



Rice Memorial MBC

Pastor Jimmy L. Harper, Sr., President of State Convention
Apostle Walter Camp, 1st Vice President
Dr. Sidney L. Miller, 2nd Vice President
Pastor Tremayne Harris, 3rd Vice President
Pastor Harry Noble, President of State Congress of Education
Pastor Michael Hansberry, Southern District Moderator

Rice Memorial Missionary Baptist Church

Apostle Walter F. Camp, Presiding Senior Pastor
Pastor David K. Baker III, 2nd Presiding
802 W. 15th, Little Rock, AR 72202, 501-773-6546
www.RiceMemorialBaptistChurch.org

The Forerunner of the Saviour

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
Other definitions are from **Webster's** Dictionary, 1828 Edition
or Roget's Thesaurus – **December 18, 2016**

Luke 1:6-20

Introduction: Little is “certainly” known concerning the time and place of writing this **Gospel**, or concerning the author. The first time we have any mention of the author is in his own history, Acts 16:10-11. He was then the **companion of Paul** in **his travels**, and it is evident that he often attended Paul in his journeys, compare Acts 16:11-17; Acts 21:1-6. In each of these places the author of “the Acts” speaks of “**his**” being in company with Paul. That the same person was the writer of this Gospel is also clear from Acts 1:1.

From this circumstance the ancients regarded this Gospel as in fact the **Gospel which Paul had preached**. They affirm that Luke recorded what the apostle preached. Thus, Irenaeus says, “Luke, the companion of Paul, **put down in a book the gospel preached by him.**” He also says, “Luke was not only a companion, but also a fellow-labourer of the apostles, especially of Paul.” Origen, speaking of the Gospels, says, “The third is that according to Luke, the gospel commended by Paul, published for the sake of the **Gentile converts.**” The testimony of the fathers is uniform that it was written by Luke, the companion of Paul, and was, therefore, regarded by them as really **the gospel which Paul preached**.

Luke does NOT profess to have been an eye-witness of what he recorded. See Luke 1:2-3. It is clear, therefore, that he was NOT one of the **seventy disciples**, nor **one** of the **two** who went to Emmaus, as has been sometimes supposed. Nor was he an apostle. By the fathers he is uniformly called the “**companion**” of the apostles, and especially of Paul.
(Source: <https://www.study-light.org/commentaries/bnb/luke-0.html>)

Luke 1:5-6, *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain **priest** named **Zacharias**, of the course of **Abia**: and his wife was of the daughters of **Aaron**, and her name was **Elisabeth**. And they were both **RIGHTEOUS** before God, walking in **all** the commandments and **ordinances** of the Lord **blameless (irreproachable** [free from blame; upright; innocent]).*

Righteous defined 1342, equitable [FAIR or impartial] **(in character); holy, just.**

Proverbs 14:2, He that walketh in his uprightness **FEARETH** (reverence) the Lord: but he that is **perverse (to turn aside)** in his ways **DESPISETH** (disesteem [to SLIGHT [ignore], DISRESPECT) him.

NOTE: Of the course of Abia - When the priests became so numerous that they could not at once minister at the altar, David divided them into **24 classes** or **courses**, each one of which **officiated for a week**, 1 Chronicles 24:10. Compare 2 Chronicles 8:14.

...The Greek-based word “Abia” is the same as the Hebrew-based word “**Abijah.**” **His wife was of the daughters of Aaron** - A descendant of Aaron, the **FIRST** high

priest of the Jews; so that **“John the Baptist”** was descended, on the father’s and the mother’s side, **from priests**. Our Saviour was NOT on either side. John would have been legally entitled to a place among the **priests**; our Saviour, being of the tribe of **Judah**, would NOT.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/luke-1.html>)

Luke 1:7-9, And they had **no child**, because that Elisabeth was **barren**, and they **BOTH** were **now well stricken in years**. And it came to pass, that while he **executed** the **priest's** office **before God** in the order of his **course**, According to the **custom** of the priest's office, his **lot** was to **burn incense (fragrant powder...)** when he went into the **temple** of the Lord.

NOTE: To burn incense - Incense is an **aromatic** or **white rosin** procured from trees, chiefly in Arabia. It is obtained by making incisions in the tree, and the gum flows out. It is distinguished for an especially pleasant “SMELL” when burned, and was therefore used in ancient worship. It was burned by the priest **twice a day** Exodus 30:7, and it seems to have been emblematic of **prayer and praise**, or of the **grateful offerings** of the heart wafted toward heaven. The incense used in the temple was made of stacte, onycha, and galbanum Exodus 30:34, with pure frankincense, and it was NOT lawful for this compound to be used elsewhere than in the house of God.

into the temple - See the notes at Matthew 21:12. The part of the temple where incense was burned was the **“holy place.”**

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/luke-1.html>)

Exodus 30:1, 6-8, And thou shalt make an **altar** to **burn incense** upon... And thou shalt put it before the **veil** that is by the **ark** of the testimony, before the **mercy seat** that is over the testimony, where I will **MEET** with **thee**. And Aaron shall **BURN** thereon **sweet incense** every **MORNING**: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron **lighteth** the **lamps** at **EVEN** he shall **burn incense** upon it, a **perpetual** incense...

Revelation 5:8, The four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden **vials (broad shallow cup)** full of **odours (fragrant powder..., INCENSE.)**, which **ARE** the **PRAYERS of saints**.

Luke 1:10-11, And the whole **multitude** of the people were **praying** without at the **time of incense**. And there **appeared** unto him an **angel** of the Lord standing on the **right side** of the **altar of incense**.

NOTE: It had now been about **400 years** since the time of **“Malachi,”** and since there had been any divine revelation. During that time the nation was looking for the **Messiah**, but still with nothing more than the ancient prophecies to direct them. Now that he was about to appear, God sent his messenger to announce his coming, to encourage the hearts of his people, and to **prepare them to receive him**.

On the right side ... - The altar of incense stood close by the **veil** which **divided** the **HOLY PLACE** from the **MOST HOLY**. On the north stood the table of showbread; on the south the golden candlestick. As Zechariah entered, therefore, with his face to the west, the angel would stand on the north, or near the table of showbread. That table was 18 inches square and 3 feet high.

...Upon this altar incense was **burned every morning** and **every evening**, so that it was **literally perpetual**, Exodus 30:8. Neither burnt-sacrifice, nor meat-offering, nor drink-offering was permitted upon this altar; nor was it ever **stained with blood** except **once annually**, when the priest **made ATONEMENT**, Leviticus 16:18-19.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/luke-1.html>)

Luke 1:12-13, And when Zacharias SAW him, he was **troubled**, and **FEAR** fell upon him. But the angel said unto him, **Fear not, Zacharias:** for **thy PRAYER is heard;** and thy wife **Elisabeth shall bear** thee a son, and thou shalt call his name **John**.

NOTE: Thy prayer is heard - That is, thy prayer for offspring. This, among the Jews, was an object of intense DESIRE. No prospect was more gloomy to them than that of dying childless, so that their "name should perish." Special pains, therefore, had been taken in the law to keep up the names of families by requiring a man to **marry** his brother's wife, Deuteronomy 25:5. (Source: <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/bnb/luke-1.html>)

Thought 1. There are certain songs, and sayings that make people BELIEVE that when we are blessed, "It was NOT because of any GOOD that we have done". But this thought is contrary to scriptures under the Old Covenant and the New Covenant.

Deuteronomy 28:1-2, And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt **hearken diligently** unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to **observe** and to **DO all** his commandments which I **command** thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth: And **all** these **BLESSINGS** shall **come on** thee, and **OVERTAKE** thee...

Deuteronomy 7:12-13, Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye **hearken** to these judgments, and **keep**, and **DO** them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the **COVENANT** and the mercy which he **swore** unto thy fathers: And he **WILL** love thee, and **bless** thee, and **multiply** thee: he will also **bless** the **fruit** of thy **WOMB**...

Proverbs 13:21, Evil **pursueth** sinners: but to the righteous **good** shall be **repayed**.

John 15:7, If ye **abide** in ME, and my **WORDS** **abide** (**dwell [reside: to live], remain**) in you, ye shall **ASK** what ye **will** (**desire**), and it shall be **done** unto **you**.

James 1:21-25, Wherefore **lay apart** ALL **filthiness** and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the **engrafted (implanted)** WORD, which is able to save your souls. But be ye **DOERS** of the word, and NOT hearers only, **deceiving** your **own selves**. For if any be a **hearer** of the word, and NOT a **DOER**, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway **forgetteth** what manner of man he was. But whoso **looketh** into the perfect law of liberty, and **continueth** therein, he being not a forgetful **hearer**, but a **DOER** of the **work**, this man SHALL be **BLESSED** in his **deed**.

Thought 2. Now, since Zacharias and Elisabeth, his wife, had done their part to obey Yahweh, their REWARD for obedience was certain. It was certain because, "God is NOT a man that he should lie". (Numbers 23:19) The Lord had made a Covenant with Israel, and he **KEEPS** his Covenant. The problem here in this couple's life is that the blessing had not "overtaken" them yet. But, it was on the way! And his name is John!

Psalms 89:34, My **covenant** will I not **break**, nor **alter (change)** the thing that is gone out of my lips.

Psalms 111:5, He hath given meat unto them that **fear** (reverence) him: he will ever be **mindful** of his **COVENANT** (agreement; contract).

Thought 3. What some Christians of today have failed to realize is that the Lord has a time set as to WHEN he's going to bring to pass the blessing. Therefore, it's like he told me many years ago when I asked him about certain blessings that he'd promised me. He said, "I'm going to bless you, but, you can't RUSH me."

This is the case with Zacharias and Elisabeth. Remember, John is the forerunner of the Messiah, Jesus (Yahshua). And Jesus (Yahshua) came in the "fullness of time." He was born into the earth at the TIME that was SET by his Father! It was planned.

Galatians 4:4, But when the **FULNESS (completion)** of the **TIME** was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the LAW...

Thought 4. So, we see when our Father answers our prayers, **OFTEN**, he is doing more than just blessing US. He's also blessing others and working to bring to pass his divine plan for even **MORE good**. In his work, there is an efficiency in everything that he does in the earth! Understanding this truth helps us to maintain faith and patience while we WAIT for him to bring it to pass. He will **NOT** break his covenant! And he will **NOT** take any more **TIME** than what's necessary to bring something to pass. So, since some things are taking more time to come to pass, it's **NECESSARY!** (Hab. 2:2-4)

Luke 1:14-15, And thou shalt have **JOY and gladness**; and many shall **rejoice** at his **birth**. For he shall be **great** in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink **neither** wine nor strong drink; and he shall be **FILLED** with the **Holy Ghost**, even **from** his mother's **WOMB**.

Filled defined 4130, "fill" (literally or figuratively [imbue, influence [a flowing forth of spiritual strength or ENERGY, active POWER], supply]).

Thought 1. This was different from what happened in Jesus' (Yahshua's) life. He wasn't filled by the Holy Ghost until he was about age 30. (Luke 3:21-23; 4:1)

NOTE: And thou shalt have joy and gladness... Not only because of his **having** a son; but because this his son would be the prophet of the **Highest**; would go before the Lord, and prepare his ways; give knowledge of salvation to many, and **LIGHT** to them that were in darkness, and guide their feet in the way of peace: all which, and more, he afterwards expresses in his song, whereby this part of the angel's prediction had its accomplishment:

and many shall rejoice at his birth; as the neighbours and cousins of his parents did; see Luke 1:58 and not only they, but all others, who, afterwards had knowledge of him as **prophet**, and as the **FORERUNNER of the MESSIAH**.
(Source: <https://www.studyLight.org/commentaries/geb/luke-1.html>)

Luke 1:16-17, And **MANY** of the children of Israel shall he TURN TO the Lord **their** God. And he shall go **before** him in the **spirit** and **power** of **Elias**, to **turn** the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the **disobedient** to the **wisdom** of the **just**; to make ready a **people prepared** for the Lord.

Thought 1. John's life would fulfill prophecies. (Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1, 4:5-6, Matt. 3:3)

Malachi 3:1, Behold, I will **send MY messenger**, and he shall **prepare** the **WAY** before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the **messenger of the covenant**, whom ye delight in: **behold, he shall come**, saith the Lord of hosts.

Matthew 3:1-3, In those days came **John** the **Baptist**, preaching in the **wilderness** of **Judaea**, And saying, **Repent** ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at **hand**. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet **Esaias**, saying, The **voice** of one **crying (shout in a tumultuous [excited] way)** in the **wilderness, Prepare** ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

Matthew 11:7, 9-11, 14, And as they departed, **Jesus** began to say concerning **John**, what went ye out to see? ...A prophet? Yea, and more than a prophet. For this is he, Of whom it is written, **Behold, I send my messenger before thy face**, which shall prepare thy way before thee. Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath **NOT** risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.
..And if ye will receive it, **this IS Elias (Elijah)**, which was for to come.

Luke 1:18, And **Zacharias** said unto the **angel**, **Whereby** shall I **KNOW** this? **for** I am an **old MAN**, and my **WIFE** well **stricken** in **years**.

NOTE: The answer comes. He can know that a son will be born to him because of the **AUTHORITY** and **POSITION** of the one who speaks. 'I AM Gabriel, who stands in the **presence of God**.' The 'I am' is emphatic. **Could such a one lie?** For one who stands in the presence of God could NOT come with lying promises. What he promises is directly **FROM God**. And he had been **sent** specifically to bring him these **good tidings**.
(Source: <https://www.studydrive.org/commentaries/pet/luke-1.html>)

Luke 1:19-20, And the **angel** answering said unto him, I am **Gabriel**, that **stand** in the presence of God; and am **sent** to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be **dumb**, and **NOT** able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed, because thou **BELIEVEST not** my **words**, which shall be **fulfilled** in their **season**.

QUESTION: Why didn't God do to Abraham and Sarah as he had Gabriel do to Zacharias?
ANSWER: The Lord (Yahweh) knew that Zacharias, as a priest, should have known that his circumstance was EXACTLY like Abraham's and Sarah's. They also were well stricken in age when he finally got them convinced about their baby that he'd promised them.

Romans 15:4, For **whatsoever** things were **written** aforetime were **written** for our **LEARNING**, that we through patience and comfort of the **scriptures** might have **hope**.

And we know from Genesis 18:13-14 that after Sarah laughed IN disbelief because she thought she was too old, the Lord (Yahweh) asked her a question.

Is anything too HARD for the Lord (Yahweh)? He goes on to say, At the TIME appointed, I will return unto thee, according to the TIME of life, and Sarah shall have a son."

Luke 1:21-22, And the people **waited** for Zacharias, and **marvelled** that he tarried so long in the temple. And when he came out, he could NOT speak unto them: and they **perceived** that he had **seen** a **VISION** in the temple: for he **beckoned** unto them, and remained **speechless**.

Thought 1. Zacharias lived blameless before God, and this showed his reverence (fear), to include love, with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength him. So, this SIGN, of NOT being able to speak, easily corrected him to strong FAITH. However, he really didn't know how to handle this as he stood before the altar of incense. So, he stayed longer than normal, in thought, and possibly prayed to God. But he still couldn't speak. So finally, he came out!

Luke 1:23, And it came to pass, that, as soon as the **days** of his **ministration** were accomplished, he departed to his **own house**.

Thought 1. Now, you know he shared everything that Gabriel said to him with his wife, Elisabeth! And I wouldn't be surprised if one, or both remembered that they were now like Abraham and Sarah. And as we know, for the next nine months or so, NOT being able to speak was a visible SIGN that kept his MIND full of the remembrance of God's words, and the certainty of their fulfillment in his life. He's reminded daily! "Nothing is too hard for God! And even though he couldn't speak, YET! He didn't mind because it was temporary! He had joy because when his son was born, fulfilling God's words, he'd speak again!

So, God **maximized** the **moment**! The Lord (Yahweh) still sets up things and works so we, and others, to include our children, might accomplish HIS will in the earth.

Luke 1:24-25, And after those days his wife Elisabeth **conceived**, and hid herself **five** months, saying, Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he **looked** on me, to TAKE AWAY my **reproach (taunt [disgrace])** among **men**.

Thought 1. These words just came to mind. "I LOVE it when a PLAN comes together!"