


CHAPTER 6

John's Birth and Naming




Elisabeth gave birth to a son and named him John. When family and friends objected, Zacharias wrote, “His name is John.” Filled with the Holy Ghost, Zacharias could again speak and praised John as the second coming of the prophet Elijah who would prepare the people for the Christ.¹

Luke 01:57-79 Teaching Guide (Map 1)

CHAPTER 6

John's Birth and Naming



Three months later, Elisabeth gave birth to a son. Eight days later she named him John, but friends and family members disagreed. Unable to speak, Zacharias wrote, “His name is John.” Filled with the Holy Ghost, Zacharias spoke what would become known as **Zacharias' Psalm**. As the second coming of the prophet Elijah, John would be a voice crying in the wilderness preparing the people for the Christ. (Isaiah the prophet said this would happen.) Great fear gripped the gathering and Zacharias' words were spread throughout Judea.

Luke 01:57-79 Teaching Guide (Map 1)

¹ Isaiah 40:3.

⁶ Copyright ©1991 Jonathan B. Hobbs

Teaching Guide (Map 1)

¹ Isaiah 40:3.

⁶ Copyright ©1991 Jonathan B. Hobbs

Teaching Guide (Map 1)

6.

John's Birth and Naming

“Bible Notes” – A Summary Study Guide

Three months later Elisabeth's pregnancy had come full term, and she gave birth to a son, who was born filled with the Holy Ghost. Her neighbors and cousins now understood that the Lord had shown great mercy by allowing this elderly woman's pregnancy, and they rejoiced with Elisabeth. Eight days later, a priest came and circumcised the baby according to the Law of Moses (Luke 1:59; Leviticus 12:3). In keeping with custom, the baby was named Zacharias after his father. But Elisabeth answered, “No, his name will be John!”

The gathering insisted that no one in her or Zacharias' family was named John and motioned to Zacharias how the baby should be named. Unable to speak, Zacharias beckoned for a writing tablet and wrote “His name is John.” As they all marveled, Zacharias opened his mouth and his tongue was loosed. Speech regained and filled with the Holy Ghost, he praised God in what would become known as Zacharias' Psalm.

He prophesied, “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began. Therefore we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all that hate us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His Holy covenant: the oath which He swore to our father Abraham, that He would grant to us, that we would be delivered out of the hands of our enemies that we might serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life. “Now this child John shall be called the prophet of the Most High because he shall go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways (Isaiah 40:3), giving his people the knowledge of salvation for the remission of their sins through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the dayspring from on high has visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (vv.68-79).

A fear gripped the gathering upon hearing Zacharias’ words, which would be spread throughout all Judah. Everyone secretly wondered, “What manner of child will this be? The hand of the Lord is with Him!” (v.66).

Sermon#6,
Biblical Scriptures:

Gospel of Luke - Chapter 1.

57. Now Elisabeth’s full time came that she should be delivered; and she brought forth a son. 58. And her neighbors and her cousins heard how the Lord had shown great mercy upon her, and they rejoiced with her. 59. And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they called him Zacharias, after the name of his father. 60. And his mother answered and said, “Not so, but he shall be called John. 61. And they said to her, “There is none of your kindred that is called by this name.” 62. And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called. 63. And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, “His name is John!” And they all marveled. 64. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spoke and praised God. 65. And fear came on all that dwelt round about them. And all these sayings were spread abroad throughout all the hill country of Judea. 66. And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.” 67. And his father Zacharias was filled with the

Holy Ghost and prophesied, saying, 68. “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he has visited and redeemed his people. 69. And has raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; 70. As he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began: 71. That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; 72. To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; 73. The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74. That he would grant to us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear. 75. In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. 76. And this, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for he shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his way; 77. To give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins, 78. Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high has visited us, 79. To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”



6. John's Birth and Naming

“EMMANUEL” [Jesus, The Promised Messiah]

Elisabeth's time arrived and she gave birth to a son, who was filled with the Holy Ghost, as the LORD God had promised. [When the fullness of Elisabeth's pregnancy came to term, Zacharias, still speechless, motioned for his servants to retrieve a mid-wife to aid in the delivery of his expected son. Surely, a young Mary joyously took a great part in the readiness for the birth as her bewildered but faithful belief in the spoken words of the LORD Jehovah made the anticipation intense. With the mid-wife present, Zacharias and any male servant left the birthing area for the outer rooms or courtyard adjacent to the stables fully assured that Elisabeth's needs would be met.

Normally, an elderly woman like Elisabeth would have surely died from the demanding mental stress and physical fatigue which, at this time, were unbearable. Held in the birthing position, her body now began to shiver as perspiration started to dry on her skin. The mid-wife fussed to make her as comfortable as possible. Immediately after being born, the newborn babe began to wail out in fear of his sudden change of environment. The mid-wife quickly tied a small section of the umbilical cord before separation the child from its' mother. The baby was then washed, being coated with salt for infections, and he was tightly wrapped in swaddling cloth to prevent his tiny limbs from moving, as was the custom of the time. An exhausted Elisabeth now held and nursed her infant.] Realizing that the LORD God had indeed shown great mercy upon Elisabeth, when they heard of the birth, her neighbors and relatives came and rejoiced with Elisabeth.



Circumcision was a basic Hebrew Law requirement. It requires that every son of an Israelite woman be circumcised on the eighth day after his birth. This holy ritual refers back to the pledge which Jehovah made to Abraham prosper if he would truly be loyal. This covenant was entered into and sealed by the actual act of cutting the flesh of Abraham at age 99 (Gen. 17:1-14), called in Hebrew, “ot brit,” meaning sign of the everlasting Covenant, serving as a token sign between the LORD Jehovah and mankind through Abraham. (Gen. 17:1-14) This section of Genesis ends stating that the un-circumcised individual has broken the holy commandment of the Covenant, being cut off from Israel. For these reasons, circumcision is considered the most important commandment under Hebrew Law, and was administered at the point of death.

[A decade after the Lord Jesus' ascension, the apostle Paul and Barnabas met in Jerusalem with certain Pharisees, the apostles and elders. They would debated the matter of circumcision amongst the gentiles and under Simon-Peter's leadership agreed that “Spiritual Circumcision” was sufficient. (See Acts 15 and Rom. 2:29; Col. 2:11; 1 Cor. 7:19; Gal. 6:15.) Yet, later the Apostle Paul would later circumcise Timothy whose father was Greek²⁸ and satisfy the Jews.]

Eight days later, a priest came to Zacharias' house and circumcised the newborn according to the Law of Moses.²⁹ (see Luke 1:59) After the ceremonial procedure, gathering called him Zacharias, after his father. But Elisabeth quickly insisted, “No! He must be called John.” But the people replied, “No one among your relatives has that name.” They motioned to Zacharias to find out what he would like to name the child. Still mute, Zacharias beckoned for a writing tablet. He wrote, “His name is John.” (Luke 1:63) The people marveled at the naming.

²⁸ Acts 16:1-3.

²⁹ Leviticus 12:3.

Instantly, Zacharias' tongue was loosed and he began to praise the LORD God in what would later be known as *Zacharias' prophecy*. Filled with the Holy Spirit, he stated, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel. For He has visited and redeemed his people. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, as He said through his holy prophets of long ago. We will be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us—to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy agreement, the oath He swore to our father Abraham: to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before God all the days of our life.

"And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High. You will go before the Lord to prepare the way for him,³⁰ to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun [the Dayspring³¹ or Lord Jesus] will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace." (**Luke 1:68-79**) [*Author's Reflection*: Here the Holy Ghost had revealed to Zacharias that the Almighty God's special "Light of Creation" described by Moses in the scroll of Genesis 1:1-5 was coming to earth, the Messiah. (See appendix A for full details.)]

Fear engulfed the entire gathering after Zacharias prophesied that the Day-Star was coming to earth. His words were debated throughout Judea. The gathering treasured Zacharias' message within their hearts, wondering, "What kind of child will this be?" (**Luke 1:66**) The Lord's hand was with John. [Instantly new of Zacharias' prophecy of his newly circumcised son, said to be the forerunner of the soon to appear "Messiah" spread like wild-fire throughout the entire hill country covering every village and city of Judah. Among those which heard from the massive spy network was king Herod the Great, at Jerusalem, who outwardly played off the elderly priests' foolish prophecies. However, inwardly he nervously began to ponder its' possibility.]

³⁰ Isaiah 40:3.

³¹ Genesis 1:1-5, 2 Peter 1:19.