

BREAKING THE SILENCE

Luke 1

The word of God will never fail

Prelude

Hear the words of the prophet, *"See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day the Lord comes. He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction.* Malachi 4:5-6 NIV

The last chapter, last verse, the last book the Old Testament and then silence for over 400 years. No spoken or written prophetic revelation from God, His Prophets or His messengers during this time. Much anticipation...Much expectation.

How do you view silence? Have you been in a period of silence. Seem like God is not speaking...

OR IS HE?

Let's Pray

Introduction to the Gospel of Luke

Excited to begin a new sermon series on the Gospel of Luke!

Uniqueness of the Gospel and the Man

- One of the 4 Gospels M,M,L,J
- Longest book in NT
- Unique about what is reported – More comprehensive accounts; 50% unique accounts found nowhere else; greater details and descriptions of events, geography and historical context
- Greater emphasis on people; intimate thoughts, feelings, and reflections from people, such as Mary
- Accounts of 20 miracles, 35 parables
- Details yes, but also artistry, with poems and songs
- Divine world view of history – not a secular view – sees all history as part of a divine sovereign plan with Jesus Christ at the center of history – not a byproduct of it.
- More emphasis on Jesus in prayer, the Holy Spirit, and the good news of the Gospel for everyone,

Luke the Man

- Not a Jew, a Gentile – Gentile perspective; more inclusive accounts about the role of women, children and outcasts (**OUTSIDERS**) in the Kingdom
- Not one of the 12 apostles
- Also wrote the book of Acts
- Wrote more NT than any other writer except Paul
- Physician
- Likely well-educated

Francis of Assisi “ preach the gospel at all times and if necessary, use words.

Let’s Get Started; please open you Bible or Bible app to the Gospel of Luke. And we will start in Luke, chapter 1, verse 1 , line by line, verse by verse. **(6 MIN MAX)**

Luke 1:1-4

*Many people have set out to write accounts about the events that have been fulfilled among us. ²They used the **eyewitness reports** circulating among us from the early disciples. ³Having **carefully investigated everything** from the beginning, I also have decided to write an **accurate account** for you, **most honorable Theophilus**, ⁴so you can be **certain of the truth** of everything you were taught.*

Okay not that exciting yet, but here is what is important, details, corroboration, and investigation. **LUKE’S PURPOSE STATEMENT**

Luke 1:5-17

*⁵When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order of Abijah, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also from the priestly line of Aaron. ⁶Zechariah and Elizabeth were **righteous in God’s eyes**, careful to obey all of the Lord’s commandments and regulations(**blameless NIV**). ⁷They had no children because Elizabeth was **unable to conceive**, and they were **both very old**.*

Righteous, blameless and childless. Although pretty obscure and insignificant common people from the hill country. (**OUTSIDERS?**) Levite, priest, in the line of Aaron. Priest by profession; pious by practice Why them? **Righteous – Blameless – one problem – childless**. Not a good thing to be childless in that culture and be a priest

8One day Zechariah was serving God in the Temple, for his order was on duty that week. **9**As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense. **10**While the incense was being burned, a **great crowd** stood outside, praying.

PRAYING EXPECTANTLY FOR WHAT...

11While Zechariah was in the sanctuary, an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the incense altar. **12**Zechariah was shaken and overwhelmed with fear when he saw him. **13**But the angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! **God has heard your prayer.** Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John. **14**You will have great joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, **15**for he will be great in the eyes of the Lord. He must never touch wine or other alcoholic drinks. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even before his birth.^b **16**And he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God. **17**He will be a man with the spirit and power of Elijah. He will prepare the people for the coming of the Lord. He will turn the hearts of the parents(fathers) to their children,^c and he will cause those who are rebellious to accept the wisdom of the godly."

The Silence is shattered!

400 years of silence. Nothing from God or his messengers; Here Luke chronicles the beginning of the fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi.

Listen! Since the time banishment from the Garden of Eden, came the promise of redemption, curse to uncurse, death to life, broken to restored, Man and women, animals, the earth, even the rocks cry out for salvation. The good news is here because salvation is NEAR!

And then Zac says...v.18 *how can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.*

WHAT? Time out. First of all when you encounter an Angel get out the playbook....page 14... do not question an angel... especially if his name is Gabriel! **Only 2 angels named in the Bible among myriads Michael the archangel ---battling Satan and Gabriel – making announcements**

19Then the angel said, "**I am Gabriel!** I stand in the **very presence of God.** It was **he who sent me to bring you this good news!** **20**But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time.

Spiritual Devotion was **not** a question. Obedience was High – Faith was Low. Zac wanted a sign

GOD HEARS YOUR PRAYERS

GOD HEARS YOUR PRAYERS 3X

What WAS Zac expecting?

Primary purpose of a priest was pray, offer incense on behalf of God's people. **Pray for God's Kingdom to Come**

Why did he miss it? Not just unbelief that God would provide a child, unbelief GOD HAD CHOSEN HIM AND ELIZ TO BIRTH THE ON WHO MAKES WAY...**HE MISSED HIS PERSONAL ROLE IN THE DIVINE PLAN.**

AN INTERSECTION ENCOUNTER; THIS DIVINE APPOINTMENT BETWEEN GOD'S SOVEREIGN WILL AN OUR PRAYERS AND THE LONGINGS OF OUR HEART.

Are you praying; are your praying for His Kingdom come? And HIS will be Done? then are you praying thy will be done in and THROUGH ME?

DIVINE APPOINTMENTS AND INTERSECTIONS;

ITS HOW THE KINGDOM COMES AND "THY WILL BE DONE" – GETS DONE!

A **cameo** moment is the realization God has heard your prayer and something **greater** has happened beyond it.

But isn't it enough to be committed to a church, be in a life group, daily devos... but THY WILL BE DONE> GOD HAS A PLAN- how do I fit into it?

Do you believe God hears your prayers??? Is He listening?

Has Time or circumstance eroded your faith? Has that happened to you? Been praying for something for years? No answer? At least so far as you can perceive.

Story of two people in my extended family.

Good news - Zac is silenced... Yet his prayer is answered. His unbelief does not get in the way of God's plan. AMEN?

By the way: Zechariah = The Lord remembers Elizabeth = My God is the faithful one

Make your prayers known to God; just know there is a divine plan that is infinitely complex beyond our understanding but ends with the glorious return of the King of kings.

GOD HEARS OUR PRAYERS

Gods Love is deeper than our understanding, and yes greater than our unbelief

21Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah to come out of the sanctuary, wondering why he was taking so long. 22When he finally did come out, he couldn't speak to them. Then they realized from his gestures and his silence that he must have seen a vision in the sanctuary.

Reverse charades?

23When Zechariah's week of service in the Temple was over, he returned home. 24Soon afterward his wife, Elizabeth, became pregnant and went into seclusion for five months. 25"How kind the Lord is!" she exclaimed. "He has(**shown favor-NIV**) taken away my **disgrace** of having no children.

GOD FAVORS THOSE WHO OBEY HIM.

You see. there were two people praying for a child and only one stopped believing. **The fervent prayer of a righteous (woman) avails much** (is powerful and effective) James 5:16

Zechariah and Elizabeth were obedient- not perfect. "To obey is better than sacrifice" 1 Samuel 15:22. Their son John would be born and call the people of Israel to repentance and declare the Messiah; and later baptize Him; not just as a Prophet but also a priest in the Levitical lineage of Aaron

More to come - **23 MIN MAX**

Luke 1:26-38

*In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, 27to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. 28Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, a **favored woman!** The Lord is with you!"*

29Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. 30"Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have **found favor** with God! 31You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him **Jesus.**(His name spoken for the first time in human history).

THIS IS THE MESSAGE OF LUKE – JESUS IS THE MESSIAH AND PLAN OF SALVATION FOR EVERYONE – SALVATION IS HERE!

32He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. 33And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

34Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

35The angel replied, “The **Holy Spirit will come upon you**, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. **36**What’s more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. **37****For the word of God will never fail.**”

38Mary responded, “I am the **Lord’s servant**. May everything you have said about me come true.” And then the angel left her.

Mary’s response vs. Zac’s response.

THE WORD OF GOD WILL NEVER FAIL “No word from God” NIV “Nothing will be impossible with God” NASB

JESUS – HIS KINGDOM WILL NEVER END

SILENCE IS SHATTERED - BREAK THE SILENCE

God broke the silence, through the angel Gabriel, to Zac and Eliz and to Mary. Now they each have something to say- even zac.

What has God been stirring up in you? What DOES THIS longing of your heart have to say?

Is it time for your silence to be broken?

Are you waiting for God to break His Silence? Your pray Has been heard, the time may not yet be; He favors those who are obedient to Him.

What do we do???

INTERSECTION OF GOD’S KINGDOM AND OUR PRAYERS BEGINS WITH **SURRENDER**

Surrender to the king of Kings. His name is **Jesus**- He has come and offer Himself as a living Sacrifice for you and me. Is Jesus your *Savior* **and your Lord**???. Have you prayed that, have you spoken that out loud to others. **He awaits** your response and **He Invites** your participation in His Kingdom. This Devine Appointment/Intersection awaits!

– **Story of why we are in Modesto...Serena and I are relocated to Modesto 17 years ago because of an INTERSECTION OF GOD’S PLAN FOR A CHURCH PLANT, OUR PRAYERS AND A JOB OFFER. Lot of anticipation and expectation for months before the church planter answered the call...Sticky note on desk when relocated to Modesto**

Charolette Diggs “Lottie” Moon –Single woman missionary (pioneer) to China -39 years-1873

“The needs of these people press upon my soul – and I cannot be silent.”

Is there something you need to say today??? **Break the SILENCE!**

Let's Pray - PRAYER OF INVITATION AND DECISION (33-35 MIN MAX)