



## “A Conception Announcement”

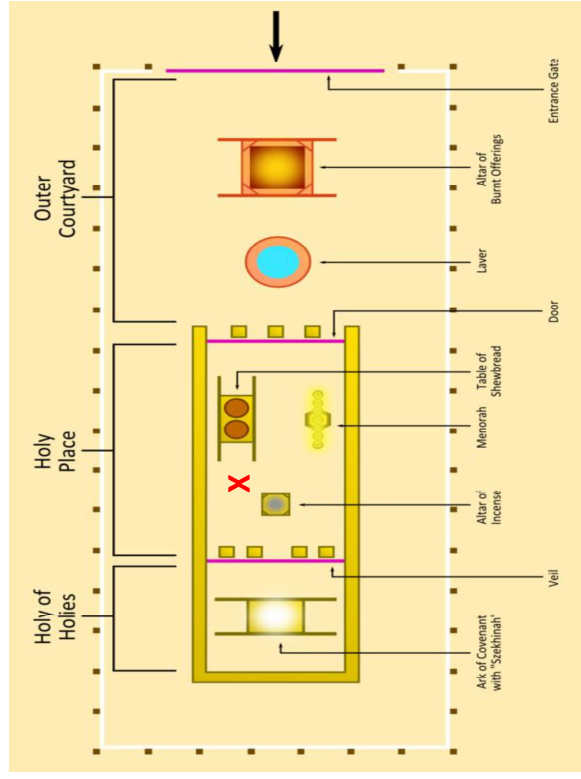
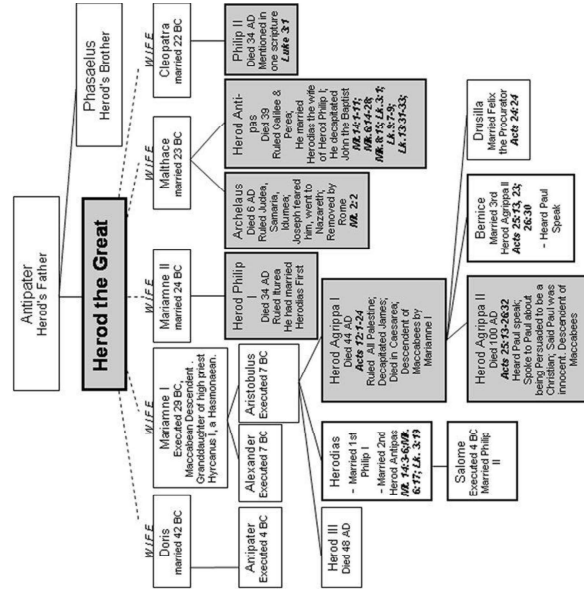
### Part 2

#### Luke 1:5-25

May 9, 2021

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- 5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.
- 6 They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.
- 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years.
- 8 Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, 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 Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear gripped him.



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- 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 **"You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth."**

## Ecc1 7:13-14

- 3 Consider the work of God,  
For who is able to straighten **what He has bent?**

14 In the day of prosperity be happy,

But in the day of adversity consider —

God has made the one as well as the other

- To dispense His grace.
- To distribute joy.

• Don't give up praying.

## Luke 18:1

- 1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that at all times they ought to **pray and not to lose heart.**

**Note:** God's timing brings answers beyond what we "could ask or think." They got more than a son - a forerunner to the Messiah.

## Eph 3:20

20 Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think,

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 many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God."**

17 **"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."**

What will John do:

1. Be great. (15a)
2. Be devoted. (15a)
3. Be controlled. (15b)
4. Be instrumental. (16)
5. Be a forerunner. (17)

John will not be Elijah but will come in the "spirit and power" of Elijah.

The very last words of the Old Testament —

## Mal 4:5-6

5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the Lord.

6 "He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

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**"Do not be afraid"** — standard reply by an angel. First words from God since OT.

**"petition"** — 2 prayers are answered at once in the bearing of a son — 1. No longer barren after years of praying. 2. The Messiah is coming.

- So here is the "right turn" — a son.
- "Prayers are filed in heaven, & are not forgotten"
- Usually the father names the son. Here God did.
- "John" means God is gracious.
- This will bring joy personally, in their marriage, to the world. This will launch everything.
- God waited:
  - To display His glory.

## John 9:1-3

1 As He passed by, He saw a man blind from birth.

2 And His disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he would be born blind?"

3 Jesus answered, "It was neither that this man sinned, nor his parents; but it was so that the works of God might be displayed in him."

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18 Zacharias said to the angel, "How will I know this for certain? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years."

19 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 will be fulfilled in their proper time."





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**Note:** None were more successful than Elijah in turning the hearts of the people back to God from the apostasy of Ahab and Jezebel.

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- When God says something, no need for a sign.

**Matt 16:1,4**

1 The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.

4 "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah."

- Only the names of 2 angels are in the Bible – Michael and Gabriel.

Michael – angel of war. Defender of Israel.

Gabriel – angel of announcements.

- God sends angels to accomplish His purposes: Exodus 23, Exodus 32, Exodus 33, Numbers chapter 20, 1 Chronicles 21, 2 Chronicles 32, Daniel 3, Daniel 6, Daniel 8, Daniel 9, Daniel 10
- Gabriel came straight from God. No need to doubt his word.

**Who are the 2 witnesses?**

**Possibilities:**

1. Moses and Elijah.
2. Elijah and Enoch.
3. 2 unidentified men.

**Heb 9:27**

27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,

Neither died -

Enoch – Gen. 5:24

Elijah – 2 Kings 2:11

So some believe God sent them back to earth to die to fulfill Heb. 9:27 (all men must die).

\*\*However it is not necessary for people to die a physical death.

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21 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 When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home.

24 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."

**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 will be fulfilled in their proper time."**

- Another turn, another zig.
- God gives Zacharias a sign, but not the one he wanted.
- He is unable to speak for 9 months.
- What made this such a difficult punishment was that Zacharias had such great news to tell to everyone.
- God takes no pleasure in unbelief –

**Heb 11:1**

6 And without faith it is impossible to please Him,

- But this will not slow down the plan of God.

**"When we do not believe God's promise for our lives, we do not necessarily destroy the promise; but we do destroy our ability to enjoy the promise."**

- Dave Guzik

**"If there is no Zacharias, there is no John the Baptist. If there is no John the Baptist, there is no herald announcing the coming of the Messiah. If there is no herald announcing the coming of the Messiah, the prophecies in the Old Testament regarding the Messiah are unfulfilled. If any of the prophecies of the Old Testament regarding the first coming of the Messiah are unfulfilled, then Jesus did not fulfill all things. If Jesus did not fulfill all things, then He did not complete God's plan of redemption for you and I and we must perish in our sins!"**

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- The people knew something was up:
  - Maybe he died from \_\_\_\_\_?
  - Maybe judgment fell.
- He comes out and can only make sign gestures.
- Unable to pronounce the blessing.

**Num 6:24-26**

- 24 The Lord bless you, and keep you;  
25 The Lord make His face shine on you,  
And be gracious to you;  
26 The Lord lift up His countenance on you,  
And give you peace.'

- From what he described, they believed it to be a vision.

**• He leaves and heads home after all the turns:**

1. Selected by "lot" to serve.
2. Serves at the altar in the Temple.
3. Sees an angel.
4. Granted answers to prayer.
5. He is promised a long-awaited child and Messiah.
6. Doubts God's word.
7. Struck speechless.
8. Unable to verbalize his joy.
9. Returns with the hope of conception, pregnancy, and birth of a son.
10. Expecting the Messiah.

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## 1. Grace to live with a trial.

### 2 Cor 12:7-9

- 7 ... there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me — to keep me from exalting myself!
- 8 Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me.
- 9 And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness."

## 2. Grace which takes the trial away.

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.**

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."**

\*It is easier to believe in the power of God (instant deliverance) than to believe in the providence of God (accepting that this is the will of God for my life).

\*Zacharias and Elizabeth no doubt struggled for years to accept the providence of God for their lives – no children.

\*Though not as painful or as hard or as long, Zacharias also struggled believing in the power of God.

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### • Why the seclusion?

- Wait until she was showing she was pregnant.
- Safeguard her and child because of her age.
- Did not want the stress of answering questions. Husband could not speak.
- Embarrassed over her husband's condition.
- Overwhelmed.

• **Note:** God always gives us the grace that we need: 1. grace to live with the trial or 2. grace which takes the trial away. Zacharias and Elizabeth experienced both of them.

Here is how it works -

## Summary:

*How are you doing with the following 5 areas?*

### 1. THE SOVEREIGNTY AND PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

- Do you see your life with its turns and twists, zigs and zags, as a life that is under the direction and providence of God?

### 2. PRAYER.

- Do you persevere in prayer?

### 3. TRUSTING GOD'S WORD BY FAITH.

- Do you trust in God's Word alone or do you look for outward signs for confirmation?

### 4. THE GRACE OF GOD.

- Do you see how God has moved in your life, taking you from difficult times where He sustained you by grace, to times of joy and gladness also by His grace?

### 5. THE PURPOSES OF GOD.

- Do you really believe that all things happen for a purpose?