(5) Birth of John the Baptist, His Father’s Song (Lk. 1:57-80)

1. Zacharias & Elizabeth obeyed the Lord’s instructions by naming their son John (Lk. 1:57-66).
   a. Ζαχαρίας Zacharias #2197 comes from זַחֲרִיָּה z’karyah #2148: YHWH remembers. The Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia lists 32 Zechariahs in Scripture. The most significantly figured Zechariah is the prophet author of the Book of Zechariah.
   b. Ἰωάννης Iōannēs #2491 comes from יׄוחָנָן yowchanan #3110: YHWH has graced. WBE lists 10 Johanans in the OT. The most significantly figured Johanan is prominent in Jeremiah (Jer. 40-43).
   c. The conclusion of Divine discipline afforded Zacharias the opportunity to praise God (Lk. 1:64).
      1) David responded to his Divine discipline with worship (2nd Sam. 12:20).
      2) Nebuchadnezzar responded to his Divine discipline with worship (Dan. 4:34-37).
      3) All believers can respond in such a way (Heb. 12:11).

2. Zacharias becomes the final member of his immediate family to receive the Holy Spirit, and sings a prophetic song of praise to the Lord (Lk. 1:67-79).
   a. “Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel” was the praise offered up by the son of David when he took his father's throne (1st Kgs. 1:48).
      1) They are the words of David himself (Ps. 41:13; 72:18,19).
      2) Ascribing εὐλογητὸς eulogētos #2128 blessedness to God is a mature recognition of His matchless worth (Lk. 1:68a; 2nd Cor. 1:3; Eph. 1:3; 1st Pet. 1:3).
   b. ὅτι hoti #3754 introduces three actions (verbs) that Zacharias praises God for doing (Lk. 1:68b,69).
      1) ἐπεσκέψατο v.aor.mid.ind. ἐπισκέπτομαι episkeptomai #1980 to visit, to look upon in order to help or to benefit (cf. σκοπέω skopeō #4648 6x) (Acts 7:23; 15:36; Matt. 25:36,43; Jms. 1:27).
      2) ἐποίησεν λύτρωσιν aor.act.ind. ποιέω poieō #4160 568x: to do/make + fem.sing.acc. λύτρωσις lutrōsis #3085 ransoming, releasing, redemption (Lk. 1:68; 2:38; Heb. 9:12).
      3) ἠγείρεν κέρας σωτηρίας aor.act.ind. ἐγείρω egeirō #1453 to arouse, cause to rise, lift up (Lk. 1:69; 3:8; Acts 13:22). κέρας keras #2768 11x: horn. σωτηρία sōtēria #4991 43x: salvation. See Ps. 132:17 for the faithful promise that Zacharias must have had in mind at this time.
   c. Zacharias then relates these miracle babies to prophetic promises (Lk. 1:70-75).
      1) Lk. 1:71 cf. Ps. 106:10
      2) Lk. 1:72a cf. Mic. 7:20
      3) Lk. 1:72b,73 cf. Ps. 105:8-10
      4) Lk. 1:74 cf. Zeph. 3:15
      5) Lk. 1:75 cf. Ezek. 36:24-27
   d. Zacharias celebrates the purpose and ministry of the forerunner (Lk. 1:76) and the Christ (Lk. 1:77-79).
      1) John the Baptist is the forerunner (Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; 4:5,6).
      2) Jesus is the Christ (Jer. 31:34; Mal. 4:2; Isa. 9:2; Ps. 25:8-10).
   3. John’s upbringing is kept unrecorded, in privacy and seclusion until he is called to public service (Lk. 1:80).