

Sermon Notes: 3 December 2023

**Setting the Stage: Luke 1:57-80**

**1. Backdrop**

John was portrayed as the eschatological Elijah who points back to God's work in history while looking forward to the fulfillment of prophetic promises.

The appearance of John the Baptist signifies the renewal of prophecy and the salvific acts of God in history

Gabriel symbolizes the renewal of God's involvement among his people.

The intensity of the presence of the Holy Spirit:

Barren Wombs: This appears in the stories of Sarah (Gen. 18), Rebekah (Gen. 25), Rachel (Gen. 30), the mother of Samson (Judg. 13), and Hannah (1 Sam. 1–2). Not only are these stories concerned with the reversal of the fortune of the individual barren women, but also the births of the heroes are linked with the fulfillment of God's covenantal promises to Israel. The presence of God for his people is therefore the underlying theme behind these narratives.

Isaiah using the barren woman to symbolize the scattered people of God (**Isa. 49:20–21**),

Jesus will come through Davidic descent (7:8), promise of greatness (7:9), "throne" of David (7:13), divine sonship of the Davidic king (7:14), and perpetual nature of his kingdom (7:16).

**2. The Birth of the Baptist: Luke 1:57-66**

57. Time fulfilled and she gave birth to a son

58. Her family and friends recognized God's mercy on her life. With His mercy comes joy.

V.59 According to the OT, the rite of circumcision was to take place on the eighth day after birth (**Gen. 17:12; 21:4; Lev. 12:3**). Whereas the naming of a child usually takes place during the time of birth (Gen. 25:24–26; 29:31–35), Abram received his name "Abraham" when he was circumcised as an adult (Gen. 17:5, 23). In light of the significance of circumcision as a sign of the Abrahamic covenant, it is tempting to see John's (and Jesus' [cf. 2:21]) reception of name during the rite of circumcision as an attempt to make a connection between Abraham and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises (cf. 1:55). (**Romans 2:28-29; Ephesians 2:11-13**)

60-61 Call him John (gift of God) Why?

62-63 Ask his Dad. John writes His name is John!

64. "At once" his tongue was loosed and he began to bless God!

65. Fear came upon the people. These matters were talked about.

66. What will this child be? The hand of the Lord is with him.

### **3. The Benediction: Luke 1:67-80**

As words of prophecy, the Benedictus focuses not on John the individual (vv. 76-80), but on God and his mighty acts on behalf of his people.

67. The filling with “the Holy Spirit” and the appearance of “prophecy” point to the arrival of a significant period of salvation history when the mighty acts of God are evident to all (cf. Isa. 32:14–17; 44:1–4). The Lukan commentary on such prophetic activities is provided in Acts 2, where the quotation from Joel 2:28–32 is used to describe the arrival of the eschatological era. God’s people in this era will experience the power of the Spirit, and thus they will be described as the “sons of the prophets” (Acts 3:24–25) (see comments on 1:5–2:52 above).

68. Blessed Be The Lord God of Israel (**Ps. 41:13; 72:18; 106:48**).

69. The “horn” is a symbol of might

70. God always works according to His Word, Name, Promise

71. The language of the deliverance from “our enemies” and “those who hate us” belongs to the Psalter, where the fate of the individual merges with the fate of God’s people

72. God is merciful, keeps His covenant (of Grace) with His people. Abrahamic, Davidic

73. He swore to Abraham

74-75. Rescued from our enemies that we might serve. The purpose of divine deliverance is formulated with exodus language (“Let my people go, so that they may worship me in the wilderness”).

76. “Before the LORD” Malachi 3:1, Matthew 11:10, Mark 1:2, Luke 7:27

to “make ready His way” **Isaiah 40:1-3, Malachi 3:1**

**77.** A knowledge of salvation, by the forgiveness of their sins. John comes preaching repentance

78. God is merciful and the source of our salvation

79. A Light in the Darkness- **Isaiah 9:1-7**

80. As the birth announcements model the birth accounts of OT heroes, this verse likewise uses OT language to describe the growth of John the Baptist and Jesus (2:40, 52; cf. Gen. 21:8 [Isaac]; Judg. 13:24 [Samson]; 1 Sam. 2:21, 26 [Samuel]).