

Period 1: Birth to Nazareth

1. The Birth of John the Baptizer Announced Luke 1:5-35

Day 1

Luke 1:5-25

The Praying The NT story begins with two babies. From Genesis 3:15 to Malachi 3-4 God promised to send someone to earth to help His people. They were not sure who he was but they called him the "Anointed One". [*Messiah* in Hebrew / *Christ* in Greek] Most felt he would be a king from David's line; would crush non-Jewish nations and rule them with a rod of iron. (Ps, 2)

The OT closed with God's promise in Malachi 3-4 to send the Messiah, and like Isaiah 40 said, a messenger would come before him to announce him. The Jewish people Had been praying for 400 years for God to keep this promise, and nothing happened. All the while they were in bondage under Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.

The long wait was finally over. A elderly Priest, Zechariah was in the temple preparing for the twice-daily prayer meeting, something he did only once in his life, The Angel Gabriel appeared and said, **"Do not be afraid. your prayers have been answered."**

Two prayers were answered. He and his wife were old and had given up praying for a child, and he and the whole Jewish nation had been praying for the Messiah to come. Gabriel told him their son would announce him.

The Preparation Galatians 4:4 says, **"When the time had fully come"** God sent His Son. For 400 years it looked like God was deaf to His people's prayers. They could not see Him working, but He was -Under the rule of Babylon

they learned to stop worshipping idols and began selecting which of their writings should be part of the Old Testament.

Under Persia they learned about the afterlife. The term "paradise" and the use of fire as a symbol of punishment came from them. The Greeks gave the world a universal language, thus the gospel could be preached and understood from the Middle-East to Britain.

The Romans built paved roads all over the world and patrolled them. Thus, Christians sharing Christ could travel the world in safety.

The Jews had been dispersed all over the world and everywhere they went they built synagogues (like our churches) and they were used by Christian missionaries.

Day 2

Luke 11:1-13

The message for us is to **keep on praying**. In Luke 11 and 18* Jesus gives a parable about a grouchy man who refused to give his neighbor some food when he had unexpected company. The other pictured a judge, who refused to give a widow justice when a man was cheating her.

Both eventually gave in because they two people kept on begging, Keep on praying when God seems to be like a grouchy neighbor who does not want to be bothered or worse, like a cruel judge who doesn't care about doing what is right. Jesus says,

"People should continue to pray and not lose heart (get discouraged, quit, give up," / " Keep on asking; Keep on searching for answers and keep on knocking on Heaven's door."
(Luke 18:1;11:1-13)

*When we do this God may tell us why he said no and left us in some kind of pain. he told Paul his pain was humbling him. He didn't give Jesus an answer in Gethsemane when the soldiers came he was the most peaceful one in the crowd. (Matt. 28:47-67 / 27:1-26) God will either tell us why we are hurting or give us the faith and the peace to believe He knows best and is doing