





The extraordinary thing
that is about to happen
is matched only by the
extraordinary moment
just before it happens.

Advent

is the name
of that moment.

- Frederick Buechner -



Gabriel's Profile

- 1. Gabriel isn't Called an Archangel in the Bible**
- 2. Gabriel Only Speaks to Three Biblical Characters**
- 3. Gabriel First Appears in Daniel's Vision**
- 4. Gabriel May Not Have Had Wings**
- 5. Gabriel's Name Means "God is Great"**
- 6. Gabriel is One of Two Named Good Angels in the Bible**
- 7. Gabriel's Appearance is Rather Terrifying**

Mary's Profile

- The “Mother of Jesus” – The Savior of the World
- The one human being who was with Jesus from birth to death
- Willing to be available to God
- Knew and applied Old Testament Scriptures

Life Lessons learned from Mary:

- God uses ordinary people who are available
- A person's character is revealed by their response to the unexpected

HARK how all the *Welkin* rings
Glory to the Kings of Kings,
Peace on Earth, and Mercy mild,
GOD and Sinners reconcil'd!

Hark the Herald Angels Sing

Adam's Likeness, LORD, efface,
Stamp thy Image in its Place,
Second *Adam* from above,
Reinstate us in thy Love.

Let us Thee, tho' lost, regain,
Thee, the Life, the Inner Man:
O! to All Thyself impart,
Form'd in each **Believing Heart**.

Charles Wesley (1739)

Is Christ being formed in
your believing heart?

**To take someone from
punishment to Promise...
now that is a good day!**

There is a difference between
being amazed, dazzled,
and delighted during this
Christmas time and true belief.

“Do you expect me to believe this?”

Zechariah

Mary said to the angel,
“But how? I’ve never slept with a man.”

Mary’s Summarizing verse:

And Mary said,
Yes, I see it all now:
I’m the Lord’s maid, ready to serve.
Let it be with me
just as you say.

**Whatever God says, or does,
“I am willing to trust and accept.”**

**The most common prayer in life:
“Thy will be changed”**

vs.

“Thy will be done”

It's not about you!

Interesting to note that in this song, the Magnificat, Mary doesn't make it about her personal hopes and wishes, but more about what God was doing through the child she would bear.

Same is true with Zechariah's praise...he began to praise a mighty savior, not that Elizabeth would birth but Mary was going to have!

“Zechariah’s vision goes beyond simply a realigning of political powers. God’s mercy, the forgiveness of sins, the rescue from death itself; all of this points to a deeper and wider meaning of salvation.”

N.T. Wright

So what’s the point?

Jesus delivered all humanity from our enemies in ways a mere political revolution could not!

- **Gabriel's message:**

Makes it clear that John would be instrumental in turning people back to God. He would get them ready. Ready for what or who? For Jesus!

- **Zechariah's message:**

Makes it clear that he is clear on Gabriel's message. "And you child, (John) will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways."

Luke 1: 76

- **Who prepared the way for your faith?**

For your Belief? It's one thing to stand in amazement. It's another to believe.

The Leap between Amazing and Faith

What is truly amazing is to have faith in what Jesus' life, death, and resurrection means to your life and living out his command. **“Love just as I have loved you!”**

- ¹⁵ The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. Luke 3:15
- ²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. “Isn't this Joseph's son?” they asked. Luke 4:22
- ²⁶ Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, “We have seen remarkable things today.” Luke 5:26

Quite the Buzz





For years the Children of Israel have been waiting for a prophet...no more prophets...here comes a prophet. Here is some OT prophet language. **“The Lord’s hand was with him.”**

- Gabriel shows up in both stories.
- There is Don't be afraid!
- They have found favor with God.
- There is this annunciation of what is coming (miracle)
- There is the naming of the child
- There is the future role of the child that is connected to scripture. All ties together.
- Both ask a question...How can this be? - OR -
Are you off your rocker!
- There is a sign given
- Gabriel leaves

- Similar to the words of Hannah – Samuel’s mom. Let your servant find favor in your sight.

I Sam. 1:18

- The words also promise power and favor given to Judges of Israel

Judges 6:12

- **The Lord is with you = God is with us.**

Matthew 1:23

The Story Before the Story

- So we have Gabriel unfold the plan. John is preparing the way. He is a preparer. Jesus is the Son of the Most high.
- **Just as David reigned over Israel...Jesus will also reign over Israel like his forefather. Joseph was of the House of David.**
- II Sam. records the promise: “I will make for you a great name...
Gabriel says, “He will be great.”
- II Sam the Prophet Nathan was told that through David’s Son, God would ***establish the throne of his kingdom forever***. Gabriel tells us Jesus will ***reign over the house of Jacob forever***.
- II Sam “***I will be his father, and he will be my son.***” God’s promise to David will be fulfilled through Jesus but his Kingdom will not be earthly but spiritual. Let’s think really BIG!

Life is full of imperfection
but also pregnant with possibilities
...nothing is impossible with God.