

Message Notes

Silence broken by a birth announcement

Scripture Passages

(taken from the New International Version)

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Luke 1:5-25

⁵In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

⁸Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. ¹⁴He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. ¹⁶He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

¹⁸Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

¹⁹The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

²¹Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. ²²When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

²³When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵"The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."



Malachi 4:1-6

¹“Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace. All the arrogant and every evildoer will be stubble, and that day that is coming will set them on fire,” says the LORD Almighty. “Not a root or a branch will be left to them. ²But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. ³Then you will trample down the wicked; they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day when I do these things,” says the LORD Almighty.

Malachi 4:1-6

⁴“Remember the law of my servant Moses, the decrees and laws I gave him at Horeb for all Israel.

⁵“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”



The Gospel of
LUKE

Luke 1:1-4

¹Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, ²just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. ³With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

Theophilus



Possibilities

- High Ranking Official
 - Greek
- Christian (or became one)
- Publisher and Distributer

Who is the author of this gospel?

Luke the Gentile

Luke the Historian

Luke the Theologian

Luke the Doctor

Luke the Pastor

Luke the Good Friend

Luke the Musician

Today's Message:

Not silent anymore:

The announcement of J the B!

Luke 1:5-25

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Luke 1:5-25

⁸Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Luke 1:5-25

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Luke 1:5-25

¹⁴He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. ¹⁶He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

Luke 1:5-25

¹⁷And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

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Luke 1:5-25

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Luke 1:5-25

²³When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵“The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

Let's meet Zechariah and Elizabeth

Luke 1:5-7

⁵In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

⁶Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

An incredible honor

Luke 1:8-10

⁸Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

“The Mishnah states that before each of the two daily services, four sets of lots were used to determine the participants (*Yoma* 2:1–5). In this case the incense lot finally fell to Zechariah, and in an instant he was at the apex of his personal history. The honor of offering incense was the grandest event in all his earthly existence. Many priests never had the privilege, and no priest was allowed to offer it more than once. Zechariah’s adrenaline began to flow, and with it came the alert attention that notes every detail. What joy he would have in telling Elizabeth.



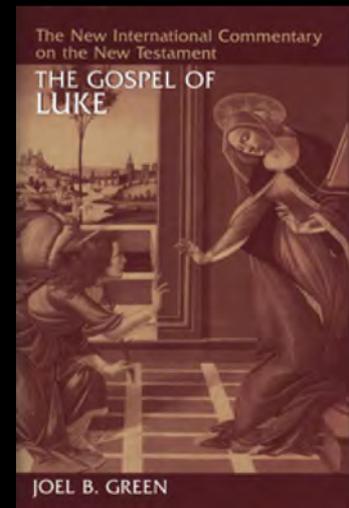
“Zechariah was serving God with his cohorts in the heart of the gleaming temple, in the Court of the Priests, where the sacrifice was to be made. Outside, in the Court of Israel, faithful worshipers were praying. Then came the moment to step into the Holy Place. Before him rose the richly embroidered curtain of the Holy of Holies, resplendent with cherubim woven in scarlet, blue, purple, and gold. To his left was the table of showbread. Directly in front of him was the horned golden altar of incense (Exodus 30:1–10; 37:25–29). To his right stood the golden candlestick. Zechariah purified the altar and waited joyously for the signal to offer the incense so that, as it were, the sacrifices went up to God wrapped in the sweet incense of prayer.”



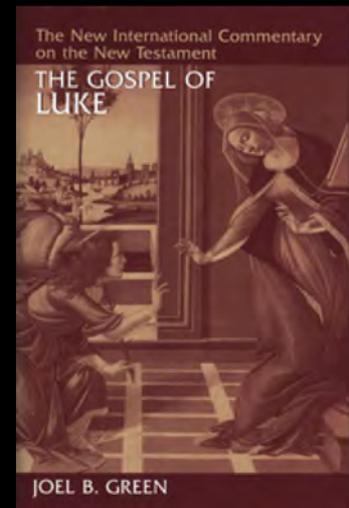
~ R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 21–22.







“The honor reserved for Zechariah is symbolized in the spatial markers Luke employs: Zechariah goes *into* the sanctuary and the people remain *outside*. This language underscores the separation of people by status as measured above all by religious purity in Jewish antiquity. In this setting, purity (or cleanliness) was correlated with holiness, so that the closer one came to the presence of the divine, the more pure one had to be. The “altar of incense” was located in the sanctuary itself, in the outer chamber or Holy Place.



On the one side was a curtained doorway leading to the inner chamber or Holy of Holies. This was the locus of God's glory and could be entered on only one day each year, the Day of Atonement, and then only by the high priest. The offering of incense, then, would bring Zechariah as close to the presence of God as any person other than the high priest might ever come. Many priests might never experience this honor, and it was forever out of the reach of nonpriests."

~ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 70.

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

A startling visitor

Luke 1:11-12

¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

Daniel 8:16-17

¹⁶And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." ¹⁷As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate.

Daniel 8:16-17

¹⁶And I heard a man's voice from the Ulai calling, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of the vision." ¹⁷As he came near the place where I was standing, I was terrified and fell prostrate.

Daniel 9:20-21

²⁰While I was speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request to the LORD my God for his holy hill — ²¹while I was still in prayer, Gabriel, the man I had seen in the earlier vision, came to me in swift flight about the time of the evening sacrifice.

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

What prayer?

Luke 1:13a

¹³But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah;
your prayer has been heard.”

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

What prayer?

Two Options:

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

What prayer?

Two Options:

1. “I really want a child”

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

What prayer?

Two Options:

1. "I really want a child"
2. "Please, Lord, redeem our nation Israel"

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

What prayer?

Two Options:

1. "I really want a child"
2. "Please, Lord, redeem our nation Israel"

ANSWER: YES on both accounts!

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

Call him John

Luke 1:13b

“Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son,
and you are to call him John.”

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

The character of this son

Luke 1:14

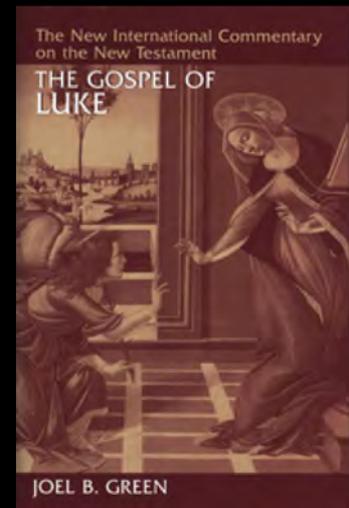
¹⁴“He will be a joy and delight to you,
and many will rejoice because of his birth...”

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

The spiritual life of this son

Luke 1:15

¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born.



“Complete abstinence from wine and other alcoholic beverages is extraordinary in the biblical world, so the requirement that John embrace such ascetic behavior requires explanation. During their period of service in the temple, priests were to abstain from alcoholic beverages (Lev 10:8–9; Ezek 44:21). Abstinence was also integral to those who had taken a nazirite vow (Num 6:1–21). This suggests that refusal to drink wine and beer was associated with separation from normal life for a divine task, whether for a temporary, specified period (priests on duty, nazirites) or, as in the case of Samson, for life (Judg 13:7). That lifelong consecration to God is meant in John’s case is suggested by later reports of his behavior (7:33).



“One may also point to the reminiscences of the Samuel story present here (see 1 Sam 1:11). More particularly, this angelic announcement echoes the material related to Samson, for there an angel announces the conception of a son and requires that his mother not “drink wine or strong drink” since “he shall be a nazirite to God from birth” (Judg 13:3–6); Samson would be instrumental in Israel’s deliverance (13:6); and, later, Samson is empowered by the Spirit of the Lord (14:19). By analogy, then, John is set apart by God to God even before his conception.”

~ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 75.

Silence Broken! A Birth Announcement!

The breakthrough ministry of this son

Luke 1:16-17

¹⁶He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous – to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶ He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers; or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.”

Matthew 17:11-13

¹¹Jesus replied, “To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. ¹²But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him, but have done to him everything they wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at their hands.” ¹³Then the disciples understood that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.

Zechariah's response

Luke 1:18

¹⁸Zechariah asked the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

“Picture old Zechariah. He is serving in the heart of the temple. The sacred ambience overwhelms him. The light from the flickering golden candlestick reveals the richly embroidered hues of the cherubim on the veil before the Holy of Holies. The golden altar of incense glistens in the light. The aroma of worship swirls about him. It is the grandest day of his life. Zechariah prays for the redemption of his people – and a supernatural being is there! Cardiac terror! Then the being speaks, promising a son whose name evokes the favor of God. He prophesies regarding the son’s *character*, his *spiritual formation*, and his *ministry*, invoking the final lines of the Old Testament as his son’s script.”

~ R. Kent Hughes, *Luke: That You May Know the Truth*, Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1998), 25.



Gabriel's Declaration

Luke 1:19-20

¹⁹The angel said to him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time.”



“Zechariah’s silence must be seen
above all as a “sign”
— that is, as the proof he requested.”

~ Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament
(Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 79.

“What’s taking him so long?”

Luke 1:21-22

²¹Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. ²²When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

Elizabeth's gift and joy

Luke 1:21-22

²³When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵“The Lord has done this for me,” she said. “In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.”

“A subsidiary message may also be derived from the experiences of Elizabeth and Zechariah. Elizabeth, in the “disgrace” of her inability to bear children, represents human helplessness, which is to be joyfully overcome by the power of God; despair gives way to praise. Zechariah, whose big day is suddenly turned upside down by the appearance of the angel, represents



human slowness to accept God’s power to change things (even though he apparently had been praying for precisely this outcome [1:13]) and contrasts with Mary’s ready acceptance of a similar challenge to faith in 1:38.”

~ R. T. France, Luke, ed. Mark L. Strauss and John H. Walton, Teach the Text Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2013), 12.



Gospel of Luke Application:

Is God Silent?

Gospel of Luke Application:

Is God Silent?

Are you ready for him to answer?

The Gospel of
LUKE