

Taking it Home

- How important is it for you to live a holy life (*hagios*: “set apart to God”)? Why does it matter? If you claim to be a follower of Jesus, does the world (unsaved people) see Jesus living in you? If not, what can you do to begin living a sanctified life that brings honor and glory to God? (Cf. **1 John 1:9; Eph. 4:23-24; 1 Peter 1:15-16**)

- If you have trusted Jesus Christ as Savior, you have the Holy Spirit living in you (**Rom. 8:9-11; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Eph. 5:17-18**). The word “filled” is *pleroo*, which means “controlled.” Have you been allowing the Holy Spirit to control your life? The evidence of the Holy Spirit controlling a genuine believer’s life is found in **Galatians 5:22-23**.

- How did the promised announcement of John the Baptist impact the people of Israel once John became an adult and started his ministry? Does the life and ministry of the Forerunner of the Messiah, John the Baptist impact you today? How?

- According to Scripture, how important is a baby’s life which is still in a mother’s womb? Is your life very significant to God? Are you using your life to glorify Jesus Christ?

The Baby Changes Everything
God Breaks His Silence-A Miraculous Revelation
Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 & Luke 1 :5-17

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December 6, 2015

God Breaks His Silence—A Miraculous Revelation

Notes:

At Home Study Guide

For the week of December 6, 2015
Isaiah 40:3, Malachi 3:1 & Luke 1 :5-17

Quick Review

God, to fulfill His sovereign will, and to fulfill the prophecies He gave to His prophet Isaiah in Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6, chose certain people to be a part of the preparation for the coming of His Son, the Messiah, to make his divine entrance upon the earth. In Luke chapter 1, we read Luke's narrative about God's sovereign selection of "key" individuals He wanted to use to fulfill His Master plan in the anticipation of the Messiah's birth—an **Angel, a Priest & his wife, a Messenger and a Virgin**.

My Story

- Have you ever wondered why you were born? What is your purpose for being alive on the earth? Discuss.
- Have you ever thought about the people that have come into your life? Do you think it's coincidental or do you believe it is part of a divine design that you've met the people who've come into your life? Discuss.
- Has there been someone significant that entered into your life that really changed your direction, your purposefulness, or your meaning of life (beside Jesus Christ)? Who, what, when, where, how, why? Discuss.
- What does the Sovereignty of God mean? If God is Sovereign, do you believe there is a master plan for your life? Do you know what it is or are you searching to reveal it? Discuss.

Growing Deeper

- Why do you think God has chosen key, "select" individuals throughout the pages of the Bible to fulfill His grand, master divine design to accomplish His will: people like Noah, Abraham, Joseph, David, Zacharias & Elizabeth, John the Baptist and Mary? What is the "common denominator" that connects all the above individuals in their special calling, used for a special purpose by God? **READ, Interpret and Discuss the following Scriptures: Genesis 6:8; Hebrews 11:8; Genesis 39:2-5; 1 Samuel 16:13; 18; Luke 1:5-6; 13-14; Luke 1:28; 30.**
- According to the great people God used mightily for His purposes (listed above), how important is the individual's personal walk with God, their righteousness, for God to use them in a profound, mighty way? Is personal holiness relevant for believer's today, or was it simply meant for characters we read about in the Bible? **READ, Interpret and Discuss: Eph. 4:23-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 1 John 3:3.**
- How many years of silence had there been between the Old Testament Prophet Malachi and God breaking His silence by speaking to Zacharias? What was the miraculous revelation that God gave to Zacharias and Elizabeth? Before the angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias in Luke 1:5, when was the last recorded appearance of an angelic being dealing in the affairs of men? How many years had there been between angelic visitations to men between **Daniel 10 and Luke 1:5-17?**
- **READ, interpret and discuss Isaiah 40:3, Isaiah 3:1, Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27; John 1:6-8.** In each Scripture verse, what is God promising to do before the Messiah begins His earthly ministry? Do you think John the Baptist knew what God's sovereign purpose was for his life? **READ and interpret Matthew 3:3 & John 1:23.**
- What is the significance of the miraculous revelation God gave to Zacharias and Elizabeth through the angel Gabriel? What is the similarity of the pregnancy of Sarah (Gen. 18:9-14; 21:2) at a very old age and the pregnancy of Elizabeth at a very old age (Luke 1:13; 18)? Why are both supernatural pregnancies incredibly important?
- In Luke 1:15, the angel Gabriel tells Zacharias that the baby that would be born of his wife Elizabeth would be "*Filled with the Holy Spirit while he was yet in his mother's womb.*" What do you think that means? What are the obvious implications, from God's standpoint, of the tremendous value of human life within a woman's womb?
- What is the incredibly important message God was delivering to Zacharias & Elizabeth, Israel and the world when God broke His silence after 400 years? What is the message He was sending to Israel? How important was John the Baptist's message to Israel? How important was John the Baptist's ministry leading up to the introduction of Jesus' 3 year ministry?