

NEW TESTAMENT



GOSPEL DOCTRINE CLASS

Lesson 2: "My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord"

- John the Baptist is born to Elisabeth and Zacharias.
- Mary and Joseph learn that Mary will be the mother of the Son of God.

A study of this lesson will help us develop greater faith in Jesus Christ through a study of the lives of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph.



Introduction

If you could meet anyone in the New Testament besides Jesus, whom would you want to meet? One of the Apostles? One of Christ's closest associates? Why would you want to meet that person? Your answer probably bears out the fact that we are often drawn to righteous people because they follow the Savior and testify of him. As we become better acquainted with

these people, we also become better acquainted with Jesus Christ. Today, we'll discuss several people who set righteous examples that can help us draw closer to him and develop greater faith in Jesus Christ through our study of the lives of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph.

John the Baptist is born to Elisabeth and Zacharias.

Luke 1:6-9 describe Elisabeth and Zacharias as righteous, obedient, and faithful.

Luke 1:7, 13 reveal that Zacharias and Elisabeth prayed for the blessing of posterity.

In **Luke 1:11-13** and **Luke 1:24-25**, we see how their prayers were finally answered. Zacharias and Elisabeth had probably prayed for many years that they would be blessed with a child. However, Heavenly Father did not grant them this

blessing until the time was right to accomplish his purposes.

We need to follow their example of remaining faithful and avoiding discouragement when our sincere prayers are not immediately answered in the way we desire.

Luke 1:14-17 contains Gabriel's prophecy about John's mission.

- John would "turn [many people] to the Lord their God" (verse 16).

- He would "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" (verse 17).
- He would "turn ... the disobedient to the wisdom of the just" (verse 17).

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#3 "Unto You Is Born...a Saviour" (Luke 2; Matthew 2)

- He would “make ready a people prepared for the Lord” (verse 17).

Note: John the Baptist was “the outstanding bearer of the Aaronic Priesthood in all history” (Bible Dictionary, “John the Baptist,” 714). And note that all these accomplishments of John’s mission can be applied to members who hold the Aaronic Priesthood.

Luke 1:18-20 tells us that as a result of his doubt about the words of the angel, Zacharias was struck dumb.

Luke 1:59-63 recounts Zacharias’ actions after John’s birth, demonstrating his renewed faith. He and Elisabeth named their son John, thus obeying God’s command rather than following local traditions.

Luke 1:68-79 contain Zacharias’ prophecy about the mission of his son, as well as the redemption, salvation, remission of sins, tender mercy, and light that would come through Jesus Christ.

John 1:6-9 remind us that, like John the Baptist, we should focus our service on helping others come

to Christ and receive the “true light”.

Luke 1:80 teaches that after John was born, he grew and “waxed strong in spirit”, meaning that he grew or developed in spirituality. John needed to wax strong in spirit to be able to fulfill his mission. We too need to wax strong in spirit to carry out our mission(s).

Mary and Joseph learn that Mary will be the mother of the Son of God.



Luke 1:26-33 records the angel Gabriel’s visit to Mary. The Savior needed to be the son of a mortal mother and an immortal Father to be capable of accomplishing his unique mission.

Speaking of Jesus Christ, Elder **Bruce R. McConkie** taught:

“God was his Father, from which Immortal Personage ... he inherited the power of immortality, which is the power to live forever; or, having chosen to die, it is the power to rise again in immortality, thereafter to live forever without again seeing corruption. ... “... Mary was his mother, from which mortal woman ... he inherited the power of mortality, which is the power to die. ... “It was because of this ... intermixture of the divine and the mortal in one person, that our Lord was able to work out the infinite and eternal atonement. Because God was his Father and Mary was his mother, he had power to live or to die, as he chose, and having laid down his life, he had power to take it

again, and then, in a way incomprehensible to us, to pass on the effects of that resurrection to all men so that all shall rise from the tomb” (The Promised Messiah [1978], 470-71).

Luke 1:26-38, and **1:45-49** give us an opportunity to learn about Mary from her conversations with the angel and with Elisabeth.

- Mary had found favor with God (verses 28, 30), meaning that she was found worthy in His sight for special blessings and responsibilities. She could have looked to other sources for favor, as some people do, but she realized that looking for favor from the other available sources might make it difficult for her to find favor with God.
- Mary was worthy to have the Lord with her (verse 28). In our lives, we need to be worthy of having the Spirit with us, so consider how you might increase your worthiness.
- Mary was humble and submissive to the will of the Lord (verses 38, 48). Obviously, it is important for us to submit to the Lord’s will if we wish to have his greatest blessings. Think seriously about how you might become more humble and submissive.
- Mary rejoiced in her Savior (verse 47). To benefit from her exam-

ple, we should consider how we may rejoice in the Savior.

Luke 1:39-44 and **Luke 1:15** - Elisabeth and her unborn son rejoiced when Mary came to visit, in part, because of the influence of the Holy Ghost. One of the Holy Ghost’s principal roles is to testify of Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:18-19 shows that Joseph and his love for Mary were tested. When he learned that Mary was with child, according to the law, Joseph could have accused Mary of violating the marriage covenant and brought her to a public trial. Such a trial could have resulted in a death sentence. Rather than do this, he decided to release her privately from the marriage contract. For Mary’s sake, he shunned the public humiliation he could have subjected her to and ignored his own sorrow and suffering. Joseph proved faithful and trustworthy because it was only after he had made the correct decision to deal lovingly with Mary that the angel visited him and directed that he should take Mary as his wife.

Matthew 1:20-23 reveals how Heavenly Father helped Joseph accept Mary’s condition and prepare for his own responsibilities.

Matthew 1:24-25 teaches us what Joseph did in response to this dream and gives us some insight into his character.

Conclusion

And Mary said, My soul
doth magnify the Lord
Luke 1:46

Luke 1:46 - In this verse, the word magnify refers to Mary's efforts to praise the Lord and help others see his greatness.

The examples of Elisabeth, Zacharias, John the Baptist, Mary, and Joseph can help us see the Savior's greatness and increase our faith in him. Then, it is our responsibility to determine how we can help others increase their faith in Jesus Christ.

Additional Teaching

"That thou mightest know the
certainty of those things"
(Luke 1:4)

Luke 1:3-4 shows that Luke addressed his testimony to a person named Theophilus. Luke's purpose in writing his testimony was to help Theophilus know the certainty of

things that had already been taught. Think about how you have been strengthened as you have heard others testify of familiar doctrines and well-known scripture accounts.

Elder Bruce R. McConkie said:
"A God was coming to earth and everything connected with his birth and life and ministry and resurrection and ascension to eternal glory - everything! - must be perfect. It must conform to what the prophets have foreseen, foreknown, and foretold. Truly Omnipotent Wisdom had left nothing to chance. A God was coming into the world, and the world must be ready for his Advent." (The Mortal Messiah 1:284-85.)

