**THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO**

**LUKE**

*Dedication to Theophilus*

1

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, 2just as those 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.

*Birth of John the Baptist Foretold*

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. 6And they were both 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.

*Jan. 24: John the Baptist*

8Now while he 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 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. 12And 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. 16And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17and he will go before him 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.”

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

19The 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. 20And 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.”

21Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple. 22When 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.

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

24After 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.”

*Birth of Jesus Foretold*

26In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27to a virgin betrothedto 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 favored 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 favor with God. 31And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32He 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.”

34And Mary said to the angel, “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 servantof the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.

*Mary Visits Elizabeth*

39In 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 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 bea fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

*Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat*

46And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,  
47    and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
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;  
    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 away empty.  
54He has helped his servant Israel,  
    in remembrance of his mercy,  
55as he spoke to our fathers,  
    to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

56And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

*The Birth of John the Baptist*

57Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. 58And her neighbors 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 neighbors. 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.

*Zechariah's Prophecy*

67And his 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 of salvation for us  
    in the house of his servant David,  
70as he 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  
74    that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,  
might serve him without fear,  
75    in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.  
76And you, child, 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 shall visit usfrom 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.”

80And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

*The Birth of Jesus Christ*

2

 In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. 2This was the first registration whenQuirinius was governor of Syria. 3And all went to be registered, each to his own town. 4And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, 5to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. 6And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. 7And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

*The Shepherds and the Angels*

8And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 9And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. 10And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. 11For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” 13And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14“Glory to God in the highest,  
    and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

15When the angels went away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.” 16And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger. 17And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child. 18And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

21And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

Jesus Presented at the Temple

22And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord 23(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every male who first opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord”) 24and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, “a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.” 25Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, 28he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

29“Lord, now you are letting your servantdepart in peace,  
    according to your word;  
30for my eyes have seen your salvation  
31    that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,  
32a light for revelation to the Gentiles,  
    and for glory to your people Israel.”

33And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. 34And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, “Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35(and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

36And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, 37and then as a widow until she was eighty-four. She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. 38And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.

*The Return to Nazareth*

39And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. 40And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

*The Boy Jesus in the Temple*

41Now his parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42And when he was twelve years old, they went up according to custom. 43And when the feast was ended, as they were returning, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. His parents did not know it, 44but supposing him to be in the group they went a day's journey, but then they began to search for him among their relatives and acquaintances, 45and when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, searching for him. 46After three days they found him in the temple, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. 47And all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. 48And when his parentssaw him, they were astonished. And his mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in great distress.” 49And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?” 50And they did not understand the saying that he spoke to them. 51And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was submissive to them. And his mother treasured up all these things in her heart.

52And Jesus increased in wisdom and in statureand in favor with God and man.

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