

DO NOT BE AFRAID

Scripture: Luke 1:5-17

December 9, 2020

Message: **But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.”**

Luke 1:13

When people see an angel, they usually exhibit signs of great fear. Seeing angels is not a normal occurrence. But this was a very special occasion as God sent the angel to announce the one who would prepare the way for the Messiah. This day was already a very special day for Zechariah; he was lighting the incense in the temple. Because of the great number of priests at that time, generally, a priest was only selected once in their career to perform this important task. The incense was lit two times a day, once in the morning and once in the mid-afternoon. Today was the day Zechariah was selected for the honor of lighting the incense for one of the two lightings. God also selected this same day to surprise Zechariah with an answer to prayer, the prayer for a child conceived by his wife. In addition, God named the child, another rare occurrence. They were rewarded with this special child because they had been righteous before God.

What does this story tell us about God? Nothing is impossible for God. God rewards righteousness. God delivers on His promises. God wanted to prepare the path for His Son, whom He was sending to earth to redeem the world and establish a new covenant with people. God is love, mercy, and forever generous toward us. God likes surprises and is creative in finding ways to surprise us.

Even during this pandemic, we have been surprised at what God is able to do through His people called the church. This year I have noticed the beauty of nature around me, and the creativity of God's handiwork has been astounding. The creativity in reaching people in our communities has been exhibited in a variety of ways. Give thanks to God.

Prayer: Dear Lord, thank you for the surprises You give to us. Help us to be joyful, righteous and thankful for the many blessings You give to us. Amen.

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