

Jesus, the Jewish Messiah

ישוע המשיח הַעֲבָרִי

Gospel of Luke

Luke 1

*Annunciation to Zechariah,
Birth of John.*

(http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/___PWK.HTM)

The Gospel of Luke begins his account by describing an important ceremony which was officiated by the priest Zechariah in the Temple of Jerusalem.

It is not specified which this ceremony was, but some aspects of it seems to indicate a specific one.

The first is that *all the people* were waiting and praying outside the Temple:

*“Then, when **the whole** assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering”, (Luke 1:10).*

Here it is used the Greek word “παν” (pan), giving to the word the meaning of *the whole assembly*: **the entire population of Jerusalem**:

“και παν το πληθοξ”, (literally: and *all* the people).

The second is that this ceremony lasted for a few days:

“Then, when his days of ministry were completed, he went home.” (Luke 1:23).

The third is that during this function Zechariah *did not live in his house*:

*“Then, when his days of ministry were completed, **he went home.**” (Luke 1:23).*

The fourth aspect is **the answer** that the Angel gives to Zechariah:

*“But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. **Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John.**” (Luke 1:13).*

Since the Angel announces to Zechariah that he would have had a son it would be logical to assume that this was the answer to his prayer, but on that announcement Zechariah is astonished and in disbelief, and responds:

“How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” (Luke 1:18).

This seems to rule out that his prayer concern was the request of a child, it would also be incomprehensible why a Cohen in the Temple of Jerusalem, while officiating an important religious ceremony could make such a personal request.

Even wanting to think that the Angel brings to Zechariah such announcement in answer to an ancient prayer of him we may wonder why he was sent just in that particular occasion.

And so, what is this prayer of Zechariah to which the Angel brings such a response?

Before answering this question it is necessary to connect the three above mentioned aspects to a specific Jewish feast: **the Yom Kippur**.

The Yom Kippur is the most important of all Jewish feasts.

On this day the people asked God to forgive their sins committed during the previous year.

Maybe this will give us a little smile (to us Gentiles), but outside the Temple was hung a cloth of red cloth, that if God had accepted the request of the people made by their Cohen Gadol in the Temple would become white. This by virtue of the Scripture:

“...says the LORD: Though your sins be like scarlet, they may become white as snow; Though they be crimson red, they may become white as wool.” (Isaiah 1:18).

This is the reason why all the people (but literally *everyone* - παν παν -) was awaiting the divine's response (**first aspect**).

The feast of Yom Kippur lasts eight days, and the most important day is the last one.

This fits well to **the second aspect** (the service that lasted for a few days).

The Cohen Gadol who was to officiate at the service for the duration of the festival was *taken from his home with great honors*, and transferred to a special place of the Temple, where he remained until the completion of his service.

Here we have **the third aspect** (the return of the priest at his home at the end of his service).

The main prayer that the Cohen Gadol turned to the Most High in that day has already been mentioned: *he was asking that the sins of the people may be forgiven.*

This is the prayer that Zechariah speaks to God and from which, that year, get immediate response from the Angel.

God would have forgiven the sins of man, not by a repeated yearly sacrifice, but through **“The Sacrifice”**, *in which his own blood would be shed as the price for all sins.*

For this reason He would have sent to the people of Israel a son to Zacharias, that:

“... will be great in the sight of (the) Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb” (Luke 1:15).

“and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.” (Luke 1:16).

“He will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of fathers toward children and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to prepare a people fit for the Lord.” (Luke 1:17).

To the specific aspects mentioned above we may add a **fifth**, that is *the time of incense* and that all the people were praying outside the Temple.

Precisely because the specification that *all the people were praying outside the Temple* is not likely that could have been the ordinary burning of the incense that was made daily, morning and evening.

“Then, when the whole assembly of the people was praying outside at the hour of the incense offering” (Luke 1:10).

The well-known Jewish exponent Rabbi Abarbanel (or Abravanel) lived in the fifteenth century, scholar of Jewish customs and traditions of ancient times, describes the incense offering made on the day of Yom Kippur as:

“the most difficult service in the Beis Hamikdash, because it was done differently than on all other days.”

[from the book: The Abarbanel, on the Yom Kippur service in the Beis Hamikdash, Author: R. Yitzchaq Abarbanel, Translated in english by: Rabbi Elimelech Lepon (1990), Edited by Targum Press Inc. (USA), pag. 15 and following.].

According to him the offering of the incense was made on this day ***in the Holy of Holies***, the most sacred part of the Temple where only the High Priest could enter once a year, on the day of Yom Kippur. On that day he went in and out four times in the Holy of Holies.

Curiosity: since no one, absolutely no one but the Cohen Gadol could enter for any reason in the Holy of Holies, the Jewish tradition (or perhaps *the legend*) reports the use of secure the leg of the Cohen Gadol to a rope, in case for some reason he died in that place.

Some argue that this is just a legend born in medieval times, but the same rabbi Abravanel, in the quoted book, says that some had lost their lives in this service, because of unworthiness (so he claims) or for committing errors in the ritual.

If it was to be established, beyond all doubt, that this was precisely the ceremony of Yom Kippur the implications would be enormous, because it would mean that God, in His Holy Temple, in the holiest day of the year spoke to the children of Israel foretelling the coming of their משיח

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If all of these it's not enough we may add a **sixth evidence**, that would be **the last one and maybe the stronger** in claiming that the day of the apparition of the Angel to the Cohen Gadol Zechariah in the Temple of Jerusalem in the Holy of the Holies, was the day of Yom Kippur.

If the **sixth month** of which the evangelist Luke speaks:

*“In the **sixth month**, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. ” (Luke1:26-27),*

is not the month following the fifth of which he speaks in the previous verse:

“After this time his wife Elizabeth conceived, and she went into seclusion for five months, saying” (Luke 1:24),

but refers to the **sixth month of that current year**, then we would have a **direct confirmation** that the ceremony during which the Cohen Gadol Zechariah receives the message of the Angel in the Temple **could not have been other than the day of Yom Kippur.**

This is because the Angel of the Annunciation informs the Virgin Mary, about Saint Elizabeth, that:

“... this is the sixth month for her ...” (Luke 1:36).

If the sixth month of the year was **also** the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, it follows that Elizabeth became pregnant in the first month of the year, **which is precisely the Hebrew month in which Yom Kippur is celebrated.**

I repeat that if the message of the Angel Gabriel to the priest Zechariah took place in the Temple of Jerusalem, on the day of Yom Kippur, this would have direct and profound consequences in today's Judaism.

Paul, the apostle and the Jew.

In at least three places in the letters of the apostle Paul we find the phrase *“according to my gospel”*.

What does he means?

Maybe he means in a vague way: *according to the things I've learned*, or does he mean precisely and literally according to *“his”* Gospel, that is, a **written Gospel** that has come down to him, ...if not a Gospel written **specifically** for him?

Could it be the Gospel of Luke, *“the dear doctor”*? (Colossians 4:14)

In the second letter to Timothy, verse 2: 8, Paul writes:

“Remember that Jesus Christ, of the lineage of David, rose from the dead, according to my gospel,”

“Of the lineage of David”, as the Gospel of Luke tells us:

“... betrothed to a man of the house of David, called Joseph” (1:27).

Is **Theophilus** (Luke 1: 3) for whom the Gospel of Luke was written by the doctor Luke a *first name* or a *noun*? Because **Theophilus** literally means **friend of God**, and it could have been written and intentionally dedicated by Luke to the Apostle Paul.

In the eleventh chapter of the letter to the Romans, has always been read the conversion of the Jewish people before the end of time.

Did the Apostle Paul, the Jewish Saul (his real hebrew first name was Saul) and disciple of Gamaliel, knew that the secret of this conversion was contained precisely in the initial part of “*his gospel*”?

Pending new developments or discoveries, at the moment, this may be only an hypothesis... maybe!

בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה, אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל--מִהְעוֹלָם, וְעַד הָעוֹלָם: אָמֵן וְאָמֵן

(Blessed be ADONAI, God of Israel, for evermore. Amen, and Amen), Psalm 89:53.

If you'd like to read directly in Hebrew the first two chapter of the Gospel of Luke from which the quotes are taken (or any other chapter from the Gospel) you may please click the link below.

For your sake and respect to honesty, I'm informing you that the four books that make up the Gospel just came to our times in Greek language, so what's following it's a relatively recent translation from Greek to Hebrew.

Nevertheless some theologians mention the possibility that the primary source of these Greek Gospel were written in Hebrew.

To me this makes perfectly sense.

The four books of the Gospel were written by Jews people (with some reservations regarding Luke), so why should they have considered the idea to write those accounts in any other language than Hebrew? Specially considering also the profound respect that Jewish people always had and have for their own language.

And we cannot forget that having all those accounts happened in Israel two thousands years ago, those words were pronounced in Hebrew or Aramaic, because it's totally unlike that when Jesus spoke to the Cohen Gadol or other members of the Pharisees he spoke in... what? English? German? Latin? Greek?

Of course not! So, whether those accounts were primarily written in Hebrew (then lost) or translated directly in Greek, **the source was without doubts Hebrew.**

Having said that let's move on. This is the link to the first chapter of Luke, where you can also confront it with the English translation.

Have a good reading.

<https://www.biblica.com/bible/niv/luke/1/hhh/>

תודה רבה

