

**I. Prayer Answered - Luke 1:13-17**

1. Zacharias and Elisabeth had longed for a child for a long time (**verse 13**)
    - A. Like most couples had prayed
    - B. Both came from the lineage of priests - Aaron
  2. "Fear not" your prayer has been heard
    - A. "Fear not" because verse 12 said he was startled
    - Rea -in Scripture most people who encounter an angel are afraid
    - B. Call him John
  3. Predictions about John (**verse 14**)
    - A. Joy and gladness
      - many will rejoice
    - B. He will be great in the sight of the Lord (**verse 15**)
      - Jesus called him the "greatest" (Mt. 11:11)
    - C. No wine or strong drink
      - Nazarite vow or committed behavior?
    - D. Filled with the Holy Ghost from birth
    - Rea -a "special" child from the beginning
    - E. He will turn Israel to God (**verse 16**)
    - Rea -sparked a revival in the nation... prior to the birth of Jesus
    - F. Will have the spirit and power of Elias (Elijah) (**verse 17**)
    - Rea -John is a "bridge" prophet - he bridges the Old Testament with the New Testament - after the Old Testament prophets, he comes in their spirit to usher in a new age
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
1. Where are the "prophets" of 2020?
  2. So consecrated that he refused wine nor strong drink
    - these are two different types of alcohol
  3. The New Testament gospels give special place to the prophet John - why do you think that is so?
  4. John's revival identified him
    - he also identified Jesus - "behold the Lamb of God... who takes away the sin of the world"

**II. Doubt Expressed - Luke 1:18-20**

1. Zacharias had a hard time believing (**verse 18**)
  - I'm an old man - my wife (also) is old
  - how, then, shall I know this?
2. I am Gabriel - sent from God (**verse 19**)
  - I'm bringing you good tidings (Jesus is always good news)
  - you will not be able to speak (dumb) (**verse 20**)
  - temporarily not able to speak - until the baby is born
  - because you didn't believe
- Rea 3. Mary also asked - how can this be? - and was not chastised for not believing... compare Mary with Zacharias

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. Old aged parents - compare Abraham and Sarah
2. Supernatural births indicated supernatural children
3. Samson also was a supernatural birth
  - Samuel (of Hannah) was also a miraculous birth
  - last but not least there is Jesus Himself
4. A message of glad tidings was met with a doubtful response - discuss

**III. Reality Seen - Luke 1:21-23**

1. Zacharias tarried long - while the angel and he spoke (**verse 21**)
  - the people outside waited for him to come out
2. He was speechless, so the people knew something miraculous had happened (**verse 22**)
  - he communicated (“beckoned”) but remained unable to talk
3. Finished his time of service (**verse 23**)
  - his “ministration”
  - he goes to his own home

Rea -compare the words “ministration” and “ministry”

4. Elisabeth conceived (**verse 24**)
5. She hid herself for five months
6. Her take/ response to the miracle (**verse 25**)
  - A. God has dealt with me
  - B. He has taken away my reproach among men
    - social stigma

Rea 7. God creates out of nothing - no chance of giving birth at this age

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. Long awaited, long prayed for - then this!
2. An answer to his and her prayer - see verse 13
3. John’s task - to “prepare” for the coming of the Lord - verse 17
  - forerunner - herald
4. A similar Jerry Rea idea:
  - John’s message was “repent”
  - Jesus is to be “received”
  - Together there is salvation
  - We:
    - A. Repent of our sins - get something out
    - B. Receive the Holy Spirit - get something in