

## Sermon Brief, Important Cross References and Quotes, Helpful Links, Fill in the Blank Listening Aid, “How Well was I Listening Questions”

November 21, 2021

Luke 3:1-6, “The Forerunner”

### Sermon Brief:

1. We have begun looking at the gospel of Luke.
2. Unsurprisingly, Luke begins his gospel with an introduction.
3. In this introduction he gives us some keys to understanding what he’s going to be talking about.
4. In **1:1-4** he explains that he is talking about what has been accomplished. In other words, the events he is recording are the accomplishment of a plan that was revealed in the Old Testament.
5. *Unfortunately our familiarity with what happened with Jesus often keeps us from seeing how astonishing this claim would have been, which is why we took a lot of time in the first couple chapters to help you see just how big the salvation God was promising to provide through the Messiah was.*
6. One way Luke makes it clear the plan he’s claiming Jesus was fulfilling was of world-changing importance was by beginning with a story in **1:5-25** that is intentionally designed to remind you of one of the biggest and most important stories in the Old Testament, the story of Abraham and Sarah and Isaac, and yet, there’s a twist, and the twist is that their child John isn’t even going to be the ultimate hero. Jesus is.
7. And so it is like, as you are reading Luke 1, you know this book is going to be about salvation and that it is going to be big because, Abraham and Sarah. But just when you think it can’t get any bigger, it does, because first John is born to a barren couple, and yet right after that, we learn Jesus is going to be born to a virgin. Which is how Luke works. He is pointing us back to the Old Testament, Jesus is fulfilling the Old Testament, while finding a way to emphasize that Jesus is actually bigger and better than anything we’ve seen before.
8. And one way we know that is because an angel is sent by God in **1:26-38** to tell Mary that she is going to have a Son and her Son is going to be the eternal ruler of the Universe.
9. Luke wants us to know that Jesus is going to be the One who fulfills the Davidic covenant. But again there’s just a little extra twist, because we’ve had descendants of David before, and they all failed, and so in the third story Luke tells in **1:39-45**. Luke makes clear that while Jesus is a descendant of David, he’s also more, as Elizabeth who is filled with the Holy Spirit identifies Jesus as her Lord.
10. *It’s like Luke is connecting the dots. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, meaning that he’s the seed of Abraham, so think reversal of curse, and meaning, the descendant of David, so think ruler of the universe, and that He’s Lord, meaning He is a unique Son of David, who can do what all the rest could not.*
11. And in case we are not familiar with exactly why all that is so significant, Luke brings in some people in the rest of chapter one to explain. He starts with Mary who unpacks what she’s expecting God to do through Jesus in verses **1:46-55** focusing on salvation for Israel and then Zechariah steps in and reveals in **1:56-80** that the

salvation God accomplishes for Israel through Jesus is going to result in them bringing blessing to the entire world.

12. *And so we need to look at what happened with Jesus because Luke's claiming He is the solution God promised in the Old Testament to the problems of the entire world. Especially because Jesus doesn't look much like someone you would expect to be able to do all that Luke's claiming He was able to do.*
13. Even if you just think about his birth. And now we are in Luke chapter 2. In **Luke 2:1-7** Luke helps us see the problem, because he tells the story of Jesus' birth in a way where he compares and contrasts Him with Caesar Augustus who was the most powerful person in the world in those days. And at first, honestly, this story confirms our questions, because Caesar looks like the strong one as He is issuing orders from Rome and Jesus' parents are forced to comply, but in **Luke 2:8-20** he reveals that what is really going on behind the scenes, is that God is using Caesar to enable Jesus to be born exactly where He needs to be born to fulfill the Old Testament promises.
14. *And that's the point of this book. It's like Luke is telling these stories, and saying, it's happening. It's really happening.*
15. Luke cements that by introducing two witnesses in **2:22-38** to confirm his case. Simeon and Anna both speak for God and what do they say? They say that when we look at Jesus we are looking at the fulfillment of the prophecies we read about in the Old Testament and Simeon even points out Isaiah in particular.
16. And you know if we have any question about all this. If we wonder maybe about Jesus and His interpretation of the Old Testament, Luke shows us in the last story in **Luke 2:39-52** that at age 12, Jesus already understands the Bible better than the greatest minds in Jerusalem, and so if we have any question about Jesus, the problem is not with Jesus and his understanding of the Old Testament, it's because we don't appreciate who Jesus is. He's the Son of God. And the thing is, Jesus knew that. At age 12. He knew who He was and what He was doing and what was important, when even Mary and Joseph didn't. They were confused. But Luke wants us to show us, they shouldn't have been. And we know that because Jesus tells them, "Did you not know I must be in my Father's house?" which almost sounds like a rebuke, because I kind of think it is. Jesus is saying, you should have known. And yet how should they have known? They should have known because what happened with Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.
17. That's the introduction. That's Luke 1 and 2. Luke is making a case that what happened with Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament, and if you read the Old Testament, you should know it. That's Luke's basic thesis. And Luke wants to convince you of it. He wants you to be certain. That's why he is writing.
18. And so in chapter 3:1-20, he begins to show us how. **He begins to prove how these events fulfill the Old Testament starting with John. And what I want to do in the next couple of weeks is show you why.** This is going to be like one long sermon over three weeks, but what we are going to look at, what I think is important for you to understand, is why Luke brings John up as a key part of his case that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament.
19. To understand how this story about John helps us see Jesus as the fulfillment of the Old Testament, the very first thing you have to understand is how important John the Baptist is and to help you understand how important John the Baptist is, you have to

understand **1. The historical context for John and 2. The Old Testament background to John.**

20. Both politically and spiritually, Israel is in trouble. They are in exile. But while they are in exile, the word of God comes to John the Baptist in the wilderness by the Jordan. It's like John is standing with Israel at the entrance to the fulfillment of all these great amazing promises, and saying you know what needs to happen for us to enter? We need repentance.
21. If we have any questions about what John is doing, Luke says, all we need to do is read Isaiah. Because Isaiah says there is a prophet who is going to come before God steps in to rescue His people, and Luke says, that's what is happening with John.
22. If you wonder, can I be sure Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament? Let's start by looking at John. Because, John is really, really important. How important? Israel is in exile. When God's Word comes to John just like the Old Testament said it would. And John is calling them to repent and announcing that God is acting to provide salvation just like the Old Testament said He would. And what happened?
23. This is going to be verses 7-14. But real quickly, what happened is just what the Old Testament said would happen. Which means as we look at John's ministry, what do we see? We see His the fulfilment of this promise about the prophet who would come before the Messiah, and what does this great Old Testament prophet who was supposed to come before the Messiah say about how we can identify who the Messiah is? That's verses 15-17. But if you want something to take home, here's the preview. **John's huge. But John's whole ministry exists to make clear, the One come after Him is much greater. Just when you thought it couldn't get any bigger. It does. And his name is Jesus.**

#### Important Cross References and Quotes:

1. Luke 1:1-4
2. Isaiah 35:6,8
3. Hosea 2:14
4. Amos 4:4,5
5. Deuteronomy 30:1ff
6. Joel 2:12ff

#### Helpful Links:

1. [The Holy Spirit in Luke and Acts](#)
2. Going Deep: [Dispensationalists and Spirit Baptism](#)

#### PowerPoint Presentation [Link](#)

#### With Fill in the Blanks [Link](#)

#### Fill in the Blank Listening Aid:

##### I. Introduction

- A. Luke says he is talking about what has been \_\_\_\_\_.

1. We are not just reading a story about something that happened long ago. We are reading about events that did something in this world.
  2. The events he is recording are part of the accomplishment of a plan that was promised in the Old Testament.
  3. Luke is telling us from the beginning that what he wants us to see is that Jesus really did fulfill the Old Testament.
- B. To help you understand why that is such an important question we took a lot of time in the first couple chapters to help you see just how big the salvation God was promising to \_\_\_\_\_ through Jesus is.
1. 1:5-25 reminds us of the promise to Abraham.
  2. 1:26-38 points us to the Davidic covenant.
  3. 1:39-45 reveals the Messiah is God.
  4. 1:46-55 describes the salvation He's bringing as a complete reversal at every level of how things were for Israel.
  5. 1:56-80 reminds us that salvation for Israel results in blessing for the world.
- C. What Luke is claiming about Jesus is huge, and so we really need to look closely at what happened, because Jesus doesn't look like someone you would expect to be able to do all that Luke's \_\_\_\_\_. He was able to do.
1. Luke helps us see the problem in the way he tells the story of Jesus birth in 2:1-7.
  2. He gives the answer to that problem in 2:8-20.
  3. He brings in two witness to confirm the claims he is making in 2:22-38.
  4. And he wraps it up by demonstrating why we should trust Jesus' interpretation of the Old Testament in 2:41-52.
- D. What happened with Jesus is the fulfilment of the Old Testament. That's the introduction. Now, in Luke 3 and 4, he wants to show you how these events do that.
- E. And he begins with \_\_\_\_\_ in 3:1-20.

II. What we are going to look at is why Luke brings John up as a key part of his argument for Jesus being the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Old Testament.

- A. You can't just read this as: "it tells me lots of interesting information about John." No. This story is here doing something. And Luke's told us what the is intending it to do. He wants to prove Jesus is fulfilling the Old Testament. So, how does this story do that?
- B. To understand how it does that you have to begin by understanding how important John the Baptist is. That's the goal of this sermon today. I want to show you how important John is.**
- C. And to understand how important John is first, you have to understand the \_\_\_\_\_. (3:1-2)
- D. And second, you have to understand the \_\_\_\_\_. (3:3-6)

III. Conclusion

- A. Luke is telling us that the Old Testament promised a prophet who would come right before God sends the Messiah to prepare the people for what He is going to do.
- B. And we look at John and his ministry and you know what we see? We see that John is clearly that prophet. He is the fulfilment of that promise. AND here's the thing. What does this great Old Testament prophet who was supposed to come before the Messiah say about how we can know who the Messiah is?
- C. You'll have to come back next week to find out.
- D. But here's a preview. John's ministry is huge. And yet John's whole ministry exists to make clear that the One coming after Him is much, much greater. In other words, just when you thought it couldn't get any better or bigger. It does. And his name is Jesus.

### **How Well Was I Listening Questions:**

That's not a great name for this section. But, here are some questions you should be able to answer after listening to the message.

1. What passage did we study today?
2. What is the reason why Luke is writing this gospel?
3. Why is it so important to understand that as you are reading the rest of Luke's gospel? How does that help you interpret what you are reading?
4. What claims is Luke making about Jesus in Luke chapters 1 and 2 and how does he do that? See if you can summarize.
5. What is Luke beginning to do in chapters 3 and 4?
6. As we look at verses 1-20 of chapter 3, what question are we trying to answer?
7. The first thing Luke does is show us how important John is. How does he do that in verses 1-6?
8. Who was emperor when John the Baptist began preaching?
9. What is a tetrarch?
10. Who was the high priest?
11. Where did John start his ministry? Why is that location so significant?
12. What book of the Bible does Luke quote when he talks about John?
13. What does that book say would happen before Israel is delivered from exile?
14. What is one thing you learned from the message today?