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By Dan Maines

Luke 3

Luke 3:1-6

Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip was tetrarch of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, in the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. And he came into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins; as it is written in the

book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "The voice of one calling out in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, Make His paths straight! Every ravine will be filled, And every mountain and hill will be lowered; The crooked will become straight, And the rough roads smooth; And all flesh will see the salvation of God!'"

† Luke rooted John's ministry in history, naming Roman and Jewish rulers.

† John fulfilled Isaiah 40:3-5, preparing the way for the Messiah.

† His message pointed to covenant renewal and coming judgment.

Luke 3:7-14

So he was saying to the crowds who were going out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore produce fruits that are consistent with repentance, and do not start saying to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I say to you that from these stones God is able to raise up children for Abraham. But indeed the axe is already being laid at the root of the trees; so every tree that does not produce good fruit is being cut down and thrown into the fire."

And the crowds were questioning him, saying, "Then what are we to do?" And he would answer and say to them, "The one who has two tunics is to share with the one who has none, and the one who has food is to do likewise." Now even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they said to him, "Teacher, what are we to do?" And he said to them, "Collect no more than what you have been ordered to." And soldiers also were questioning him, saying, "What are we to do, we as well?" And he said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone, nor harass anyone, and be content with your wages."

† John's rebuke warned that heritage could not save without repentance.

† The "wrath to come" pointed to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

† True repentance bore fruit in justice, mercy, and integrity.

Luke 3:15-20

Now while the people were in a state of expectation and all were thinking carefully in their hearts about John, whether he himself perhaps was the Christ, John responded to them all, saying, "As for me, I baptize you with water; but He is coming who is mightier than I, and I am not fit to untie the straps of His sandals; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in His hand to thoroughly clear His threshing floor, and to gather the wheat into His barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." So with many other exhortations he preached the gospel to the people. But when Herod the tetrarch was reprimanded by him regarding Herodias, his brother's wife, and regarding all the evil things which Herod had done, Herod also added this to them all: he also locked John up in prison.

† John declared the superiority of Christ's baptism with the Spirit and fire.

† Fire symbolized both purification and judgment, fulfilled in AD 70.

† John's boldness cost him his freedom, showing the cost of truth.

Luke 3:21-22

Now it came about, when all the people were baptized, that Jesus also was baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came from heaven: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well pleased."

† Jesus' baptism inaugurated His public ministry.

† The Spirit's descent marked Him as the Anointed One.

† The Father's voice confirmed His Sonship and mission.

Luke 3:23-38

When He began His ministry, Jesus Himself was about thirty years old, being as was commonly held, the son of Joseph, the son of Eli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi... (genealogy continues) ...the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

† Luke traced Jesus' lineage back to Adam, showing Him as Savior for all humanity.

† Unlike Matthew's genealogy focused on Israel, Luke emphasized universality.

† Jesus is both Son of David and Son of God, fulfilling both covenant and creation.

How it applies to us today:

† Luke 3 shows preparation for Christ's ministry, the call to repentance, and the baptism of the Spirit. The fulfilled perspective reminds us that judgment fell on Israel in AD 70, but Christ established His everlasting kingdom. For us today, this chapter calls us to bear fruit of repentance, follow the true King, and rejoice in the Spirit's work in our lives.

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

Source Index

† Josephus, Antiquities 18.5.2

† Philo, On the Special Laws 2.167

† Tacitus, Annals 15.44

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies 3.9.3

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