we can be righteous before God (2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Pet. 1:18)

Jesus is the only _____ between God and men (1 Timothy 2:5)

Mary was uniquely blessed to be the virgin mother of Jesus -she had ___more children by Joseph (Mk 6:3)

Mary's Departure (Luke 1:56) She returned home about the time of John's _____

The Birth of the Herald (Luke 1:57-66)

Verses 57-58 - The relatives and friends rejoiced at the birth of a child to such an _____ couple

Verses 59-66 - The relatives and friends were astonished they would name the boy, _____

When Zacharias _____, they were more amazed and spread the word the hand of the Lord was on him

Zacharias' Prophecy (Luke 1:67-80)

Verse 67 - Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking - it is _____ from God

Verses 68-70 - Zacharias praises God for the fulfillment of ancient Messianic _____

Verses 71-75 - Zacharias cites some of these prophecies that would fulfill God's _____ with Abraham

Verses 76-77 - John is the prophet who would fulfill the prophecies of the Messiah's _____

Verses 78-79 - The salvation that brings peace comes because of the tender _____ of God

Verse 80 - John grew physically and spiritually - living in the desert fulfilling _____ (Matt. 3:3)

Conclusions

Luke strengthens Jesus' identification as the _____, the promised Messiah, through the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies concerning His herald, and the additional ones given to Zacharias and Mary

KIDS CORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. **Young Children** - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. **Older Children** - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned and look them up later. 2) Count how many times Zacharias, Elizabeth and Mary are mentioned. 3) Discuss with your parents the importance of the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. Describe Jesus identity and nature in eternity past (John 1). How did Luke compile his gospel account? What is his emphasis? What is the significance of Zacharias and Elizabeth being descended from Aaron and him being of the division of Abijah? Describe what they were like in character? What was Zacharias doing when Gabriel visited him? What was his immediate response? Why was the announcement that his wife would bear him a son so significant? What would be significant about the child? What sign did Gabriel give Zacharias the prophecy would come true and what effect did that have on him and the people waiting for him? What was Elizabeth's "disgrace" that would be taken away? What is the significance of pointing out that Mary was a virgin betrothed to a descendant of David? What was Mary's response to seeing Gabriel? What is the significance of the name "Jesus" and the title "Son of the Most High"? What is the significance of Jesus getting the throne of David and that it would be an everlasting kingdom? How would God accomplish this through Mary? What sign did Gabriel give that "*nothing will be impossible with God*"? What dangers did Mary face being pregnant without a husband? What significant facts did the Holy Spirit reveal through Elizabeth? How do we know from them that a baby is fully human at conception? How does Mary's response reveal her godly character? How did Mary view herself? Why is it blasphemy to consider Mary sinless, co-redemptrix or mediatrix? What was the response to the birth of John the Baptist? How was John's birth proof of the other prophecies given to Zacharias? What was his response? What did the Holy Spirit reveal through him? What ancient prophecies would John fulfill? What is their relationship to the Messiah? What do you believe about Jesus?