

Luke 1:5-25 Prepared for the Lord

God graciously prepares us to partake of His redemption by faith.

- 1) The Problem: A Barren Couple & an Oppressed People (5-7)
 - a) God's people experience the dissonance of being right with God yet being reproached in His world.
 - i) Elizabeth's barrenness brought shame upon her (cf. Deut. 7:12-14).
 - ii) Herod "the Great" brought shame upon faithful Israelites.
 - b) Do you experience unwarranted shame due to the unbiblical values of our society?
- 2) The Prayers: For a Child & Salvation (8-13)
 - a) God assures us that He hears our prayers.
 - i) Zechariah prayed for a child.
 - ii) Zechariah/Israel prayed for the redemption of Israel.
 - b) Are you entrusting your "cause" to God in prayer?
- 3) The Promise: Of a Child & Salvation (14-17)
 - a) God assures us that He is working to redeem His world.
 - i) He promised joy (14).
 - ii) He promised the Holy Spirit (15).
 - iii) He promised conversion (16-17a).
 - (1) Vertical: "turn many . . . to the Lord their God"
 - (2) Horizontal: "turn the hearts of the fathers to the children"
 - (3) Moral Transformation: "turn . . . the disobedient to the wisdom of the just"
 - iv) He promised preparation for the Lord's coming (17b).
 - b) Do you know what God has promised? Have you received the Promised One?
- 4) The Pitfall: Lack of Faith in God & Overconfidence in Self (18-23)
 - a) God rebukes our unbelief when we set our minds on the flesh.
 - i) Zechariah's question might be paraphrased, "How can you expect me to believe this?"
 - ii) Zechariah's unbelief came from focusing on human ability: "I am an old man . . ."
 - iii) Zechariah doubted God faithfulness to His redemptive promise.
 - iv) Zechariah was disciplined for his lack of faith.
 - b) Do you believe in the power of the gospel to change lives?
- 5) The Resolution: God's Redemptive Power (24-25)
 - a) God assures us that He will reverse our reproachful condition in His time.
 - i) Elizabeth conceived!
 - ii) Elizabeth hid herself until her blessed condition would be obvious to all.
 - iii) Elizabeth praised God for removing her shame.
 - iv) Israel, as a nation, refused redemption through faith in Jesus Christ. But many from among the nations have believed.
 - b) Will you respond with faith or unbelief?
 - c) The good news is that God is not restricted by our lack of faith. He is working out His purpose in His time by His power: "And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that

these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time” (v. 20). The tragedy for Zechariah was that he had to wait over nine months before he could tell the good news. But you can speak the Good News by faith.