

Lesson II.

THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

January 14, 1912

Luke 1 : 57-75. Study Luke 1 : 57-80—Memory Verses, 67-69, or 76, 77.

Golden Text—Blessed be the Lord God of Israel ; for he hath visited and redeemed his people.—Luke 1 : 68.



57 Now Elis'abeth's full time came that she should be delivered ; and she brought forth a son.

58 And her neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her ; and they rejoiced with her.

59 And it came to pass, that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child ; and they called him Zachari'as, after the name of his father.

60 And his mother answered and said, Not so ; but he shall be called John.

61 And they said unto her, There is none of thy kindred that is called by this name.

62 And they made signs to his father, how he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all.

64 And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65 And fear came on all that dwelt round about them : and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judæ'a.

66 And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be ! And the hand of the Lord was with him.

67 And his father Zachari'as was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying,

68 Blessed be the Lord God of Israel ; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant Da'vid ;

70 As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began :

71 That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us ;

72 To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant ;

73 The oath which he sware to our father A'braham,

74 That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

75 In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

THE LESSON RETOLD

At last the son whom God had promised to Zacharias and Elizabeth was born. When the baby was eight days old, the friends and relations of his father and mother gathered in the home. For at this time he was to be dedicated or given to God and to receive his name. They all thought that the baby would be called Zacharias after his father. But his mother Elizabeth said, "No, he must be called John." Zacharias had told her in writing—for he was not yet able to speak—the message which the angel had given him in the temple.

"But", the friends said, "none of your relations are called John. Let us ask his

father what the child is to be called". So they made signs to Zacharias, and he wrote : "His name is John." And all the friends were astonished, for they did not know, as Elizabeth knew, the vision that Zacharias had seen in the temple.

And as soon as Zacharias had written the words, God gave him power to speak again, and he burst out into a song of thanksgiving, praising God for His goodness in sending to him the child that had been promised ; for it showed that the rest of God's promises which He had given through His prophets would also come true very soon,—the pro-