

# **The Couple God Uses**

## **When Did Christmas Begin?**

### **Luke 1:5-17**

Adapted from: [www.baptiststart.com/sermons\\_ppt.html](http://www.baptiststart.com/sermons_ppt.html)

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# The Couple God Uses

Luke 1:5-17

- 5 In 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.**
- 6 Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.**

# **The Couple God Uses**

## **Luke 1:5-17**

**7 But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.**

**8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,**

**9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.**

**10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.**

# The Couple God Uses

## Luke 1:5-17

- 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.**
- 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 give him the name John."**

# **The Couple God Uses**

## **Luke 1:5-17**

- 14 He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,**
- 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 from birth.**
- 16 Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God.**

## **The Couple God Uses**

### **Luke 1:5-17**

**17 And 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."**

## **The Christmas Story Starts with the Birth of John the Baptist**

- **Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.**
- **Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, (Acts 1:1-3)**



## The Christmas Story Starts with the Birth of John the Baptist

- The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- It is written in Isaiah the prophet:  
"I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way" — (Mark 1:1-2)





## **What the Births of John & Jesus Had in Common**

- **The same angel, Gabriel, appeared to Zechariah and Mary.**
- **Both were troubled by the angelic visit.**
- **Both were told not to be afraid.**
- **Both were told of the future birth of a son.....**

## **What the Births of John & Jesus Had in Common**

- **Both births were associated with the work of the Holy Spirit.**
- **In both passages the angel gave the name for the son.**
- **In both the angel stated that the son would be great and part of God's plan.**

## Differences Between John & Jesus

John's mother was older and had been unable to have children (impossible).

Jesus was born to a virgin (absolutely impossible).

John's name meant, "God is gracious."

Jesus name means, "Savior."

John came to prepare for the Lord.

Jesus IS the Lord.



# **The Couple God Uses**

**Insights from Zechariah and Elizabeth**

**1**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Exhibits Christian Character**

# Exhibits Christian Character

- **In 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.**
- **Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly. (Luke 1:5-6)**

**2**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Endures Delays & Setbacks**

# Endures Delays & Setbacks

- **But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years. (Luke 1:7)**
- **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 give him the name John. (Luke 1:13)**



## Answers to prayer delayed are not prayers unheard

- A great Spanish saint prayed for his people, "May God deny you peace and give you glory."
- A great modern preacher said, "Jesus Christ came not to make life easy but to make men great."

**3**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Exemplify God's Plan at Work**

# Exemplify God's Plan at Work

- Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.
- When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. (Luke 1:11-12)

## Good News in Verses 13-17

- Elizabeth will bear you a son
- There will be joy and delight for you
- Many will rejoice at his birth.
- he will be great in the sight of the Lord
- and will never drink wine or beer.
- He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb.
- What parent wouldn't like to be told they were to have a child like that?



## **Good things happen when you are at the right place at the right time**

- **Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,**
- **he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.**

**(Luke 1:8-9)**

# **Somebody Has to Be the First**

- **Zechariah and Elizabeth were the first to hear from God in 400 years.**
- **They went ahead of Mary and Joseph in having a baby with supernatural aid.**

**4**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Experience God's Correction**

# Experience God's Correction

- Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."
- The angel answered, "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."
- 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 proper time." (Luke 1:18-20)





**5**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Worship God in Spirit-filled Worship**

# Exalt God in Spirit-filled Worship

- **When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.**
- **In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! (Luke 1:41- 42)**



# Exalt God in Spirit-filled Worship

- His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:
- "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has redeemed his people. (Luke 1:67-68)



# 6

**The Couple God Uses**

**Encourage Those Behind Them**

# Encourage Those Behind Them

- **Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.**
- **For nothing is impossible with God.”**

**(Luke 1:36-37)**



# Encourage Those Behind Them

- When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.
- In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! (Luke 1:41- 42)
- Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home. (Luke 1:56)



**7**

**The Couple God Uses**

**Equip a New Generation To Serve God**

## High Impact Child

- 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 give him the name John.
- He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,
- 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 from birth.....



# High Impact Child

- Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God.
- And 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." (Luke 1:13-17)

## **The Couple God Uses (Luke 1)**

- 1. Exhibit Christian Character (verses 5-6)**
- 2. Endure Delays & Setbacks (v. 7)**
- 3. Exemplify God's Good Plan at Work (11-17)**
- 4. Experience God's Correction (18-20)**
- 5. Exalt God in Spirit-filled worship (41-42,67-68)**
- 6. Encourage Those Behind Them (36-56)**
- 7. Equip a New Generation to Serve God (13-17)**

# The Couple God Uses (Luke 1)

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