



**Presents at Christmas are nice, but a Divine Presence is life-changing.*

**Luke 1:13* the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

Luke 1:16 And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. *17* He will also 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 a people prepared for the Lord."

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

19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

1. **V:13 & 16-17 An divine assignment** was given and it was to be a messenger for God.
The name of the last prophet of the O.T. John the Baptist.

But before the prophet would be born. Zacharias was going to be the messenger. The father-to-be will give his future prophet son the message to share with the world.

2. **V:18-19 Age, and biology, are no challenge** for the Creator. Gabriel was sent by God & reveals a heavenly insight.
Gabriel is bringing glad tidings. Your circumstance doesn't limit God's ability.

**The History of God's Presence & Silence. Who's not speaking?*

**Luke 1:20* But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

21 And the people waited for Zacharias and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple. *22* But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

1. **V:20 Zacharias was silent** because of his unbelief, but, to the Jew, it was God who had been silent for 400 years.
2. ***Unbelief and sin** limit our mission and the ability to experience His presence.

Talking about those 400 years more accurately; God wasn't silent in that period. It was the silence of a prophet's voice.

3. **Genesis 3:8-9 Experiencing God's presence** has always been God's desire.

It was in the cool of the day that God came and walked with Adam and Eve.

God is omnipresent. He's everywhere! But...

***God's mission** was that humanity would have his manifest (discernable) presence.

**When miracles and the presence of God converge it's never subtle.*

**Luke 1:57* Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. *58* When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.

Luke 1:59 So it was, on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. *60* His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

61 But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." *62* So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

63 And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. *64* Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God.

1. **V:57-58** **When God is at work** neighbors and relatives hear about it and there is always the awe factor.

The shepherds get the awe of Angels and Wisemen received the awe of a star. Things are always noteworthy with God.

Think of the colors we celebrate Christmas with, Red and Green do they go together for any other occasion other than God's entrance?

2. **V:59-63** **God has been gracious** is the Hebrew meaning of the name John.

A. It wasn't a naming after a relative. It was a declaration.

B. So many miracles took place?

1st Zacharias sees Gabriel as the one who stands in the presence of God.

2nd Elizabeth has a supernatural/natural birth of the last O.T. Prophet.

3rd Zacharias is mute because of unbelief but gets one of the longest chapters in N.T. that ends with his prophecy.

4th We then can add all the other miracles of Matthew 1&2

**The converges of reality with the eternal.*

**John 1:14* And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.' "

Jesus' birth is the fullness of truth, time, grace, and God for all humanity.