



## 400 Years of Silence

Israel was waiting.

They were living in the land God had promised them, but it was under foreign control, and had been for nearly 500 years.

God had gone silent.

Where was He?

He had promised a Messiah.

He had promised a King who would overthrow their enemies and deliver them from the hands of the wicked.

Had He forgotten them?

Had He gone back on His promise?

Was He even there anymore?

Have you ever wondered where God is? Has He ever felt distant from you? Does God seem overly passive to you?

We recently remembered the anniversary of one of our country's most horrific tragedies.

Where was God when it happened?

Is He worth following?

Has He abandoned us?

The answer is no.

God is still there. He always has been. He always will be.

God, like the parent He is, likes to step back and see what His children will do without Him. He waits to see what decisions we will make and how we handle the resulting consequences.

He's done it before, and each time it seems like an intolerably long time, yet, each time when He reveals Himself again He seems mightier and more wondrous than ever before.

Israel was waiting.

Many had given up hope.

Others were watching.

And a small few were preparing the way.

Which category do you fall into?

The 400 years is over.

God is about speak.

Enjoy.

## Unwrapping The Christmas Gift

### My Purpose:

- To Glorify God
- To Guide you through God's Word
- To Equip you with Tools and Techniques for Studying the Word yourself
- To Assist in Finding Ways to Apply God's Word to your Life and the Lives of Others

"Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so."

Acts 17:11

## I Believe...

1. ...In the Inerrancy of the Bible.
2. ...God is Proactive not Reactive or Inactive
3. ...Every Christian should Learn to study for themselves.

4. ...God, the Holy Spirit is your Teacher.

5. ...The Bible is the best source for interpreting the Bible.

For more info visit "My Beliefs" at our website.

### Jewish Culture: The Levitical Priesthood

Jacob had 12 sons.

One of them was named Levi. From his descendants, or tribe, came a man named Moses, and his brother, Aaron.

God gave the Law to Moses. In Exodus 28, as God instructs Moses on the construction of the Tent of Meeting, He declares that all of the Levites descended from and including Aaron would fulfill the office of priest. They would perform duties such as reading the Law, performing animal sacrifices, and burning incense in the holy part of the Tabernacle (and later the Temple).

What started out as a handful of men, in the days of Moses, by Jesus' time was a major institution.

### Technique Focus #2a

Reading- Context

Context rules.

The Bible can be made to say just about anything if someone isolates the appropriate verses. Interpretation requires that the verse or passage be viewed in the light of its chapter, its book, and the bible as a whole.

Read Verses in Context



## Unwrapping God's Gift of Christmas

Here is the passage that we will be studying this week. Please pray before you begin.

### Luke 1:1-12 (The Message)

- 1 So many others have tried their hand at putting together a story of the wonderful harvest of Scripture and history that took place among us,
- 2 using reports handed down by the original eyewitnesses who served this Word with their very lives.
- 3 Since I have investigated all the reports in close detail, starting from the story's beginning, I decided to write it all out for you, most honorable Theophilus,
- 4 so you can know beyond the shadow of a doubt the reliability of what you were taught.
- 5 During the rule of Herod, King of Judea, there was a priest assigned service in the regiment of Abijah. His name was Zachariah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron. Her name was Elizabeth.
- 6 Together they lived honorably before God, careful in keeping to the ways of the commandments and enjoying a clear conscience before God.
- 7 But they were childless because Elizabeth could never conceive, and now they were quite old.
- 8 It so happened that as Zachariah was carrying out his priestly duties before God, working the shift assigned to his regiment,
- 9 it came his one turn in life to enter the sanctuary of God and burn incense.
- 10 The congregation was gathered and praying outside the Temple at the hour of the incense offering.
- 11 Unannounced, an angel of God appeared just to the right of the altar of incense.
- 12 Zachariah was paralyzed in fear.

## Insights from Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38

### Bloodlines

From a study of Matthew, it can be concluded that he is writing primarily to Jewish people. He only needed to prove that Jesus was from Abraham through David's line. Luke a Gentile doctor writing to Gentiles traces Jesus back to creation. The two bloodlines are common until they divide at David.

Jacob and Eli both seem to be the father of Joseph.

How can this be?

Here is a combination of a couple of theories:

Matthew follows King David's son King Solomon down through the line of kings from the kingdom of Judah. The coming Messiah would be a king, and as such should come from this line.

Problem #1: In Jeremiah 22:30 God curses this line and declares that no one from it will bear the throne again. So while the Messiah must be able to claim kingship,

He cannot come from this cursed line.

Problem #2: The coming Messiah must still come from David's line. It is believed that Dr. Luke is tracing Mary's natural bloodline through David's son Nathan. Both Joseph and Mary have blood ties to David.

Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man; so are children of the youth.

Psalm 127:3-4

Joseph, by legally choosing to raise Jesus as his own son, gives Him the right to the throne without being spiritually contaminated by the curse.

In either case it is clear that Joseph is not Jesus' dad. Neither line says that Joseph "begot Jesus". Matthew says that Joseph was the husband of Mary, who bore Jesus. In Luke Jesus is "supposed" to be Joseph's son.

Jesus and Adam are the only two males in history who had no earthly father.

## It's all Γρεεκ το με!

### Luke 1:3- Write

Strong's Greek #1125 -Grapho  
To engrave. Where we get *biography*, *graphite*, *autograph*, and *graffiti*.

### Luke 1:3- Excellent

Strong's Greek #2903 -Kratistos  
Strong, powerful. Where we get *bureaucrat* and *democratic*.

### Luke 1:4- Instructed

Strong's Greek #2727 -Katecheo  
To instruct orally.  
Where we get *catechism*.

### Luke 1:7- Barren

Strong's Greek #4723 -Steiros  
Where we get *sterile*.

### Luke 1:11- Angel

Strong's Greek #32 -Aggelos  
Literally "messenger".

### Luke 1:12- Troubled

Strong's Greek #5015 -Tarasso  
To stir up, agitate.



## Part 3: Unwrapping the Gift of Service

Luke 1:1-12

### Opening Discussion

-Do you have a long-term prayer request that God seems inactive in answering? -Why might God delay?

### Luke 1:1-12 (New International Version)

1 Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us,

-What is the author undertaking to do? -What is the account of? -What has been fulfilled?

2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word.

-What was handed down? -Who handed them down? -How are they described? -Was the author one of them?

3 Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus,

-What has the author done? -What has he investigated? -In what manner did he investigate?

-What did he write? -In what manner did he write it? -For whom did he write? -How is he described?

4 so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

-What is the author's purpose? -What does he want his reader to know? -What had they been taught?

5 In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

-When did the following events take place? -Who is the subject of this verse? -What was his position?

-To what did he belong? -Who was his wife? -How is she described?

6 Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly.

-How are Zechariah and Elizabeth described? -What did they observe? -How did they observe them?

7 But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.

-How else are they described? -Why were they childless? -What was their age? -Read Psalm 127.

-What was the importance of having children in that culture? -How might this reflect on the couple?

-On a priest? -In light of their apparent lack of God's blessing, how did they choose to live their lives?

8 Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God,

-What was Zechariah doing? -What does it mean to serve as priest before God?

9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense.

-What was he chosen to do? -How was He chosen to do it? -Where did he go?

10 And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

-What time came? -Who participated? -What were they doing? -Where were they doing it?

11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

-What happened when Zechariah was in the temple? -How is the angel described? -Where was he standing?

12 When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear.

-How did Zechariah react? -Define each term?

-What do we learn about God? -Christ? -The Spirit? -The author? -His readers? -His purpose?

-What have you been taught about Christ? -How can you know for certain whether or not it's true?

-What does it mean to be "upright in the sight of God"? -Do you live this way? -If not, how can you learn?

-How do you worship God? -How often do you pray for those who do service for the Lord?

-What is your greatest desire in life? -If God never provides it, will you still live for Him?

For more guidance and information on this passage, visit [www.doorwayto.com/crossreferences/](http://www.doorwayto.com/crossreferences/)

### Cross references

#### Luke 1:1 :

Romans 4:21; 14:5;

Colossians 2:2; 4:12;

1 Thessalonians 1:5;

2 Timothy 4:17;

Hebrews 6:11; 10:22

#### Luke 1:2 :

Mark 4:14; 16:20;

John 15:27;

Acts 1:21; 8:4; 14:25;

Acts 16:6; 17:11; 26:16

1 Corinthians 4:1;

Hebrews 2:3;

2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1

#### Luke 1:3 :

Acts 1:1; 11:4; 18:23;

23:26; 24:3; 26:25;

1 Tim 4:6

#### Luke 1:4 :

Acts 18:25; Rom 2:18;

1 Corinthians 14:19;

Galatians 6:6

#### Luke 1:5 :

1 Chronicles 24:1-19;

Matthew 2:1;

1 Peter 2:5-10;

Revelation 1:5-6

#### Luke 1:6 :

Genesis 7:1;

Acts 2:25; 8:21;

Philippians 2:15; 3:6;

1 Thessalonians 3:13

#### Luke 1:7 :

Psalms 127

#### Luke 1:8 :

1 Chronicles 24:19;

2 Chronicles 8:14; 31:2

#### Luke 1:9 :

Exodus 30:1-10

#### Luke 1:10 :

Leviticus 16:17

#### Luke 1:11 :

Luke 2:9; Acts 5:19

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## Cross references

172 Wood Lake Dr  
Murrells Inlet SC 29576

Phone: 843-357-1445  
Cell: 843-344-7763  
E-mail: [crossreferences@gmail.com](mailto:crossreferences@gmail.com)  
Editor: David "Mr. Dave" Patterson

## Unwrap the Gift!

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[www.doorwayto.com/crossreferences/](http://www.doorwayto.com/crossreferences/)

## This Week's Challenges

### Challenge A-Major Players: Luke

Read some or all of the following verses. Write down everything you learn about Luke.

Luke 1:3; Acts 1:1; 20:5-6;  
Colossians 4:7-18; 2 Timothy 4:9-12;  
Philemon 1:23-24

### Challenge B-The Text

Read some or all of the verses listed below. Note any similarities

with this week's passage.

Genesis 7:1; Exodus 30:1-10;  
Leviticus 16:17; 1 Chronicles 24:1-19;  
2 Chronicles 8:14; 31:2; Psalm 127;  
Matthew 2:1; Mark 4:14; 16:20;  
Luke 2:9; John 15:27 Acts 1:1, 21; 2:25  
Acts 5:19; 8:4, 21; 11:4; 14:25; 16:6;  
Acts 17:11; 18:23-25; 23:26; 24:3;  
Acts 26:16, 25; Romans 2:18; 4:21; 14:5  
1 Corinthians 4:1; 14:19; 24:10;  
Galatians 6:6; Philippians 2:15; 3:6;  
Col 2:2; 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 3:13

1 Timothy 4:6; 2 Timothy 4:17;  
Hebrews 2:3; 6:11; 10:22;  
1 Peter 2:5-10; 2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:1;  
Revelation 1:5-6

### Challenge C-The Old Testament

Read Genesis 32.

Note any similarities to this week's text. Take careful notes of Genesis, so you can compare it with future passages.

*This sections provides extra study opportunities for you. This is not homework. Do one. Do them all. Do none of them. It's your choice. Have fun with it.*

## Mr. Dave's Corner



The world was ready.

God's timing was as perfect as

always. While His people were complaining about being under foreign leaders, God was using the intruders to set the stage for the drama that was about to unfold.

When Alexander the Great conquered most of the known world, he united the various cultures by giving them the common language of Greek. Different areas still spoke their native languages, but they needed to know Greek if they were to survive in every day life. When the Roman Empire

came to power they kept much of the Greek culture. They also brought new technology, mainly (No, not iPhones, but...) roads.

At no other time in history were nations so compatible with each other.

The Gospel spread with ease. The world was ready.

-Mr. Dave

### Tool #3-

Bible: Themes

Bibles are made for specific groups, such as women, men, kids, teens, students, and leaders with added features that aid in application for each group.

Study bibles come with cross-references and commentary.

# Tapestry

Presented by Cross references

## 400 Years of Silence!?! Really?

God's people were a mess.

They ignored His commands and guidance, and fought amongst themselves. After the death of King Solomon, they split the Promised Land into two kingdoms. God sent the prophets, warning both that if they didn't shape up, He would allow them to be taken into captivity.

The Northern kingdom of Israel had already been taken by the Assyrians. Now, in 605 B.C., Babylon seized the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the finest of

the captives be selected and added to his own personal team of servants.

One of these young men was named Daniel.

God gave Daniel the ability to interpret dreams. Those interpretations were prophecies which outline Israel's future until the end of time, including the 400 years between Malachi 4 and Luke 1.

God wasn't silent at all, He just spoke in advance.

*Tapestry* will be looking at these prophecies and tying them into history. Enjoy!

## Heavy Metal Dreams

In Daniel chapter 2, King Nebuchadnezzar has a dream. Daniel describes the dream to him.

### Daniel 2:31-35 (New American Standard)

31 "You, O king, were looking and behold, there was a single great statue; that statue, which was large and of extraordinary splendor, was standing in front of you, and its appearance was awesome.

32 "The head of that statue was made of fine gold, its breast and its arms of silver, its belly and its thighs of bronze,

33 its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay.

34 "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them.

35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

- ◆ Draw a sketch of this statue, dividing it appropriately, labeling each part with the given metal.
- ◆ What metals are used?
- ◆ What do you know about the value of each of these metals?
- ◆ What do you know about each metal's strength?
- ◆ Describe the stone.
- ◆ What does the stone do in the dream?

Read Daniel 2:36-45 (New American Standard)

36 "This was the dream; now we will tell its interpretation before the king.

37 "You, O king, are the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, the power, the strength and the glory;

38 and wherever the sons of men dwell, or the beasts of the field, or the birds of the sky, He has given them into your hand and has caused you to rule over them all. You are the head of gold.

39 "After you there will arise another kingdom inferior to you, then another third kingdom of bronze, which will rule over all the earth.

40 "Then there will be a fourth kingdom as strong as iron; inasmuch as iron crushes and shatters all things, so, like iron that breaks in pieces, it will crush and break all these in pieces.

41 "In that you saw the feet and toes, partly of potter's clay and partly of iron, it will be a divided kingdom; but it will have in it the toughness of iron, inasmuch as you saw the iron mixed with common clay.

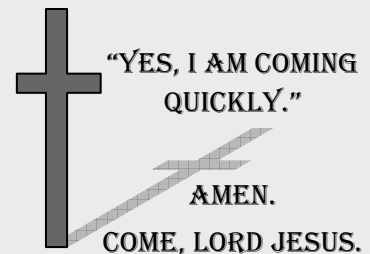
42 "As the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of pottery, so some of the kingdom will be strong and part of it will be brittle.

43 "And in that you saw the iron mixed with common clay, they will combine with one another in the seed of men; but they will not adhere to one another, even as iron does not combine with pottery.

44 "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

45 "Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

- ◆ What does each metal and the stone represent?
- ◆ How is each kingdom described?
- ◆ Add a brief description of each kingdom to your sketch.
- ◆ Keep the sketch handy. We will be adding to it in the coming weeks.



REV 22:20

## *The Strand Challenges*

*The Old Testament Strand*

Read Genesis 3

*The Psalms Strand*

Read Psalm 3

*The New Testament Strand*

Read Romans 2:1-16

Last week we read Genesis 2; Psalm 2 and Romans 1:24-32. Here are some connections I made: Genesis 2 gives a detailed account of the creation of Adam and Eve, and their role in the Garden. Adam was God's son, having no father but God. (Luke 3:38) He was created to serve God by ruling over creation. In Psalm 2, God speaks to His Son, telling Him to serve Him by ruling over our sinful world. In Romans 1, Paul speaks of the godless attitude of man that led to and perpetuates our fall into evil. Which leads us right into Genesis 3...

See ya next week!