

Christmas Playlist Series# 1, Zechariah's Song Of Hope

By: D. Karl Thomas

"Billie Jean" might be one of Michael Jackson's most beloved songs, but the story behind it is terrifying. According to legend, Jackson had been receiving letters from a woman who claimed that he was the father of her child. The letter writer was relentless, constantly proclaiming her love for Jackson while trying to convince him to start a life with her. Jackson was so disturbed by the letters that he often had nightmares about them.

One day, Jackson received a package from the same woman that included a letter, a photo, and a gun. She wanted him to kill himself and said that she'd kill herself and her baby so that they could be together in another life. The incident inspired Jackson to work through the horror he felt and write a song that addressed the woman indirectly.

Paul McCartney's classic Beatles song "Let It Be" was inspired by a dream he had about his mother. McCartney claimed he was struggling personally at the time, delving deeper into drugs and alcohol. One night, he came home from a long night and fell asleep. When he woke up, he realized he'd dreamed of his mother who died when he was just 14.

"My mother appeared, and there was her face, completely clear, particularly her eyes, and she said to me very gently, very reassuringly: 'Let it be,'" McCartney said. "It was lovely. I woke up with a great feeling. It was really like she had visited me at this very difficult point in my life and gave me this message: Be gentle, don't fight things, just try and go with the flow and it will all work out."

McCartney woke up with inspiration and proceeded to write about his "mother Mary" in one of the most legendary songs in music history.

"Amazing Grace" Hymn published in 1779. Written by John Newton. He was a slave trader.

"It Is Well With My Soul." Written on 22nd November 1873 by Horatio Gates Spafford, at the exact spot his four daughters perished.

"Joy to the World." 1719 Written by genius Isaac Watts.

"He is only five feet tall, with a shallow face, hooked nose, prominent cheek bones, small eyes, and deathlike color.....I admired the jewel but not the casket that contained it." **Elizabeth Singer**

Luke 1:68-79 Benedictus — Zechariah's Song

68 *"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people*

69 *and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David,*

70 *as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, 71 that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us;*

72 *to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant,*

73 *the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us*

74 *that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear,*

75 *in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.*

76 *And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, 77 to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins,*

78 *because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby **the sunrise shall visit us from on high***

79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the way of peace."

Luke 1:5-19 The Back Story!!

5 *In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, [a] of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. 8 Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, 9 according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.*

They had to give two weeks of service each year ... Incense — Only get to do it once in a life time, many priests never get this opportunity

Zechariah is specifically chosen at this time ... God sets you up for stuff!!!!

10 And the **whole multitude** of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. 11 And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12 And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for **your prayer has been heard**, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. 14 And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 15 for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. 16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 17 and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”

18 And Zechariah said to the angel, **“How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.”** 19 And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.

Proverbs 13:12 “Hope deferred makes the heart sick...”

• **Hope** — an expectation of good • **Deferred** — protracted, drawn out, delayed • **Sick** — worn down in strength, sick, to be pained, to become wearied.

Luke 1:20

20 And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.”

Mark 4:24 “Consider **carefully what you hear**,” he continued. “With the measure you use, it will be measured to you—and even more.

Mark 11:23 “For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says.”

World is voice activated!

Proverbs 18:21 (AMP) “Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and they who indulge in it shall eat the fruit of it [for death or life].”

Luke 1:21-25 And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. 22 And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. 23 And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

He had time to think on this before he went home ... waiting in silence ... well Elizabeth its like this!

24 After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, **(They did the wild thing!)** and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, 25 “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to **take away my reproach among people.**”

John’s Birth Luke 1:57-66

57 Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. 58 And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. 59 And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, 60 but his mother answered, **“No; he shall be called John.”** 61 And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.” 62 And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. 63 And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, **“His name is John.”** And they all wondered. 64 And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. 65 And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, 66 and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him.

Zechariah - God has remembered. **Elizabeth** - God has promised. **John** - God has graciously given.
Put these all together: **God has remembered His promise and graciously given.**

Zechariah's Song "...the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

That is the Good News of Christmas. God has personally invaded all darkness

Austrian psychologist Carl Jung "Those psychiatrists who are not superficial have come to the conclusion that the vast neurotic misery of the world could be termed a neurosis of emptiness. DARKNESS Men cut themselves off from the root of their being, from God, and then life turns empty, inane, meaningless, without purpose."

Genesis 1:2-3 "The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light."

"Light" - First Word God calls into manifestation.

Isaiah 9:2, 6, 7, 9 "The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; ... For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; ... Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, ... The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this."

3 Observations:

1. **Light Confronts Darkness** Whether you want it to or not.
2. **Light Equals Life** No Light - No Life Jesus is light!
3. **Light Doesn't Hesitate** He never holds back. He rushes into every dark place.

John 8:12

"Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'"

All the darkness in the world cannot put out one candle flame.

Jesus is the light. It is Jesus or darkness.

The world was made for HIS light.

Everyone in the world needs His light

The whole world will be filled with HIS light.

John 12:36 "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden."

COME TO THE LIGHT!