**Wednesday Night Bible Study**

**Wednesday 08 December 2021**

**Queens Chapel UMC \* 7410 Muirkirk Road \* Beltsville, MD 20705**

**Instructor: Rev. Dr. Will Butler**

~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~~

**The Gospel of Luke**

**Key Verse**: **Luke 1:4**

“So that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

**Luke 1:11-17** An Angel Announces the Birth of John the Baptist

 11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

* Fear is a normal response to a divine visit from an Angel—for example:

**Judges 6:20-22 – Gideon feared after being called by God to fight the enemy—he wanted proof that God would be with him. God sends an angel**

 “20 The angel of God said to him, “Take the meat and the unleavened bread, place them on this rock, and pour out the broth.” And Gideon did so.

 21 Then the angel of the Lord touched the meat and the unleavened bread with the tip of the staff that was in his hand. Fire flared from the rock, consuming the meat and the bread. And the angel of the Lord disappeared.

 22 When Gideon realized that it was the angel of the Lord, he exclaimed, “Alas, Sovereign Lord! I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face!”

**Angels, who they are:**

* **Psalms 104:4-5** confirms that Angels were created by God after God laid the foundation of the earth

 “4 Who makes His angels spirits, His ministers a flame of fire.

 5 You who laid the foundations of the earth, So that it should not be moved forever”

* Angels are innumerable—**Hebrews 12:22** says…

 “But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels”

* Angels are invisible and they have the ability to become visible by choice in many forms—no wonder the Bible warns us to be careful—**Hebrews 13:2**…

 “Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.”

* Angels are invincible—they are strong and mighty. The Angel that visited Zacharias is believed to be the Angel Gabriel, which means “the mighty one”
* Daniel credits angels for delivering him from the lions’ den
* 2 Kings 19 confirms that one angel, in one night destroyed 185,000 warriors of Assyria
* It was an angel that rolled away the stone when Jesus rose from the dead
* Most of all, Angels are intrigued by salvation—According to Luke 15:10, the angels rejoice over one sinner but they don’t understand because angels never experienced salvation.
* Now God is about to become a man to save the world from their sins. Therefore, God sends Gabriel to make several announcements
* No one knows how an angel really looks because they can come in many forms—this time Gabriel’s appearance was terrifying to Zechariah—notice **Luke 1:13**

**Luke 1:13**

 13 But 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.

* The angel wanted Zechariah to know that his prayers were answered
* It was obvious that he was praying for his wife Elizabeth (according to verse 7) who was barren—that she would have a child.

**Luke 1:14**

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

* Gabriel gives Zechariah a mental view of the baby’s personality He “will be a joy and delight to you”
* And the impact this child will have upon the world. “and many will rejoice because of his birth”

Q = Did you know God created you to make an impact either on your family, community, friends or the world?

* Look at the impact John the Baptist will have upon his culture

**Luke 1:15-16**

 15 for 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.

 16 He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

* For a man or woman to be great in the sight of God is to walk with God by faith and in obedience to God’s Word
* He is never to take wine or other fermented drink—John’s mind and decision-making was not to be controlled by any substance. God wanted John to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 5:18**

 “Don’t be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit”

* and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. Means that God knows every baby that’s formed inside the womb of a woman.
* John was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was born into the world

**Luke 1:17**

 17 And 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.”

* And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah—The Prophet Elijah was known for his bold, uncompromising stand for God’s Word—even in the face of opposition
* The final verses of Malachi promised the return of Elijah before the Day of the Lord—**Read Malachi 4:5-6**

 “5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.

 6 **And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers,** Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse."

* John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy

**Luke 1:18-25** Zacharias Is Unable to Speak

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

 19 The 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.

 20 And 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, like Abraham, asked God how He was to perform something that was impossible because of his age
* Gabriel said to Zechariah, “are you kidding me?” I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news.
* In other words, I’m not giving you second-hand information here. God sent me from His presence to communicate this good news
* But since you still do not believe me… 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.”

 21 Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

* The people outside the temple were worried and wondering what was taking Zechariah so long to come out
* He was only to be in the temple long enough to offer incense on the altar at the curtain that separated him from the Holy of Holies.
* They were waiting on him to come out and pronounce the blessing [or Benediction] written in **Numbers 6:23-27**

 “23 "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, 'This is the way you shall bless the children of Israel. Say to them:

 24 "**The LORD bless you and keep you**;

 25 **The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you**;

 26 **The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace**."'

 27 "So they shall put My name on the children of Israel, and I will bless them."

* They didn’t realize he was having a conversation with God through the Angel Gabriel

 22 When 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.

 23 When his time of service was completed, he returned home.

 24 After 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.”

* After Elizabeth becomes pregnant, she began to praise God for what he has done
* The Lord God had taken away her shamefulness of being barren.
* Childlessness carried a strong disgrace and shame for a barren woman in this culture.
* Childlessness carried a social stigma that was usually humiliating for the woman
* Blessings were tied to birthrights and family line. A birth line of a man was very important to mention. For example,

**Isaiah 1:1** The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz,

**Jeremiah 1:1** The words of Jeremiah the son of Hilkiah,

**Hosea 1:1** The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beeri,

**Next week**: The Angel Gabriel announces Christ’s Birth to Mary