

HIS NAME SHALL BE CALLED WONDERFUL
DECEMBER 18, 2022

ISAIAH 9:6

The Christmas season is a wonderful time of year. The sights, sounds and songs remind us of a holy night when our creator took on human flesh, to dwell among us and sacrifice His life to save us from our sins. Isaiah prophesied His Name would be called Wonderful. Jesus is wonderful for many reasons. His conception and birth, His life, ministry, death, resurrection, appearances, coronation, and seating, all make Him the most wonderful man who ever lived. He's God's unspeakable gift and His name is wonderful beyond words.

The Importance of Faith

LUKE 1:20, 38 – Reveal two responses to the words of an angel. Zacharias had every reason to believe, and Mary had every reason to doubt. Their reactions reveal how the spirit needs our acting on God's Word in order to carry out God's will and plan for our lives.

Luke and Theophilus

LUKE 1:1-4 AMPC

Luke was a Gentile Christian who traveled with Paul. He wrote his Gospel and Acts. His objective was to convince Theophilus about the life of Christ and remove any uncertainties he had from listening to messages on YouTube. Luke needed a patron to help him publish his two books.

- **V3-4 AMPC** – compare with **ACTS 11:1-4, 18 KJV, AMPC**. Luke researched everything to the finest detail. His Gospel is a well-researched historical account based on eyewitness testimony.

Luke 1:5-25

He gives a play-by-play account of Zacharias' interaction with Gabriel. Zacharias was a priest, Elizabeth was of the line of Aaron. They were elderly, righteous and blameless. If anyone would have a reason to believe, it would be Zacharias.

- 1.) Priest: He knew about Abraham and Sarah having Isaac. He knew the facts, but somehow the faith escaped him.
- 2.) Pious: righteous and blameless. It was his once in a lifetime opportunity to burn incense. He was in the temple, at the altar, burning incense in the holy place when the encounter occurred. Why the uncertainty and unbelief?
- 3.) Prayerful: He prayed for a child and possibly the restoration of Israel. He's a praying, pious, priest who was given a message of glad tidings from Gabriel. Zacharias didn't believe. Faith is the key ingredient that enables the Spirit to work.

LUKE 1:21 The people outside were waiting to receive a blessing, but Zacharias was speechless. He was struck dumb.

LUKE 1:26-38

Mary has a similar visit from Gabriel also. Gabriel tells her similar things. She will have a child supernaturally. The child's future is revealed, just as John the Baptist's was to Zacharias. Mary's response is filled with faith. She exalts the word above the laws of nature, and the facts pertaining to procreation.

- If anyone had a reason to doubt, it was Mary. But her response moved heaven (**HEB. 10:5-9**).
- What if Mary would've responded like Zacharias?

Conclusion: Faith is required for the Gospel to benefit us. Are we like Zacharias or Mary?