

**LESSONS THIS QUARTER**

- 1) 04 Dec 2016 ..... Joshua 1:1-18
- 2) 11 Dec ..... Joshua 2:1 – 6:27
- 3) 18 Dec ..... Joshua 7:2 – 12:24
- 4) 25 Dec ..... **Christmas Message Luke 1:26-38**
- 5) 01 Jan 2017 ..... Joshua 13:1 – 22:34
- 6) 08 Jan ..... Joshua 23:1 – 24:33
- 7) 15 Jan ..... Sanctity of Life Prov 24:10-12; Mark 10:46-49
- 8) 22 Jan ..... Judges 1:1 – 5:31
- 9) 29 Jan ..... Judges 6:1 – 12:15
- 10) 05 Feb ..... Judges 13:1 – 16:31
- 11) 12 Feb ..... Judges 17:1 – 21:25
- 12) 19 Feb ..... Ruth 1:1 – 2:23
- 13) 26 Feb ..... Ruth 3:1 – 4:22

**INTRODUCTION**

- If anyone has doubts about the validity or historical reliability of the New Testament, study the Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts
- Luke, a physician, was meticulous with details in both of his books
- Luke’s Gospel and Book of Acts accurately identify more than 100 historical names & places, including the water depth near a harbor
- So, if he is accurate with his secular details, it stands to reason when he states that a miracle happened it has the same reliability
- Also, Luke doesn’t embellish his stories, and he even records unpleasant events about his characters, which gives more credibility
- Luke was a co-worker and a dear friend to the Apostle Paul. Paul called Luke “a dearly loved physician” (Col 4:14). Near the end of Paul’s life we are told “only Luke” was with him (2 Tim 4:11)

Passage	Comments
Luke 1:1-4	<p><b>Dedication to Theophilus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Luke apparently was a Gentile convert who wrote to another Gentile convert, Theophilus, to help confirm his faith with the facts of Jesus being God in the flesh</li> <li>• Luke tracked down the original sources of information (over 500 eyewitnesses were available – 1Cor 15:6)</li> </ul>
Side Note: We Do Not Have Blind Faith	<p>The Christian faith is not a blind faith. Unlike every other religion in the world, including atheism, our faith is based on substance – reliable historical and scientific evidence.</p> <p><b>Historical Fact #1.</b> We have more historical evidence that Jesus lived (10 sources) than we do of Jesus’ contemporary, Tiberius Caesar (only 4 historical sources)</p> <p><b>Scientific Fact #1.</b> Mathematical probability of just 10 out of 365 Messianic prophecies being fulfilled and referring to anyone else other than Jesus Christ is nil</p> <p><b>Scientific Fact #2.</b> Cosmological and teleological arguments and evidence for a logical design of the universe and for life on earth give credence to God’s existence (Src: “I don’t have Enough Faith to be an Atheist”, Geisler &amp; Turek)</p>
1:5-25	<p><b>Gabriel Foretells John’s Birth to Zechariah</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zechariah, a Levitical priest, had the duty to burn incense in the sanctuary. Gabriel popped in to say Hi</li> <li>• Zechariah was “chosen by lot” signifies God even controls the roll of the dice..... Proverbs 16:33</li> <li>• John the Baptist was going to be special from birth, as he was filled with the Holy Spirit while still in the womb</li> </ul>
Who was Gabriel?	<p>Though commonly spoken of as an Archangel, he is not called such in Scripture. He appears in the apocryphal Book of Enoch (Chaps 9, 20, 40) as one of 4 chief angels. Gabriel is only mentioned 4x in the Bible. Twice in Daniel and twice in Luke as a messenger of historical news</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Daniel 8:16; 9:21.</b> Gabriel was commissioned to explain to Daniel the vision of the ram and the he-goat, and to give the prediction of the 70 weeks</li> </ul>

Passage	Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Luke 1:19, 26.</b> He announces to Zacharias the birth of John the Baptist, and to Mary the birth of Jesus</li> <li>• Other named angels in the Bible include Michael the Archangel (Dan 10, 12, Jud, Rev 12) and Satan/Lucifer</li> </ul>
1:26-38	<p><b>Gabriel Foretells Jesus’ Birth to Mary</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To accept the Lord’s will for her life, Mary was going to be labeled a “loose woman,” an adulterer, a liar</li> <li>• Why didn’t Mary get disciplined for asking a question of Gabriel like Zechariah did? “How can this be?”                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Zechariah was disciplined for his lack of faith</li> <li>♦ Mary asked out of curiosity – Miracle? or Natural?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
1:39-45	<p><b>Mary Visits Elizabeth</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary and Elizabeth may have been 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins, or possibly niece and aunt either by blood or marriage</li> <li>• Elizabeth realized Mary’s special pregnancy</li> <li>• Luke probably got these details directly from Mary</li> </ul>
1:46-56	<p><b>Mary’s Praise</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mary echoes many of the teachings from the Psalms</li> <li>• v48. Mary was definitely blessed by God for being chosen to raise His Son, but the Catholics went too far with venerating her beyond God’s intent. Mary was not a perpetual virgin, nor was she sinless (she needed saving), nor a co-redeemer with Christ, nor should we pray to her, nor was she assumed into Heaven</li> </ul>
1:57-66	<p><b>The Birth and Naming of John</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the right time, Zechariah’s voice returned and then the people had “fear” of what was transpiring</li> <li>• It would take years for the child to grow for the people to see where things would finally lead → to Christ</li> <li>• Why does God take His sweet time to reveal His will?</li> </ul>
1:67-80	<p><b>Zechariah’s Prophecy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zech, filled with the Holy Spirit spoke of God’s intended blessings and salvation for Jews and Gentiles</li> <li>• v80. The end result of these prophecies is that John the Baptist would mature and grow spiritually strong, to lead many people, including us, to grow spiritually too</li> </ul>

**CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS**

- God chooses to use regular people such as Zechariah, Mary, Luke, Theophilus, and you and me to accomplish great things for the Kingdom from sharing His truth to raising the next generation

**NEXT WEEK:**

**Joshua 13 – 22.** The conquest of the Promised Land took about 5 years, but problems linger – would Israel trust God?

