

# “The Birth of *John the Baptizer* is Foretold!”

Based on Luke 1:1-25 NAU  
2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of Advent – 2011  
December 7 → 11:00 & 7:00

- c. How will I know this *for certain*? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years – Zacharias was reasonable: *We are very old!* Reason is good, but believing *God’s Word* from *God’s messenger* is best!
- d. you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place – Since Zacharias doubted, *his silence would prove the angel’s words*. He could have rejoiced at the news, *but instead he suffered the promised consequences*.

3. **Zacharias is Mute; Elizabeth is Pregnant:** <sup>21</sup> The people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. <sup>22</sup> 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. <sup>23</sup> When the days of his priestly service were ended, he went back home. <sup>24</sup> After these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, <sup>25</sup> “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.” //
- a. he was unable to speak to them – God’s Word always happens; *never doubt, always trust!*
  - b. Elizabeth his wife became pregnant – Even when we doubt, as did Zacharias, *God keeps His promises!*

**Conclusion:** We are sinners and live in a sin-filled world, *but God will keep His promise to eternally save everyone who receives Jesus Christ as Savior!* During this Advent season, let us ♦recall our sin and ♦rejoice in our Savior! *Amen!*

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem’s website: [www.blc7500.com](http://www.blc7500.com)  
*Please share them with your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!*  
Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ, the new church year has recently begun (11/27); therefore, knowing *we are sinners – helpless to save ourselves*, we are looking for the coming of our Savior. During Advent we think about both of His comings: “...Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time...to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.” (Heb 9:28 NIV)  
Today we focus on Jesus’ *first* coming, when God sent John the Baptizer to prepare the way for our Savior!

As we go to the gospel of Luke, keep in mind that Luke ♦was a Gentile, ♦was converted to Christianity after Jesus’ ministry, and ♦was a very close companion of Paul. Even though he did not personally see Jesus’ ministry, he used information he received *from eyewitnesses and disciples of Jesus*, and *from his own careful investigation*. He was also moved by the Holy Spirit to write God’s Holy Word (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21).

**Luke 1:1** Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, <sup>2</sup> just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, <sup>3</sup> it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; <sup>4</sup> so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught. //

- in consecutive order – That is true for the gospel of Luke and many other Bible books, *but not for all*.
- so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught – Close is okay in ♦horseshoes, ♦corn hole, and ♦hand grenades, but when it comes to our Savior, God wants us to know “the exact truth.”

1. **Zacharias and Elizabeth – Their Situation:** <sup>5</sup> In the days of Herod <sub>1</sub>the Great<sub>1</sub>, king of Judea <sub>1</sub>who reigned from 37-4 B.C.<sub>1</sub>, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah [one of 24 such divisions, which are named in 1 Chron. 24-7-18]; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth [not only a descendant of a priest, but of the first high priest]. <sup>6</sup> They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren [unable to conceive], and they were both advanced in years. //

- a. righteous in the sight of God – That was true because – *by God’s grace* – they trusted in God and His promised Savior; then, *as a result of their faith*, they very carefully followed the ways of the Lord! Being sinners, they were saved by faith – *and it showed!*
- b. Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years – Think about the couple: Zacharias-*a priest*, Elizabeth-*a descendant of Aaron*, and both-*faithful OT Christians*; nevertheless, *though children were desired*, she was unable to conceive and both were old – *so having a child seemed impossible!*

2. **Gabriel Appears to Zacharias:** <sup>8</sup> Now it happened *that* while he was performing his priestly service before God in the

*appointed* order of his division, <sup>9</sup> according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense [by lot makes it God’s choice].

<sup>10</sup> And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. <sup>11</sup> And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> Zacharias was troubled when he saw *the angel*, and fear gripped him. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.

<sup>17</sup> 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.” <sup>18</sup> 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.” <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> 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.” //

- a. your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son – Let us never doubt; *nothing is impossible with God!*
- b. he will be great in the sight of the Lord – He will prepare the way for Jesus by calling people to repent. With the call to repent comes God’s power to ♦recognize sin, ♦be sorry, and ♦trust in Jesus!