

# Songs of Christmas



# Luke 1

<sup>11</sup> Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

# Luke 1

<sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. <sup>14</sup> He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth.

# Luke 1

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# What prayer?

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- Prayer for a child from long ago? Perhaps.
- Priestly prayer for the salvation of Israel?  
Perhaps

# Luke 1

<sup>57</sup> When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. <sup>58</sup> Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

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# Luke 1

<sup>59</sup> On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, <sup>60</sup> but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.”

# Luke 1

<sup>61</sup> They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”

<sup>62</sup> Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child.

# Luke 1

<sup>63</sup> He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, "His name is John." <sup>64</sup> Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God.

# Luke 1

<sup>65</sup> All the neighbors were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. <sup>66</sup> Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord’s hand was with him.



# How to preach this?

- Could explore parallels with First Testament where God begins a new work by some miraculous or unexpected birth.
- Ex. Abram/Sarah, Jacob and Rachel, Samson's parents, Samuel's parents

# How to preach this?

- Maybe explore numerous interesting parallel between FT Zech. and NT one.

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- Maybe explore numerous interesting parallel between FT Zech. and NT one.
- Could examine this passage for the way (like the Magnificat) that it just bursts with First Testament allusions.



- Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people... (Lk. 1:68)

- 'Remember us, O Lord, with the favor thou hast to thy people: visit us with thy salvation' (Ps. 105:4)



- ...and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David... that we should be saved from our enemies... (Lk. 1:69-71)
- The LORD is... the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. I call upon the LORD, who is worthy to be praised, and I am saved from my enemies. (Ps. 18:2-3)



- that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us (Lk. 1:71)
- And he saved them out of the hand of them that hated them, and redeemed them out of the hand of the enemy. (Ps. 106:10)



- ...to show the mercy promised to our fathers (Lk. 1:72)

- You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old. (Mic. 7:20)



- ...to remember his holy covenant (Lk. 1:72)

- For their sake he remembered his covenant, and relented according to the abundance of his steadfast love. (Ps. 106:45)



- And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways... (Lk. 1:76)
- Behold, I send my messenger and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts. (Mal. 3:1)



- ...to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins... (Lk. 1:77)

- The LORD has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. (Ps. 98:2)



- ...whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace. (Lk. 1:78-79)
- Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. (Is. 60:1-2)



# How to preach this?

- Maybe, focus on, the drama of the voice returning...

# Voice returns

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- ἔγραψεν λέγων
- He wrote, saying....
- Did he get voice back as he wrote?

# How to preach this?

- Could examine this passage for how it parallels the Magnificat.

# Parallels with Magnificat

- God initiates action
- Angel visits with news of baby
- Impossible pregnancy
- Both question

# Song of Christmas

- God is doing, has done, is about to do something
- People hear about it by a messenger (angel)
- They are amazed (awe and fear)
- Twofold response:
  - they go and tell someone
  - they praise.
- Pondering in heart

# Luke 1

- <sup>65</sup> All the neighbors were filled with awe
- ἐπὶ πάντας φόβος (actually fear)
- Laid up all these things in their heart .66

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