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**The
Birth of Jesus
in
Luke.**

(Luke 1:1-79)

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Birth of Jesus in the Luke.

Topics.

- Zechariah and Elizabeth.
- The birth of John the Baptist
- The spirit and power of Elijah.
- Gabriel goes to Mary.
- Jesus will be called the Son of the Most High.
- Christ is the promised seed of David.
- Elizabeth gives birth to John.
- The oath the LORD swore to Abraham.

INTRODUCTION

Matthew chapter one and Luke chapter three are the only references to the actual genealogy and birth of Jesus in the New Testament. In both accounts the virgin birth is very clear. Joseph was a descended of the house of David and the natural son of Jacob there is no mention of Joseph in Scripture after Jesus was in the temple at twelve years old.

Luke is concerned with Jesus' humanity (Luke 3:23-38) he establishes Jesus actual physical descent from Mary through to David then moves from David to Adam. Luke writes through Jesus mother Mary, he tells the story from Mary's viewpoint, he tells of Mary's reception of the Angel's message, describing her maidenly fears, her humble submission to the will of God her inner emotions, puzzled question and her hurried journey to Elizabeth. Her praise to God for the favour accorded her in being the mother of the Messiah and gives details of the birth itself (Luke 1:26-56).

1

ZECHARIAH AND ELIZABETH

- **Luke 1:1-5:** Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, ²just as those (the apostles) who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, ³it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, ⁴that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught. ⁵In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

Zechariah: means Jehovah has remembered.

Elizabeth: means God is my oath she was the wife of Zacharias, mother of John the Baptist, relative of Mary and a descended of Aaron the high priest (Luke 1:36) (Luke 1:5).

Theophilus: was a Christian to whom Luke addressed the books of Luke and Acts (Luke 1:3) (Acts 1:1). Luke's purpose for writing this letter was to give Theophilus absolute confidence in the things he had been taught about Christ.

Those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word refer to the apostles and those that saw Christ. Luke had been very carefully following all things concerning Christ and the apostles and, in

this chapter, gives a detailed account of the birth of John the Baptist by his mother Elizabeth and the birth of Jesus by Mary.

- **Luke 1:6-11:** And they were both (Zechariah and Elizabeth) righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. ⁸Now while he (Zechariah) was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord (God) and burn incense. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

Elizabeth and Zacharias were both righteous and blameless before God, this does not mean they were without sin, but that they had hearts of integrity, honesty, compassion and did what was right before God and good toward others. If anyone of us could attain to the glorious state of sinlessness Christ died for no reason. The Lord didn't die a brutal, bloody and cruel death so we could attain to a sin free life, but because we couldn't. There has only ever been one man who has lived without sin and his name is the Lord Jesus Christ the Son of God. Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were well advanced in years this means that Elizabeth was unable to have children. If it was possible for Elizabeth to could give birth it is certain she would have had children when she was a much younger woman. Jewish woman married with the intention of having children if they did not have children it was not because they chose not to, but because the woman was unable to. Added to this Elizabeth's words, "The Lord has taken away my reproach among people" (Luke 1:25) when she did conceive John clearly show she desired children long before now. Zechariah acting as priest entered the temple of God and an angel of the LORD appeared to him. The name of this angel who appeared to Zechariah was Gabriel who stands in the presence of God (Luke 1:120).

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

2

- **Luke 1:12-15:** And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

When Zechariah saw the angel, he was fearful, perhaps he thought Gabriel was going to bring some form of judgment upon him. The angel comforts Zechariah who had obviously been praying that his wife Elizabeth would be healed and able to conceive a child. Gabriel tells Zechariah that God has heard his prayer and that Elizabeth his wife will conceive and will bear a child who is to be named John. Unlike Moses and Elijah, John never performed one miracle, yet the angel told Zechariah that John will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb and be great before the Lord. John was great before the Lord because he had the honour of introducing Israel's promised Messiah the Christ and Saviour of the world to Israel and to the world. The birth of John was a miracle birth, prayers were prayed and heard by God, the angel Gabriel was involved. Zechariah's earnest prayers for his wife clearly show that Elizabeth wanted children, but was unable to conceive. We are told that John would be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb this most likely happened when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary and the baby leaped in her womb and the Holy Spirit filled Elizabeth (Luke 1:41).

- **Luke 1:16-17:** And he (John) will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, ¹⁷and he will go before him (the Lord) in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

Some in Christian circles today use the term, "John will turn the hearts of the people to the Lord their God" to support the theory that Jesus is God, but Gabriel is not implying that Jesus is God, but simply saying that John will turn the hearts of the people to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

For further information see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH

Gabriel tells Zechariah that John will go in the spirit and power of Elijah. Elijah destroyed the false religious leaders of Baal who had greatly influenced the people of Israel and led them away from God (1 Kings 18:17-40). He through his passion for the LORD'S name and God's people turned the hearts of the people back to the LORD their God. This is exactly what John did, his mission was to make a people ready for the Lord by turning the hearts of the disobedient to wisdom, justice and fairness and the hearts of the fathers to the children, meaning he was to turn the hearts and ears of the older generation who were indoctrinated with the Old Covenant to accept and listen to the younger and newer generation (especially Christ) who came with the New Covenant and the Good News of the Gospel of grace.

ZECHARIAH IS MADE MUTE

- **Luke 1:18-23:** And Zechariah said to the angel "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." ¹⁹And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." ²¹And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²²And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realised that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. ²³And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

Because Zechariah and Elizabeth were not young people Zechariah found it hard to believe Gabriel's words, so the angel tells him he will not be able to talk again until John is born. A similar thing happened to Ezekiel, during a time when Israel was rebellious the LORD made the prophet mute so that when he did speak he would be a sign to the people of Israel and they would know the LORD had been speaking with him and that he was speaking the word of the LORD (Ezek. 3:26-27). This is exactly the effect Zechariah's muteness had on the people waiting in prayer outside the Temple, they realised the LORD had given him a vision.

ELIZABETH HIDES HERSELF

- **Luke 1:24-25:** After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵"Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

It was considered a shame for a Jewish woman not to have children perhaps Elizabeth because of her old age hid herself for five months to make sure she was pregnant before saying anything or maybe to stay safe and protected from harm.

GABRIEL GOES TO MARY

- **Luke 1:26-31:** In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favoured one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.

In the sixth month refers to the sixth month of Mary's cousin Elizabeth being pregnant with John (Luke 1:36). Some believe the word virgin in this context simply means a young maiden (i.e. unmarried young woman), but in nearly all Scriptures of the Bible that the word virgin is used it implies a chaste woman, in only one verse it could be taken to simply mean a young unmarried woman. The word virgin means chaste and chaste means, a pure woman, one that is restrained, modest, celibate, unused, unspoilt, stainless and spotless. Added to this Scripture teaches that single people should not be having a sexual relationship until they are married therefore when God uses the word virgin in relationship to an unmarried woman it carries the idea of a woman that is chaste and not just a young maiden.

JEWISH BETROTHAL AND MARRIAGE

First is the betrothal (erusin) which is the reading of the marriage contract (ketubba) and the giving of the ring with a declaration, "Behold you are consecrated to me by this ring according to the Law of Moses and Israel." This is later followed by the marriage ceremony (nissu'in) consisting of the reciting of the seven marriage benedictions which is performed under a huppa (a canopy, that symbolizes the bridal bower). Since Jewish religious law permits a man to divorce his wife at any time for any reason, the Jewish marriage contract (the Ketubba) guaranteed a bride certain future rights before her marriage. It was introduced in ancient times to protect a woman's rights and to make divorce a costly matter for the husband. A Jewish wife carefully preserves the ketubba, not as evidence of marriage but for its future value (cited from the Encyclopaedia Britannica). Mary and Joseph were betrothed to marry meaning they had contracted together according to Jewish law and custom to marry. We in the West would say they are engaged to marry, though being engaged is certainly not as binding as a Jewish betrothal was. The angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will conceive in her womb and bear a son who she is to name Jesus. Here we see that the angel Gabriel was involved in the miracle births of both Elizabeth and Mary. For those who doubt the miracle birth of Jesus, surely if God can bring about a birth in a woman well advanced in years and who was unable to conceive and bear children, it is not difficult to believe that God could bring about a miracle birth in a young woman who is in the prime of her life for giving birth to children and is well able.

JESUS WILL BE CALLED THE SON OF THE MOST HIGH.

- **Luke 1:32-33:** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

Gabriel tells Mary the Lord God will give her child the throne of his father David (v32), David is the father of Jesus in the sense that Mary Jesus mother descended from David's son Nathan. (Many Bible Scholars suspect Joseph descended from David's son Solomon).

CHRIST IS THE PROMISED SEED OF DAVID

- In the book of Samuel, the LORD promises David after he dies God will raise up offspring (seed in KJV) after him who will come from his body and the LORD will establish his Kingdom (2 Sam. 7:11-12).
- In the book of Jeremiah, the LORD says, he will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land (Jer. 23:5).
- In the book of Psalms, the LORD swore to David that one of the sons of his body will sit on his throne (Psalm 132:11).
- In the book of Isaiah, the LORD said, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse and a Branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1). (David was the son of Jesse) (1 Sam 16:11).

Paul wrote:

- Concerning God's Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:3-4).
- Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel (2 Tim. 2:8).

These verses shine a spotlight on the following truths, Jesus was God's son at his birth by being made of the seed of David according to the flesh, this could only be through Mary because if Joseph was the paternal father how could Scripture call David Jesus' father. Jesus was also declared or called God's son because of the power of the resurrection that proved his holiness. If Jesus had sinned, God could not have resurrected him since the law would then have had every legal right to hold Jesus in the grave.

THERE WILL BE NO END TO HIS KINGDOM

Gabriel's words to Mary, "Of his Kingdom there will be no end." (v33) Refers to the Kingdom spoken of in the book of Daniel, in which the LORD tells Daniel that God will set up a Kingdom that will break in pieces all other kingdoms and bring them to an end. It is a Kingdom that will never be destroyed never left to another people and will stand forever (Dan 2:44). All peoples, nations, and languages will serve God's King the Lord Jesus Christ, his dominion will be an everlasting dominion, which will never pass away or be destroyed (Dan 7:14). The greatness, authority and power of all kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Most High it will be an everlasting Kingdom and all dominions and nations will serve and obey them (Dan 7:27). For further information see the title:

- Future Kingdom of God in the New Testament.
- In, Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MARY QUESTIONS GABRIEL

- **Luke 1:34-38:** And Mary said to the angel (Gabriel), "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Gabriel had told Mary that she will conceive and bear a son (v30); Mary knowing she had not lain with Joseph asked how will she conceive when she has not been with any man? Gabriel basically answers her by telling

Mary she does not need to lay with a man to fall pregnant because the Holy Spirit will come upon her and she will conceive a child by the creative power of God. To give Mary even more confidence Gabriel reminds Mary that Elizabeth's baby is a miracle child and that nothing is impossible for God. It is interesting to remember that the birth of Isaac was also a miracle; Sarah Abraham's wife was also a barren woman and ninety-years old when she gave birth to Isaac. To confirm their faith that LORD would do what he had promised God said to Sarah and Abraham, "Is anything too hard for the LORD?" (Gen 18:14). Mary accepts the word of Gabriel and the angel leaves her.

MARY VISITS ELIZABETH

- **Luke 1:39-45:** In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby (John) leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

The words, "Mary arose in those days" does not necessarily mean that she immediately left to go and visit Elisabeth. It is more likely that just as Manoah's barren wife (the mother of Samson) after the angel of the LORD had appeared to her went and told her husband Manoah (Judges 13) that Mary likewise would have gone to find Joseph and tell him all that the Gabriel had said, who could have an experience like that and not go and tell the person they love and intend to marry?

The Scripture says that Mary was found with child, meaning she had the knowledge of the child and it is certain with this knowledge Mary went and told Joseph that she was going to have a child, but Joseph did not believe the story and while thinking about putting her away the angel came and told him the child is of the Holy Spirit, all of this could have happened the same day.

REMEMBER: there is no mention that Gabriel went to visit Elisabeth and tell her that she was going to have a child, nor is there any mentioned of Zachariah her husband telling his wife that an angel of God had told him she will have a child. Luke leaves it up to the common sense of the reader to suppose that Zachariah would naturally tell his wife all that Gabriel had said. Luke applies this same principle with his account of Mary, he takes it for granted that the reader will suppose that Mary would go and tell Joseph just as Manoah's wife went and told her husband.

Ponder for a Moment: Gabriel in his visit to Mary told her he had also visited Elizabeth (Mary's relative) (v36) so naturally Mary goes to visit her, imagine the enormous excitement Mary would have had on her journey to visit Elizabeth, and the thrill for Elizabeth knowing they were both to be an amazing part of the eternal plan of God. Both women would have known the Scriptures no-doubt they were up day and night reading everything again that the Old Testament spoke of concerning Christ and jumping for joy that they were favoured and honoured in such a way by the LORD.

NOTE: some in Christianity mistakenly teach that Jesus is actually God, but if that is a true statement then God has a mother, because Elizabeth calls Mary the mother of Jesus (v43). Obviously when Elizabeth refers to Mary as the mother of the Lord, she does not have in mind that he is God, but that he is the Messiah and Saviour of Israel, she does not for a moment think that Mary is pregnant with God or going to give birth to God. Added to this Gabriel told Mary that her child is the Son of God, he

did not say Mary was going conceive in her womb and give birth to God. The teaching that Jesus is God is a false teaching it is read into certain Scriptures by those who approach them with the preconceived mindset that Jesus is God. For further information see the title:

- Trinity (The Doctrine of the Trinity) in Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU).

MARY PRAISES GOD

- **Luke 1:46-55:** And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, ⁴⁸for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. ⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm (Christ) he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; ⁵²he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away. ⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring (seed in the KJV) forever."

Mary's words, "His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation" (v50) is alluding to the LORD'S promise that He will establish His covenant with Abraham and his offspring (Seed in the KJV) after him throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant and will show steadfast love to thousands of those who love Him and keep His commandments, and to the following words of David, "The steadfast love of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children (Genesis 17:7) (Exod. 20:6) (Psalm 103:17-18).

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THE POOR AND THE RICH

God has filled the hungry with good things and the rich he has sent empty away means, God saves those who are humble and poor, but He casts away those who are rich, prideful and selfish with their wealth. The poor should never envy the rich because it is far easier for a poor person to accept Christ since they have nothing to give up or loose, whereas a rich person has all the pleasures of this world to fulfil their life and worldly treasures and a lifestyle that they may be called to let go.

Mary's words:

- As God spoke to Abraham and his offspring (Seed in the KJV) (v55).

Refer to the LORD'S promise to Abraham that Sarah will bear a son who they will name Isaac and who God will establish His covenant with as an everlasting covenant for his offspring (Seed in KJV) after him. (Gens 17:19) and to the LORD'S promise to David, that one of his sons from his body (meaning one of his descendants) will sit on David's throne (notice the LORD does not name the son) (Psalm 132:11). The child that Mary is about to give birth to is the fulfilment of the LORD'S promise to Abraham and David, Christ is the promised seed of Abraham and the promised seed of David. Matthew fully aware of this glorious truth begins his writings with the words, "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1)

MARY RETURNS HOME

- **Luke 1:56:** And Mary remained with her (Elizabeth) about three months and returned to her home.

When Gabriel visited Mary Elizabeth was six months pregnant (v36) and Mary spent three months with her so it is most likely Mary was with Elizabeth at the birth of John and the reason she stayed with her so long before returning home.

ELIZABETH GIVES BIRTH TO JOHN

- **Luke 1:57-66:** Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸And her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." ⁶¹And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." ⁶²And they made signs to his father inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. ⁶⁴And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵And fear came on all their neighbours. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.

It was the Jewish custom to circumcise a child when they were eight days old because circumcision was a sign of the everlasting covenant between God and Abraham. Whoever was not circumcised broke God's covenant and was to be cut off from God's people. The ceremony also included naming the baby boy being circumcised. Many Jewish names are the same because it was Jewish culture to name the child after the father or a relative (Gen. 17:9-15) (Lev 12:3). Female babies are named in the synagogue, on the Sabbath following their birth when the father is called to recite the benedictions over the reading of Torah

NOTE: though the previous verses have told us Mary has gone home that does not necessarily mean she was not at the birth of John as these verses may not be in chronological order and Luke could easily be recapping the events of the birth of John. It seems hardly likely Mary would leave Elizabeth her relative (v36) when she was nine months pregnant and ready to give birth. It is also possible that Luke has deliberately left Mary out because the focus is Elizabeth, the birth of John and the miracle of Zechariah speaking again all of which Mary has nothing to do with.

ZECHARIAH SPEAKS

It was the custom in ancient times to name a male child after their father; Zechariah must have been writing notes to Elizabeth because she stood against her friends and said the child will be called John. During the history of the Bible there was no global internet or mobile phones so God throughout the Bible often did things to shock the mind in such a manner that it would start people talking. Making Zechariah mute during Elizabeth pregnancy and then giving him his voice back is one of those moments. The crowds are stunned when Zechariah speaks and praises the LORD and everyone is struck with awe and wonder and news about Elizabeth's new-born child rapidly spreads. A similar thing happened to Ezekiel, the Lord made him mute so that when he did speak, he would be a sign to the people of Israel and they would know the LORD had been speaking with him and that he was speaking the word of the LORD (Ezek. 3:26-27). This is exactly the effect Zechariah's muteness had on the people waiting in prayer outside the Temple, they realised the LORD had been with him and the entire events concerning the birth of John were spoken of not only in the city of Jerusalem but even up in the hills of Judah.

ZECHARIAH IS FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND PROPHECIES

- **Luke 1:67-79:** And his (John's) father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, ⁶⁸"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people ⁶⁹and has raised up a horn (Christ) of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰as he (the LORD God) spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; ⁷²to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, ⁷³the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. ⁷⁶And you, child (John) will be called the prophet of the Most High for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise (Christ) shall visit us from on high ⁷⁹to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Mary had been staying with Elizabeth and Zechariah for the past three months, obviously Mary would have told Zechariah all about Gabriel's visit and that she is pregnant with the Christ the promised horn of Salvation (v69) spoken of by the LORD'S holy prophets of old. This is why Jesus said, "Among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist." John even though he did no miracles was the greatest of all because he prepared the way for the promised seed of Abraham and David the Messiah of Israel, the Son of God. (Matt 11:11) (Luke 7:28). Zechariah's words:

- As the LORD God spoke by the Prophets from of Old (v70).

Refer to the LORD'S eternal promise that He would raise up for David a righteous Branch, who will reign as King and deal wisely and execute justice and righteousness in the land and in his days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely and the name by which he will be called will be: "The Lord is our righteousness" (Jer. 23:5-6).

THE OATH THE LORD SWORE TO ABRAHAM

God promised Abraham that he would make him the father of a multitude of nations (Gen 17:4), bless and multiply his offspring as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore and that his offspring would possess the stronghold of their enemies. To convince the heirs of the promise of the unchangeable character of his purpose, God guaranteed the promise with an oath. (Genesis 22:16-17) (Hebrews 6:13-17).

CONCLUSION

David is presented as the father of Jesus and Mary the mother there is no mention of Joseph in Gabriel's entire salutation. Obviously, it could not read David was the father of Jesus and Joseph was the father, many Scriptures throughout the Bible only work with a virgin birth. Joseph is never seen as Jesus paternal father in Scripture. Jesus was God's son at his birth by being made of the seed of David through Mary according to the flesh. If Joseph was the paternal father, how could Scripture call David Jesus' father? David was Jesus father by descent, Joseph was Jesus father by law, and God was his Father by His creative power and the Holy Spirit. Mary asks Gabriel the question:

- How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

Gabriel has not made any mention of Joseph in his salutation to Mary, this would be strange to Mary since she is betrothed (but not married) to a future husband. Even more confusing to Mary would be the fact Gabriel told her that the child's father, will be David and will be called the Son of the Highest, Mary would have known what the term the Son of the Most

High meant, making Gabriel's message even more mysterious, is it any surprise she wonders how can this be? If this were to be a normal birth Gabriel would have said the same as he did with Zacharias and Elizabeth. Gabriel came to Zacharias (a married man) and told him "Your wife Elisabeth shall bear you a son and you shall call his name John," but in talking to Mary Gabriel deliberately leaves Joseph out in his salutation to Mary, and Mary questions this. If Joseph was to be the father why would Gabriel give such a strange answer to Mary's question? "How shall this be?" Surely, he would have simply said, "You and Joseph will have a child," but Gabriel does not include Joseph, this may be another reason why Mary asks the question "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

Both the mother of Isaac and Jacob were barren and unable to bare children, Sarah's birth of Isaac and Rebekah's birth of Jacob were both amazing miracles as both these women were unable to even have a child, whereas Mary was young and well able to give birth. Believing in the Virgin Birth of Mary should not be so difficult considering modern scientists today have in theory the knowledge to clone a child from DNA. It should not be so amazing to anyone that man has the ability to create mortal life since God has put in the seed of all things the ability to create another of its own kind, thus man is only creating from what God has already given him, without the DNA man can do nothing, but God can. Man, maybe able to create mortal life, but only God can create immortal and eternal life. Since God created the DNA, how simple for Him to use His creative power to alter Mary's DNA or alter some genetic information so that Mary would conceive. If anyone still doubts the Virgin Birth, they should consider the following words the angel of the LORD spoke to Sarah concerning the birth of Isaac:

- Is anything too hard for the LORD? (Gen 18:14).

And the following words Gabriel spoke to Mary concerning the birth of Jesus:

- Nothing will be impossible with God (37).

The birth of Adam, Eve, Sarah, Rachael, Manoah's wife, Elizabeth and Mary are all full mysteries, angels, miracles and the miraculous creative hand of God. Since God is the source of all life and created all things no one should have any difficulty in believing in the Virgin Birth especially since so many Scriptures have to be forced, twisted and distorted to deny the Virgin Birth and so many others lose their majestic prophetic glory.