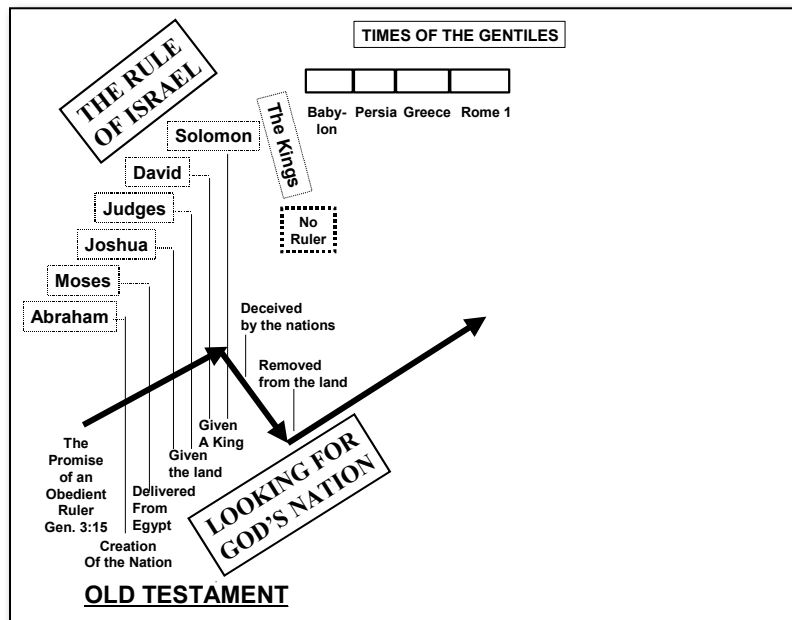
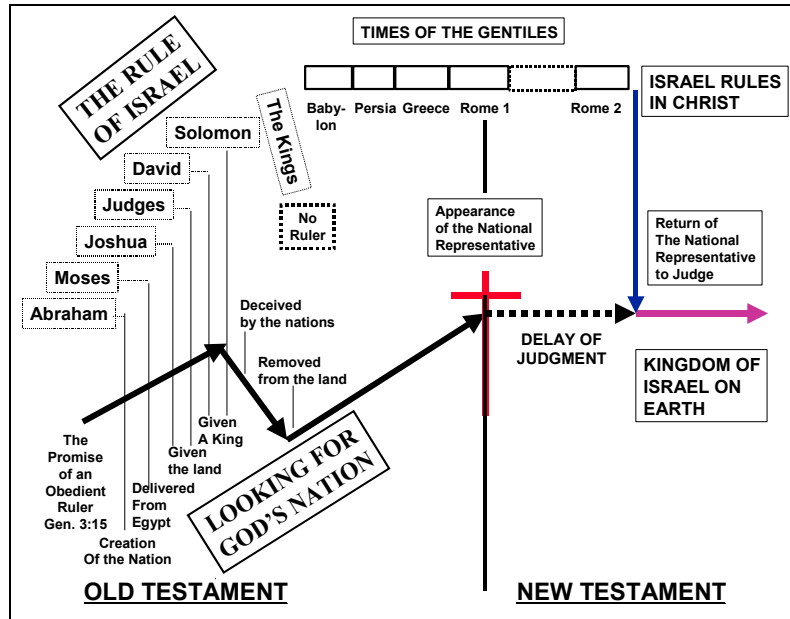


Main Theme

Israel's history was one of disobedience. They had been created by God (Gen. 12:1-3), delivered from bondage, covenanted, and indwelt by God's glory (Exodus), given a land (Numbers through Judges) and a King (1—2 Samuel). Yet after all their equipping to be the representative of God, they had chosen to serve other gods, and quickly apostatized, rejecting their rule under YHWH, preferring to be ruled by Gentiles (other gods, Satan, 1—2 Kings). Thus God judged Israel by putting them under Gentile rule (Daniel). This Gentile rule was to continue through four nations (Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome). Now, under the fourth power, Jesus appears, and Israel expects deliverance. However, the reason that Israel was placed under the Gentile powers was due to their rejection of YHWH (self-righteousness) and thus the correction was for YHWH to restore them through their repentance (return to covenant relationship through a request for mercy, Deut. 30:1-6).



Thus Jesus presents the opportunity for them to repent, as He is there to pay for their sin (substitution). Yet Israel sees no need for repentance, preferring instead for Jesus to deliver them in their own self-righteousness and destroy the pagan Gentile power. Jesus will continue to pay for their sin, yet Jerusalem will reject that provision and will stay in apostasy while the message goes out from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth. Ultimately Jerusalem will perceive their need and will repent and Christ will return to save them and bring them into the kingdom.



Thus the Book of Luke presents:

- **The Old Testament prophet John the Baptist** anticipating the deliverance under Jesus (1—3)
- **Jesus gathers disciples in Galilee who He will train** to take the good news of deliverance out to the nations in His stead (4—9:51)
- **Jesus moves toward Jerusalem to offer Jerusalem deliverance** (9:52—19:27).
- **Jerusalem rejects Jesus as He pays for that deliverance** and the good news goes out from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the earth (19:28--24:53).

Jerusalem: Note here that the primary thrust of Jerusalem is due to the self-righteousness of those who lived there. Jerusalem was the location of the temple and the hierarchy of the religion. Thus they looked down on Samaritans (half-breeds) and those in exile in other nations, thinking they were cursed of God. The Pharisees (from Jerusalem) come out to see Jesus and His miracles to condemn Him, but Jesus moves to Jerusalem to demonstrate that He has come to die for them and redeem this city and its people. Jesus states in chapter 13 that the exiles will come and sup at table with Abraham and Isaac in the kingdom while that generation of Jews in Jerusalem would be cast out (note in the prior verses that their claim to the kingdom before Jesus was that He had taught in their streets (Jerusalem)). He then weeps for the city as they are the ones who reject the prophets and thus He will also be rejected by them.

In the Book of Acts it should be noted that only the Jerusalem Jews were accused of killing Jesus. Peter does not give that blame to the Judeans or Samaritans, nor to Cornelius. Paul never accuses any other Jews other than the Jerusalem Jews of putting Jesus to death.¹

¹ Refer to Acts 10:39, 13:27,

Character Development

There are several main characters or character groups within the book. They are:

Jesus: The Main Character

Theology: He is the minister of God's compassion to those who recognize their need of release under the Old Covenant, both individually and nationally.

Scribes, Pharisees: This is the antagonistic main character group. They are in the book to oppose Jesus' theology, to clarify the error of the Jews to the reader, that of self-righteousness. They are looking for a deliverer who will remove the Gentile powers on their behalf.

Theology: That of self-righteousness. They believed they were righteous through good works (e.g., the Rich Man) and their inheritance from Abraham (Lazarus and the Rich Man). They are under the dominion of the Gentiles (Rome) and feel they are unjustly dominated. Thus they wait for a Messiah Who will justify them and judge the Gentiles. They do not realize that they are under judgment due to their disobedience and must repent in order to be delivered as prophesied in Deuteronomy 30:1-9.

Disciples: The disciples are the students of Jesus' ministry. He gathers them slowly through chapters 5—6, and then explains to them their part in representing Him in the coming age in 7—19, 24.

Theology: Their theology is normally one of their self-abilities, which fail until they learn that they must only go in the power and Name of Jesus. Their main function is not the doing of miracles, nor the elevation of themselves but the multiplication of the Word of Jesus. They occupy a unique position in the Gospels as those who are specially anointed to eyewitness the words and works of Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament. They thus are inspired to carry the word to the world beyond Jerusalem.

John the Baptist: John is the last prophet of the Old Covenant. His function is to point to Jesus as the Judge and Deliverer of those under the Old Covenant.

Theology: John is a righteous O.T. believer and prophet who holds that Israel failed under the Old Covenant and must have Jesus to deliver them. He thus sees the Pharisees as evil (perceiving themselves as righteous) and due judgment under Christ. He sees Christ as the Deliverer of those righteous

(John and his followers) who come to repent. However, the ministry of mercy that Jesus extended to those under judgment escapes his understanding, not recognizing the need for the patience of God in delay of judgment. John feels that judgment is due immediately on the Pharisees and, like His predecessor Elijah, does not appreciate the delay given so that mercy can be shown to those rejecting.

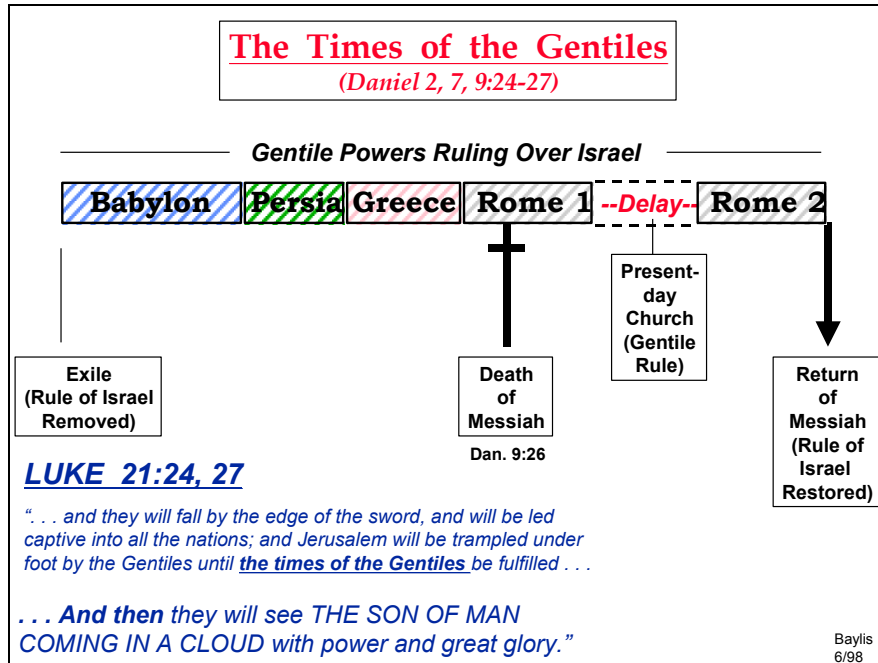
The Outcast (poor, sick, widows, Gentiles): These are perceived as unrighteous by the Pharisees, who took the Deut. 28 physical curses to indicate individual righteousness and unrighteousness. However, it should be noted that while they were poor physically, they are a parallel to those who are poor spiritually. These in the second group are those who perceive their lack of righteousness and desire the Messiah to come and release them.

The Multitudes: There is a group in Luke that follows and listens to Christ and perceives His miracles. However, these are those who do recognize that He can do miracles and seek to take advantage of the physical benefits, but do not perceive what the miracles are for, that is, to demonstrate His greater benefit, that of delivering the forgiveness of sins. An illustration of this is the Jewish elders in 7:1ff who ask Jesus to heal the Centurion's slave. They are aware of Jesus abilities, yet in their request clearly show they do not perceive the mercy of God as they argue for the Centurion's worthiness (He blesses Israel, but they note it as a meritorious deed). Thus these multitudes are not saved, but are taking advantage of the physical benefits of the Kingdom Messiah, not any different than the Pharisees who were taking advantage of God's general grace toward them. Deuteronomy referenced one who was unrepentant and utilized God's grace yet imitating the nations without God. The multitudes (especially the leadership at Jerusalem) see deliverance through them (Israel) to Gentiles on the basis of the elevation of themselves (not God).

Deut. 29:17 "Moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold, which they had with them); 18 lest there shall be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; lest there shall be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood. 19 "And it shall be when he hears the words of this curse, that he will boast, saying, 'I have peace though I walk in the stubbornness of my heart in order to destroy the watered land with the dry.' 20 "The LORD shall never be willing to forgive him, but rather the anger of the LORD and His jealousy will burn against that man, and every curse which is written in this book will rest on him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven. 21 "Then the LORD will single him out for adversity from all the tribes of Israel, according

to all the curses of the covenant which are written in this book of the law.

The Times of the Gentiles:



Daniel had revealed that the removal from the theocratic rule in the Davidic King was of God, and that four Gentile powers would continue to rule over Israel until that Theocratic Rule was restored. That event would only come following Israel’s repentance and the return of Christ to reestablish their rule.

Luke: Israel under Gentile dominion (Rome: final Gentile ruler in the Times of the Gentiles).

Definitions:

Deliverance: Deliverance, usually translated “saved” or in some instances “made well” frequently means more than what frequently is taken to mean “born again” (although that certainly is one usage). Primarily Israel was under the dominion of Satan. Individually, they had been under his dominion since Genesis 3 when the rule was reversed on Adam and all mankind. Nationally, the rule was reversed in 2 Kings when the nation was placed under Gentile rule as a judgment for Israel’s rejection of YHWH as their ruler. Thus deliverance is taken by the Pharisees to be success, normally in physical prosperity, but ultimately the deliverance from Roman dominion. However, deliverance in terms of Jesus and the apostles indicates walking with God with or without physical evidence, and

ultimately they would be delivered into the kingdom through bodily resurrection.

Rule or ‘overcoming’: The means of overcoming or having victory either individually or nationally over Satan was not through one’s own power being greater, but through obedience² (or repentance if needed). For it was not the Gentiles own power that had placed them over Israel but God, who in judgment of their disobedience, had authorized the Gentiles to control Israel.

Repentance: This term Biblically means to ‘return to covenant relationship’. It does not inherently tell how to return, only that one is out of that relationship and must return (through the covenantal prescribed means). Thus Israel, having found themselves under Gentile control, was necessarily required to repent (Deut. 30:1-6). It was only repentance that would relieve them from Gentile control. Yet Israel looked for a leader who would deliver them from Gentile control without repentance, who would deliver them as they were – self-righteous. They felt that they were unjustly under bondage, and while they thought that God would help them, they did not realize it was that they needed to turn to righteousness, and this righteousness was always to trust in the Messiah.

Money: Money is frequently used in the gospel, and typically the rich are evil and the poor are righteous (Luke 16:19-31). Yet the story of Lazarus and the rich man demonstrates that it is not riches, but one’s value of himself through personal possessions which is evil. He does not see possessions as gifts, and himself as needy for the mercy of God through Jesus. Thus, normally, money and possessions stand for all personal physical possessions that become one’s self-righteousness, or elevation above others or in the sight of God.

However, for the most part it is clear that the “poor” are those who are lacking the good news of release from sins. They have longed for it, or have been excluded from it, and now find it in Jesus. In Luke 4:18, 7:22 the poor are those who need the gospel. In the illustration of the Kingdom Feast in 14:13, 21, the poor are those who are ultimately invited

² There should be a very clear point made here. ‘Obedience’ does not require the practical keeping of the commandments for God’s blessing. To say that one does this for God’s blessing is to repeat what the Pharisees affirmed. Obedience is to imitate God through the direction indicated in the revelation (which includes commandments) but one is to recognize that one imitates because of a heart love for God and not to earn merit. Thus obedience is the heart desire to follow God’s direction through His imputed mercy and standing as a son. One would go to the sacrifices to receive the mercy of God for their errors in achieving the Law. It was this longing for the mercy of God that demonstrated their identity with His character, the very character of mercy.

to the feast, and thus the poor are those who realize they are stricken with a poverty of righteousness. Contrary to that, the rich are surprised when they find that riches did not indicate righteousness. However money is the case when the widow gives more than the rich in 21:3. Jesus speaking of the rich man, however, holds up the giving of money to the poor

Righteousness: The parable of the Pharisee and the Tax-Gatherer define the terms righteous and humble. (Luke 19:9-17). They are a contrast between those who perceive whether the effect of the Law results in their own righteousness or in their own condemnation

The Law and the Prophets: It is important to note that the theme of Luke is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets. Thus the Law condemned man fully and anticipated Jesus as the One who would provide mercy (like the sacrifices of the O.T.) This is seen as Jesus relates His first coming to the Old Testament (i.e., the Lost Son as a reflection of Deut. 30:1-6, Lazarus and the Rich Man (16), The Road to Emmaus (23), and the sending of the Apostles (24).

Forgiveness of sins: Forgiveness is mentioned in 4:18 where the captives are released (“forgiven”). The word then is only used elsewhere as the “forgiveness” of sins (1:77, 3:3, 24:47).

Argument of the Book

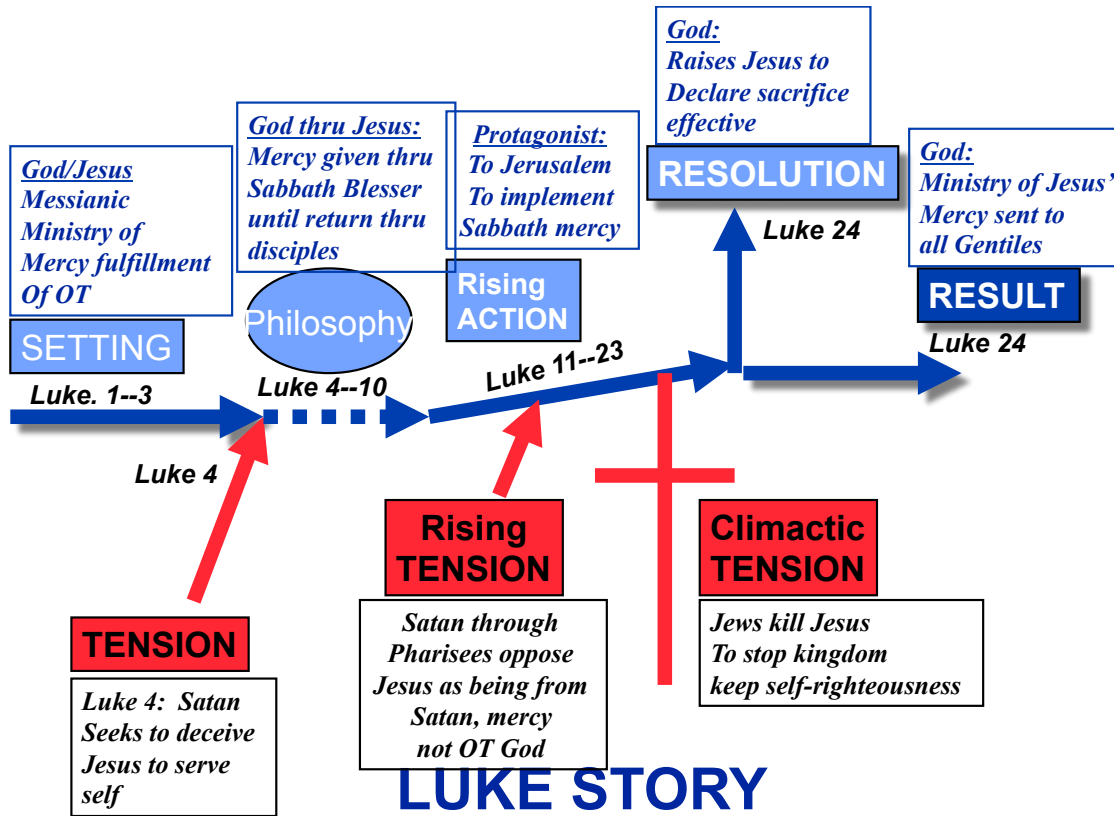
Message: Jesus, the Lord of the Great Sabbath (who releases Israel (and the nations) from their sins), pays for their sin and initiates the proclamation of forgiveness to the nations through the disciples beginning at Jerusalem.

Literary Structure: Geographically there are three significant areas in the book, Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. In the first three chapters, the story goes between the three areas, Mary's home in Nazareth of Galilee, Elizabeth's home in Judea (along with the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judea) and then the temple event when Jesus was a young boy in Jerusalem.

The book then moves in a major pattern, beginning in 3:24 from Nazareth in Galilee to Judea in 9:51 and finally into Jerusalem in 19:29. That the geographical intensity toward Jerusalem is valid is seen from the major marking verses of 9:51, 13:22, 17:11, 19:11, 19:28, where it is clear that Jesus is headed purposefully and intensely toward His destiny in Jerusalem. However, it should be noted that the geography is not perfectly defined as there are times in the Judea section when He is in Galilee or Samaria, and there appear to be times in the Galilean section where He is in Judea. However, once in Jerusalem there is no deviation back into Judea or Galilee. Thus, it is very relevant that the book is directed geographically toward Jerusalem and the Temple.

The disciples are also major intensification subjects in the book. Jesus chooses them, sends them out, and then becomes the example of self-sacrifice for the cause of the gospel.

Literary Argument



LUKE STORY

Baylis
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The O.T. Great Sabbath Blesser Arrives

I. **Introduction:** The purpose of the writing of the book was to give Theophilus an accurate account of events of the word in a logical³ order [1:1-4].

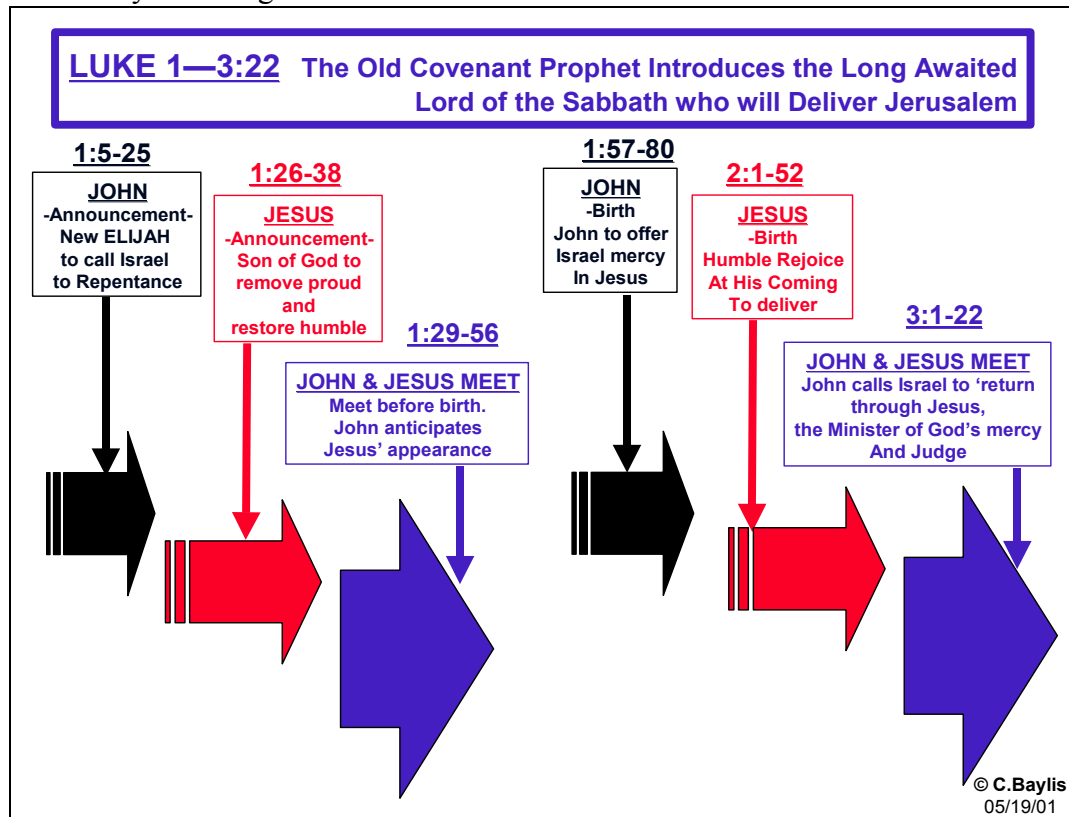
1:1 Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, 2 just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word have handed them down to us, 3 it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; 4 so that you might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

II. **Setting:** [Judea, Galilee, Jerusalem]: **John the Baptist, the final prophet of the Old Covenant, proclaims the end of the Old Covenant and points to Jesus as**

³ The word used here does not necessarily indicate that the events of Luke are chronologically ordered from earliest to latest. It may very well mean that the parts are ordered as part of a greater whole (the book), thus more of an argument format (*Word Biblical Commentary*, Luke 1:3, "Comment".)

the One who will bring and end to the captivity of the Gentiles and of Satan. [1:1—3:23].

Literary Structure: This section is set off by the interchange of narrative events of John the Baptist and Jesus. There are two cycles, the first is the supernatural announcement of the births, and the second is the actual birth narratives of each. Each cycle is broken up into three sequences; first John, then Jesus, then a section where they come together.



- A. Jesus, the Anointed One of God, is the minister of God's mercy to Israel, and John the Baptist, the promised Elijah, introduces Him as the One through Whom Israel may find release from their captivity, as John, representing the Old Testament (John) looks to Jesus (New Covenant fulfillment) [1:1—3:22].

This first section introduces the nation Israel to their Messiah, Who comes as a fulfillment of Scripture, to forgive the sins of Israel⁴ as the ultimate Sabbath Provider. Also appearing is the other eschatological

⁴ What Israel did not realize was that they were under the bondage of Gentiles due to their *own* sin, not the power of the Gentiles. God had done this as a judgment on the nation in the Book of Daniel. Thus, the means to reversing the rule, releasing them from captivity, was to repent.

figure, Elijah from Malachi 4, who offers the nation of Israel repentance, and salvation from judgment.

There is a parallel movement between John the Baptist (the announcer of the Messiah and the Elijah who calls the nation to repentance) and the Messiah. Their supernaturally announced birth (sovereignly directed by God), speeches regarding the great mercy of God in giving the two to the nation (Mary and Zacharias) and a statement about their spiritual growth (1:80 and 2:52) are parallel.

There are several items of comparison that should not be missed:

	<u>John the Baptist</u>	<u>Jesus</u>
<u>Setting</u>	Parents barren	Virgin (no anticipated children)
<u>Announcement</u>	By an angel To the husband (a man)	By Gabriel To the virgin (a woman)
<u>Reception of revelation</u>	Zacharias questions truth, does not realize destiny of child to Israel	Mary accepts truth, requests means, realizes destiny of child to Israel
<u>Name</u>	Named by angel	Named by angel
<u>Destiny:</u>	To call Israel to repentance and righteousness	To rule over Israel as the Son of God
<u>Praise of mother/father</u>	That God has blessed her That God will bless Israel through his son	That God has blessed Israel through her
<u>Assessment of child</u>	John grew in strong in spirit	Jesus grew in wisdom and stature in the sight of God and man
<u>Message</u>	Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand	Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand

1. **Cycle #1:** The birth announcements of John the Baptist and Jesus are interchanged and then concluded as John the Baptist (the Old Testament prophet) greets Jesus in the womb, excited over the approaching fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets [1:5-56].

a. **John the Baptist:** John the Baptist is brought forth by God supernaturally under Gentile oppression as the new Elijah to call Israel to repentance⁵ [1:5-25].

1) **The Setting:** Zacharias, a righteous⁶ Levitical Priest, and his wife Elizabeth, are barren during Gentile rule over Israel [1:5-7].

There are several things to note here. Herod is ruling. He was established by the Roman government, a Gentile nation predicted by Daniel the prophet to be the final oppressor of Israel before the return of Israel to rule. The oppression of Gentiles indicates that the nation is under judgment due to disobedience. The next thing to notice is that Elizabeth was barren. The fact that she was barren is to be noted since barrenness is not the blessing of God. There are several possibilities as to why she was barren since God controls the womb.

- a) Elizabeth and Zecharias were disobedient
- b) The nation was disobedient
- c) The parents (or the nation) was being tested
- d) God had a special purpose for her barrenness.

The text does not appear to come out clearly and say explicitly but it implies that the reason is 'd' (the text denies "a" as a possibility) for this would add to the special provision by God of John the Baptist.

⁵ According to Deuteronomy 28, the reason for domination by Gentiles was disobedience. Thus the way to restoration was not more power, but repentance. It was then that God would restore them (Deut. 30:1-6).

⁶ Righteous in Luke would indicate that they were in a right relationship with God through the imputed forgiveness, which they received by faith in the anticipatory sacrifices.

5 In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron⁷, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. 7 And they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years

- 2) **Tension introduced:** God sends an angel with the birth announcement and the destiny of the new Elijah (Malachi 4:5-6) to Zecharias [1:8-17].

8 Now it came about, while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering.

11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense.⁸ 12 And Zacharias was troubled when he saw him, and fear gripped him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard⁹, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 "And you

⁷ Note here that both genealogies are given, both of husband and wife. This would give credence to the issue of Mary's genealogy being given in this book, either in 1:27 (could be both, or just Joseph's) or in 3:23ff.

⁸ This was the altar used for the sin offering in Leviticus 4. It is also the altar on which Uzziah offered illicitly.

⁹ This petition would seem to be the prayer for the return of the nation. Zecharias and Elizabeth could have been praying for a son, but in light of the people who were praying outside (1:10) it would seem more likely that they were praying for repentance. In addition if he was at the right of the altar of incense then he very likely was offering a sin offering. Thus his petition would be for the forgiveness of the sin of the nation. However, they could be related, since fruitfulness of the womb was related to the obedience of the nation. Thus Zecharias could have been praying for both.

will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and he will drink no wine or liquor; and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother's womb. 16 "And he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 "And it is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous;¹⁰ so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

- 3) **Failure to tension:** Zecharias requests a sign for evidence, and is struck dumb as an indication of the truth of the revelation [1:18].

Zecharias doubt was not concerning the deliverance of the nation but through his own ability to bring forth a son. What Zecharias was questioning was whether God could do this through an old man (apparently felt God's hands were tied when dealing with old age). That was no problem for God since He had already done that with Abraham. The real miracle was the turning back of Israel to God. That had never been done before in any permanent fashion.

The message of the angel is regarding the repentance of Israel through the fulfillment of Malachi 4. All this angel did was to say that Zecharias would be the means..

Zecharias did not need to know a sign, for it would either happen or not. But the birth of John was the sign that Israel would repent. Thus, John had questioned the sign (asked for a sign for the sign) and should have waited for the sign to appear to fulfill the greater need, that is, Israel's repentance.

¹⁰ It would appear that the comment "turn the hearts of the Fathers back to the children" is saying that the fathers are wicked and the children are righteous due to the Hebrew parallelism here.

18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this for certain? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years."

- 4) **Response to failure:** The angel does give Zecharias a sign, speechlessness, but it is a judgment on his doubt [1:19-23].

19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to bring you this good news. 20 "And behold, you shall be silent and unable to speak until the day when these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which shall be fulfilled in their proper time." 21 And the people were waiting for Zacharias, and were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22 But when he came out, he was unable to speak to them; and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple; and he kept making signs to them, and remained mute. 23 And it came about, when the days of his priestly service were ended, that he went back home.

- 5) **Successful Conclusion:** Elizabeth conceives and rejoices in God's mercy toward her, indicating that the return of Israel (the far prophecy) would come true [1:24-25].

Probably the most important thing to note here is the near/far type of prophecy that Zecharias had received. The prophecy was essentially two parts. The first (and most important) was that Israel was going to be returned to God. The second (the means of implementation) was that Zecharias would have a son in his old age. Now the first has happened, thus indicating the sureness of the second (Israel's repentance).

24 And after these days Elizabeth his wife became pregnant; and she kept herself in seclusion for five months, saying, 25 "This is the way the Lord has dealt with me in the days when He looked with favor upon me, to take away my disgrace among men."¹¹

¹¹ The 'disgrace' here is that she was considered unloved by God, or cursed, even though there were other possibilities.

b. **Jesus:** Jesus is to be brought forth by God supernaturally as the Son of God, Who will rule over Israel (1:26-38)

1) **The Setting:** Mary, a virgin is engaged to Joseph (1:26-27)

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee, called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David;¹² and the virgin's name was Mary.¹³

2) **The Tension:** God sends an angel with the birth announcement and the destiny of the new David, the Son of God, the Ruler of Israel, to Mary (1:28-33).

Now the angel brings Mary also a two-part prophecy. She, a virgin, will bear a Son. However, the Son will be the One Who will rule over the nation, the One prophesied by the O.T.

28 And coming in, he said to her, "Hail, favored one! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was greatly troubled at this statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this might be. 30 And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. 31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. 32 "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; 33 and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; and His kingdom will have no end."¹⁴

¹² Grammatically it appears that the genealogy of David belongs to Joseph.

¹³ πρὸς παρθένον ἐμνηστευμένην ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὄνομα Ἰωσήφ ἐξ οἴκου Δαυίδ, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς παρθένου Μαρίας,

¹⁴ This sequence appears to be Psalm 110, reflected in Luke 19 parable of the minas. The reception of the kingdom appears to be in heaven during the delay.

- 3) **Success to Tension:** Contrasted with Zecharias¹⁵ (1:18-23), Mary questions the means of this supernatural occurrence, that is, how she will conceive apart from physical relationship, and the angel explains that it will be a supernatural conception similar to the supernatural enablement of Elizabeth (1:34-37).

Differently than Zecharias, Mary needed to know what to do? She was a virgin, and never had there been a pregnancy without a human father. While Zecharias questioned the miracle, Mary assumes the miracle, but asks how it will come about? This is confirmed by the angel's answer as he explains the process by which she will conceive.

Mary's question is what she should do to bear a son, since she would normally have thought that she would have to get married (to Joseph) to conceive. If she was to be a part of this prophecy then she needed to know any requirement on her part to bring it about. However, the angel will soon tell her there is no requirement. God will take care of it all.

34 And Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

- 4) **Response to success:** The angel explains the process by which Mary will conceive, and the angel uses the miracle of Elizabeth's conception as a sign [1:35-37].

35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that

¹⁵ Zacharias appears to be asking, "How will I know this?" as opposed to Mary's "How will this happen?" Zacharias is asking for a sign to demonstrate that it would come to pass. Mary is asking how it could come about apart from a physical relationship with a man. In verse 45 Elizabeth seems to confirm that Mary believed it would happen. Zecharias questioned the miracle itself, reminding one of Gideon. There was no need for a pre-indication to Zecharias, either she would be with child or not. Time would tell whether it was true to the doubter. In Mary's case, it might have required an action on her part toward Joseph that was not presently the case, that is, she would get married and conceive.

reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God.¹⁶ 36 "And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. 37 "For nothing will be impossible with God."

- 5) **Successful conclusion:** Mary accepts the revelation as given, recognizing that she is only the means to a greater deliverance, that of Israel's return to God (1:38).

38 And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; be it done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- c. **John and Jesus meet:** John the Baptist and Jesus come together as Mary visits Elizabeth and both rejoice in their participation in the mercy of God toward themselves and Israel (1:39-55).

- 1) Elizabeth confirms that John the Baptist anticipates Jesus as the fullness of the Law and the Prophets and thus is excited over the nearness (1:39-45).

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 41 And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 And she cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed among women are you, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 "And how has it happened to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 "For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. 45 "And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

- 2) Mary praises that the Lord has, through her, brought about the deliverance of the Nation Israel (1:46-56)

¹⁶ Note here that the emphasis seems to be on the fact that Jesus is quantifiably God.

- a) Mary praises God for her part as a poor woman in Israel to bring forth the Messiah¹⁷ (1:46-49a).

46 And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed. 49 "For the Mighty One has done great things for me;

- b) Mary quotes O.T. Scripture to demonstrate that God's character is to do as He has done toward the humble believers as opposed to the self-righteous [1:49b-53].

And holy is His name. 50 "AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM. 51 "He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who were proud in the thoughts of their heart. 52 "He has brought down rulers from their thrones, And has exalted those who were humble. 53 "HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS; AND SENT AWAY THE RICH EMPTY-HANDED.

- c) Mary explains that this mercy has been extended through her for the greater purpose of delivering Israel [1:54-56].

54 "He has given help to Israel His servant, In remembrance of His mercy, 55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and his offspring forever. " 56 And Mary stayed with her about three months, and then returned to her home.

¹⁷ Of obvious note is the resemblance that this prayer has to Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 1. The contextual nature of their parallels must be noted. Samuel came as a merciful gift to Hannah, yet for the greater purpose of bringing repentance to Israel, which he did in 1 Samuel 7. Now Jesus comes as a merciful gift to Mary, for the greater purpose of bringing repentance to Israel.

2. **Cycle #2:** The birth of John the Baptist and Jesus also reveal God as the deliverer of Israel through these men, as John and Jesus come together in anticipation of the judgment and escape present in His appearance [1:57—3:22].

a. **John's Birth:** Both Elizabeth and Zecharias follow the angel's instruction and name the boy John, which is followed by Zecharias' recognition of John as preparing the way for Jesus Who would deliver Israel (1:57-63).

1) Elizabeth bears the son prophesied and Zecharias finally listens to the angel as he names the boy, John.

57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she brought forth a son. 58 And her neighbors and her relatives heard that the Lord had displayed His great mercy toward her; and they were rejoicing with her. 59 And it came about that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to call him Zacharias, after his father. 60 And his mother answered and said, "No indeed; but he shall be called John." 61 And they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by that name." 62 And they made signs to his father, as to what he wanted him called. 63 And he asked for a tablet, and wrote as follows, "His name is John"¹⁸. And they were all astonished.

2) **Concluding praise:** Zecharias praises God revealing that he perceives the greater emphasis of the birth, the return of Israel to God (1:64-80).

a) The amazing things that are happening impel the people to ask what the significance of John is to be? (1:64-66).

Not only does Zecharias now obey the angel, but the people recognize that the supernatural birth of John to an old person and the accompanying sign must mean more than just a miracle.

¹⁸ This is following the instruction of the angel in 1:17.

64 And at once his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he began to speak in praise of God. 65 And fear came on all those living around them; and all these matters were being talked about in all the hill country of Judea. 66 And all who heard them kept them in mind, saying, "What then will this child turn out to be?" For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him.

- b) Zacharias responds to their question by showing that John will be the Elijah who will call Israel to return to the Lord through the mercy given through Jesus (1:67-80).

Zacharias confirms the greater meaning of the confrontation of Israel by John, the call to repent.

Several things should be noted in this speech which are introductions to major themes in the book.

- a. Redemption for Israel (buying back from the slave market)¹⁹
- b. Deliverance from the Gentile oppression

These two items are repeated in this prophecy, but all through the book. Jesus had come to deliver Israel from the oppression of the individual rule of Satan and the Satanic rule over Israel through the Gentile nations. However, the reason they were under that rule was due to disobedience, and the solution (Deut. 30:1-6) was to repent, and then God would show mercy.

67 And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: 68 "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people, 69 And has raised up a horn

¹⁹ Hosea 3:2

*of salvation for us In the house of David²⁰
His servant-- 70 As He spoke by the mouth
of His holy prophets from of old-- 71
Salvation FROM OUR ENEMIES, And
FROM THE HAND OF ALL WHO HATE
US;²¹ 72 To show mercy toward our fathers,
And to remember His holy covenant, 73 The
oath which He swore to Abraham our father,
74 To grant us 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. 76
"And you, child, will be called the prophet of
the Most High; For you will go on BEFORE
THE LORD TO PREPARE HIS WAYS; 77
To give to His people the knowledge of
salvation By the forgiveness of their sins, 78
Because of the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Sunrise from on high shall
visit us, 79 TO SHINE UPON THOSE WHO
SIT IN DARKNESS AND THE SHADOW
OF DEATH, To guide our feet into the way
of peace. "*

- 3) John the Baptist increases spiritually and physically in order to be prepared for his confrontation of Israel to call them to repentance (1:80)

80 And the child continued to grow, and to become strong in spirit, and he lived in the deserts until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

- b. **Jesus Birth:** The birth and growth of Jesus is to the lowly and obedient as He is prepared to go to Israel and become their Deliverer and King. (2:1-52).

- 1) The birth of Jesus is supernatural as some outcasts participate and rejoice over God's visitation to deliver Israel (2:1-38).

²⁰ While it is possible that Zecharias is referring to Joseph's line (which is emphasized throughout these chapters) without marriage (although it is difficult to know if the marriage had taken place yet) then the attribution of the 'house of David' would be through Mary.

²¹ This is referring to the 'Times of the Gentiles' and the removal from that curse.

That Israel is under a curse is emphatic here. Mary and Joseph are poor (a negative), they are under Roman rule (a curse). The shepherds are unclean almost continually (living in animal squalor), and Anna is a widow. Yet each of these either is looking for Israel's deliverance, or responds to the news of Jesus as the Deliverer.

- a) The census decree goes forth from Rome to people of Israel under Gentile subjection, thus Joseph and Mary (Jews under the Gentile oppression of the 'Times of the Gentiles') go to Bethlehem to register and she gives birth to Jesus and lays Him in a manger. (2:1-7).

2:1 Now it came about in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus, that a census be taken of all the inhabited earth. 2 This was the first census taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. 3 And all were proceeding to register for the census, everyone to his own city. 4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David²², 5 in order to register, along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child. 6 And it came about that while they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. 7 And she gave birth to her first-born son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.²³

- b) The shepherds (outcasts due to the constant state of uncleanness) are told by angels, they respond going to the manger as they spread the word and praise. (2:8-20).

²² Here the genealogy is clearly that of Joseph, as the adopted father and husband, they would have been obligated under the Davidic line.

²³ Note the absence of the infamous innkeeper in the text.

2:8 And in the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields, and keeping watch over their flock by night. 9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. 10 And the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people; 11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. 12 "And this will be a sign²⁴ for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." 13 And suddenly there appeared 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 men with whom He is pleased." 15 And it came about when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us." 16 And they came in haste and found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger. 17 And when they had seen this, they made known the statement which had been told them about this Child. 18 And all who heard it wondered at the things which were told them by the shepherds. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds went back, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them.

- c) He is named Jesus according to the angel's word. (2:21).

And when eight days were completed before His circumcision, His

²⁴ The sign would be the baby in the lowly manger, a feeding trough for animals.

name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.

- d) Joseph and Mary (too poor to present the normal offering) present their offering for the eldest son according to Leviticus 12:8. (2:22-24).

2:22 And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "EVERY first-born MALE THAT OPENS THE WOMB SHALL BE CALLED HOLY TO THE LORD"), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the Law of the Lord, "A PAIR OF TURTLEDOVES, OR TWO YOUNG PIGEONS."

- e) Simeon (a man praying for the deliverance of Israel) praises the Lord for the appearance of the Messiah before his death. (2:25-35).

25 And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; and this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel; and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 And he came in the Spirit into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to carry out for Him the custom of the Law, 28 then he took Him into his arms, and blessed God, and said, 29 "Now Lord, Thou dost let Thy bond-servant depart In peace, according to Thy word; 30 For my eyes have seen Thy salvation, 31 Which Thou hast prepared in the presence of all peoples, 32 A LIGHT OF REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, And the glory of Thy people Israel. " 33 And His father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about Him. 34 And

Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed-- 35 and a sword will pierce even your own soul-- to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed. "

- f) Anna (a widow), a prophetess, sees Jesus and gives thanks to God, telling all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. (2:36-38).

2:36 And there was a prophetess, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with a husband seven years after her marriage, 37 and then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. And she never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. 38 And at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God, and continued to speak of Him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

- 2) The growth of Jesus in obedience to the Father demonstrates His subjection to God's command establishing His knowledge in Jerusalem. (2:39-52).

- a) They return to Nazareth in Galilee. (2:39-40).

2:39 And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own city of Nazareth. 40 And the Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.

- b) At 12 years old, Jesus' parents miss Him as they leave Jerusalem and find Him in the temple astonishing the teachers with His knowledge, which was the Father's business. (2:41-52).

41 And His parents used to go to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. 42 And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the Feast; 43 and as they were returning, after spending the full number of days, the boy Jesus stayed behind in Jerusalem. And His parents were unaware of it, 44 but supposed Him to be in the caravan, and went a day's journey; and they began looking for Him among their relatives and acquaintances. 45 And when they did not find Him, they returned to Jerusalem, looking for Him. 46 And it came about that after three days they found Him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, both listening to them, and asking them questions. 47 And all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. 48 And when they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You." 49 And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" 50 And they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. 51 And He went down with them, and came to Nazareth; and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men²⁵

- c. **John and Jesus meet:** John introduces Jesus as the one who bring the next age, that of judgment to the unrighteous and mercy to the righteous as Jesus is baptized to identify with His national purpose (3:1-23).

²⁵ This would likely be a statement relating to His human characteristics. He would be educated in the things of this world (wisdom) and he would grow physically (stature). These would be related and subjected to God as the next statement verifies. Also see 2:40 which seems to confirm this. The word for "stature" could be translated as 'age', 'height' or 'maturity'.

- 1) John the Baptist and his message are rejected, announcing judgment on unrepentant Israel and calling for a return to covenant through reception of Jesus as the bearer of the New Covenant and judgment. (3:1-20).

The first episode in Luke's survey is to show Elijah to come as well as Isaiah 40 as the voice who announces the Messiah. John, as the Elijah, calls for repentance by the nation, which the leaders reject. Thus he points out that this One who is the bearer of the Holy Spirit, the New Covenant, is also the One who will bring the judgment promised in Malachi 3.

The reaction to John the Baptist's call for repentance is headed by Herod, who promptly imprisons John the Baptist for calling him an adulterer.

- a) Under Gentile rule God sends a prophet to Israel, John the Baptist, one outside of the Jerusalem hierarchy (3:1-2).

3:1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, 2 in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zacharias, in the wilderness.²⁶

- b) John the Baptist announces the fullness of times to come in the Messiah, who will bring justice to the earth and return Israel to its kingdom over the Gentiles (3:3-6).

3 And he came into all the district around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of

²⁶ John is clearly not one of the Jerusalem hierarchy, but an outsider, a main emphasis in Luke.

repentance for the forgiveness of sins²⁷; 4 as it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet, " THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT. 5 'EVERY RAVINE SHALL BE FILLED UP, AND EVERY MOUNTAIN AND HILL SHALL BE BROUGHT LOW; AND THE CROOKED SHALL BECOME STRAIGHT, AND THE ROUGH ROADS SMOOTH; 6 AND ALL FLESH SHALL SEE THE SALVATION OF GOD. '"

- c) Specifically, John warns the multitudes that the baptism which he offers is not to confirm the deliverance of those who are born of Abraham, but to judge those who hold to their heritage as justification (3:7-9).

John questions why the Jews were coming to him from the city. They were coming for baptism as a confirmation of their belief that their Abrahamic genealogy brought them into a relationship with God. John relates that there must be an internal change recognized by ‘fruits’, not a continual physical relationship through Abraham. The fruit here is again, as in Matthew, one’s testimony or confession. Luke 6:44-45 demonstrates this. However, the content of the confession is what is

²⁷ Greek: βάπτισμα μετάνοιας εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν. John’s baptism was a symbol of Israel’s return to God. This return would result in (*eis*, ‘toward’) ‘the forgiveness of sins’. “Forgiveness of sins” was something not available in the Old Testament (except in anticipation through the sacrifices). Now it was available in Jesus as the final cycle of the “do evil – be judged – return –be delivered” cycle was now coming in fulfillment of Deuteronomy 30:1-6, where God would circumcise their hearts. Thus a combination of O.T. prophecies was in John’s message: Deut. 30:1-6: The return of Israel to God and He would circumcise their hearts, Ezekiel 36:26ff. where Israel was to be baptized as a symbol of the spiritual washing that would take place as God returned them from Gentile rule, Jeremiah 31:34 where God would give Israel a New Covenant and in that He would provide permanent forgiveness of sins. This would all come true in Jesus, thus John was introducing a new concept as the fulfillment of what the old concepts anticipated.

important. The content must reflect a heart of understanding of God's mercy toward man, as demonstrated in Jesus Christ. John points out that judgment is imminent on Israel.

7 He therefore began saying to the multitudes who were going out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"²⁸ 8 "Therefore bring forth fruits²⁹ in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say³⁰ to yourselves, 'We have Abraham for our father,' for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. 9 "And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

- d) John responds to the multitudes that they should have a heart that does not value their possessions as self-value, but for the sake of demonstrating care for the brother (3:10-14).

Throughout the Book of Luke one's value system (righteousness) before God is being examined. On the one hand the Pharisees related their value before God as determined by their physical 'blessings'. Thus to not have was considered a curse, and to have was considered a blessing (pagan reasoning is the same). John now

²⁸ Luke 21:23 uses the word "wrath" the only other time in this book to indicate the judgments on Israel during the Great Tribulation. However, it would seem that it is best applied to the "Day of the Lord" which would judge Israel for their sin.

²⁹ Luke 6:44-45 indicates that the "fruits" are the things that come from the "mouth". Thus repentance is in the heart, and the mouth indicates the repentance. The mouth's confession would be that of mercy from the Father through Jesus. This is how the brother would aid his brother at taking the mote out of his brother's eye.

³⁰ Note here that the contrast with "do fruits worthy of repentance" is "to say". This would indicate a contrast. Either "saying" is opposed to "doing", or "saying" is "doing" and the difference is the content.

illustrates that possessions are given by God to aid one to help his brother (“love thy neighbor”). Thus a true understanding (heart) of God in the Law would play itself out in a change of attitude toward those over whom one would seek a physical and profitable advantage.

The illustrations here are very negative. They all show a lack of concern, and even oppression of the brother for one’s own gain. This indicates that one treasures his own possessions more than his brother. In every case the one seeking is judging his brother less worthy than himself and thus justifying illegitimate means to gain at his brother’s expense. Thus he is not obeying the heart of the Law, but is self-centered utilizing his own selfish heart.

10 And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, "Then what shall we do?"³¹ 11 And he would answer and say to them, "Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none,³² and let him who has food do

³¹ This “do” seems to be in contrast where John says “do fruits in keeping with repentance”. At first glance this seems to be require a confirmation work to demonstrate true repentance. However, these came out of the Old Testament to demonstrate the application of the Law. The Law showed the heart of God and these thus demonstrate the heart of the person claiming that his heart was the same as God’s. This would be similar to the Sermon on the Mount where the requirements to demonstrate a heart of God were 100% and John is exhibiting this. John is expositing the Law as Jesus will do later (6:27-31) to show the heart of God. Thus to say that these are demonstrations of a true repentance or belief is not accurate since no one shows the full keeping of the Law and to claim these other than 100% (which is impossible) is to misunderstand the use of the Law. To understand this, note the alternative, which would be to claim that one’s heart could be changed but would cheat others, force others to give to them, and lie for their own gain and that would be ok. The heart produces a confession that results in actions. However, the lack of these actions does not indicate an unbeliever, just lack of sanctification which is present in all believers.

³² The point here is that one cannot wear two tunics at a time, and the one who has none needs one. Thus there is not even any suffering to give one up, but an aid to the brother. The only reason to keep two tunics would be the self-value of one over his brother.

likewise." 12 And some tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what shall we do?" 13 And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to."³³ 14 And some soldiers were questioning him, saying, "And what about us, what shall we do?" And he said to them, "Do not take money from anyone by force³⁴, or accuse anyone falsely³⁵, and be content with your wages."³⁶

- e) John's response to the question as to whether he would be the implementer of the fullness of times (full judgment and deliverance) is that he is simply symbolically indicating the coming fullness of purification to point to the One who will actually perform the cleansing (3:15-18).

John introduces the coming age in Jesus. While John continues to use a symbolic act (O.T. anticipation), Jesus will bring in the fullness of times. John refers to Malachi 3:1ff. where he will introduce the Messiah Who will purify, that is, judge between the righteous and the unrighteous.

15 Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were wondering in their

³³ The point here again is that when one collects more than he is authorized to do so he does so at the person's expense for his own gain. This is judging himself more worthy than his brother and profiting selfishly at another's expense, something contrary to the concern for brother.

³⁴ The word here is the same word for 'extort'. Thus a soldier is using his position to extort money beyond his assignment. Again this is taking advantage of a brother for one's own gain.

³⁵ The word here actually implies taking money by using false charges. Again this is selfish gain by false judgment toward one's own righteousness.

³⁶ This must be seen in light of the first two in this sentence. It means that what is given to you legally for your work is to be what you should be satisfied with as opposed to cheating or extorting or lying to gain more. This does not indicate that one should never seek a raise or seek to increase their income through legitimate means.

hearts about John, as to whether he might be the Christ, 16 John answered and said to them all, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but One is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the thong of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. 17 "And His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."³⁷ 18 So with many other exhortations also he preached the gospel to the people.

- f) The response (and illustration) of John's teaching is that a Gentile Ruler ('times of the Gentiles'), Herod, punishes John for Herod's stealing his brother's wife. Thus the introducer is rejected indicating that the Messiah will also be rejected (3:19-20).

3:19 But when Herod the tetrarch was reprov'd by him on account of Herodias, his brother's wife, and on account of all the wicked things which Herod had done, 20 he added this also to them all, that he locked John up in prison.

- 2) Jesus is baptized (by John) during which He is confirmed as the Son of God (God's ultimate Representative) [3:21-22].

3:21 Now it came about when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "Thou art My beloved Son, in Thee I am well-pleased."

³⁷ What John has said here is very correct. It is the prophecy of Malachi 3 where the Messiah comes and purifies and judges. These things were the possession of Christ, even though the ultimate judgment was separated from this appearance, nevertheless, Jesus would separate those one from another.