

A little background - Luke was a doctor and writes a little differently than the other 3 gospels writers. He tends to give more detail and he also wrote Acts.

Luke never walked and talked personally with Jesus. No firsthand knowledge but he loved research and he was a Gentile as well. The only non-Jew writer in the Bible.

Sent as a letter from Luke to a friend. It does not address the Jewish controversies that the other gospels address. . Emphasizes Jesus' compassion and being a doctor it appears he was very interested in the healings that Jesus did. Both books authored by Luke, Acts and Luke, rely on the gospel of Mark. A little less emotion but more detail and succinctness than the other gospels. He seems to have done much research from other eyewitnesses and

Not Fake News v. 1-4

"Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught."

Luke 1:1-4 ESV

Writing to Theophilus "friend of God" same as Israel. Luke is assuring him that he is trustworthy and that the things he is reporting about Jesus are true. And he is writing to a Gentile audience from a Gentile perspective.

Playing the Lotto and An Answered Prayer v. 5-17

"In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years. Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. 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. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, 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. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, 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.""

Luke 1:5-17 ESV

Zechariah spent five weeks in the temple serving the people. By lot, priests were chosen to serve and Zechariah is chosen to enter into the Holy Place burning incense. He goes in to represent the prayers, desires and hopes of others but the angel Gabriel knows his heart and desires and addresses Zechariah's hopes and dreams.

The angel of the Lord hears his personal prayer for a child. John will be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth.

John will turn many of Israel to the Lord. He will prepare the way for One to come. John will not partake of alcohol. He probably needed to be alcohol free to be believed and credible. John grows up and acts quite a bit different than how most in the priestly lineage behaved.

Turn the hearts of the fathers to the children

John is set apart in order to make ready the way of the Lord. He still had the opportunity to grow and not fulfill his purpose but he chose faithfulness and God uses him greatly in His plan.

John fulfills what is shared in Malachi 4. The great evangelist turning Jewish hearts back to God.

Shut Your Mouth v. 18-20

"And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." 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. 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.""

Luke 1:18-20 ESV

Not believing has ramifications. Gabriel announces Himself. This is the same angel Gabriel who appears to Daniel in the OT. While it may seem harsh that God would strike Zechariah mute because he did not believe that God could do what Zechariah longed for even in old age, God does those things that bring Him most glory.

A Speechless Priest

"And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. 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. And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home."

Luke 1:21-23 ESV

Because Zechariah was struck mute, the people realized that he had seen a vision. Interestingly enough, even though Zechariah was struck with being mute, he still fulfilled his duty. Many times we have circumstances hit our lives and we can look to use those circumstances not to fulfill our role/commitments.

Silent Seclusion v. 24-25

"After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, "Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.""

Luke 1:24-25 ESV

Zechariah comes home and can't talk. He obviously communicated in some way and Elizabeth being faithful herself accepted it as an act of God in their lives and fulfills one of her deepest longings; to be a mother. Elizabeth conceives and she hides out for 5 months before she reveals that she is indeed pregnant, even in old age. Elizabeth rejoices because she no longer will be judged for not being able to conceive.

Once again, we see where Our God is the God of perfectly timed delay.

What might you be waiting on God to reveal to you? Zechariah and Elizabeth model being faithful (Luke records that they were both righteous). May we be encouraged through their example to be faithful to what God has called us to in our lives/circumstances.

Share prayer requests and take time to pray.