

A Bridge Named Zechariah

Scripture Reading — Luke 1:8-25

Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God. — Luke 1:8

As a priest, Zechariah served as a bridge between God and the people. And on this day he was given the special honor of burning incense in the temple.

I wonder what he was thinking as he went in. Did he expect to hear the voice of God? Likely not. He had probably spent many years being disappointed in his long life. Was he fresh out of hope?

Often our disappointments and broken dreams can set us up for surprise by the miracles of God. On this day, Zechariah was on a collision course with astonishment. Astonishment snatches the covers off our dashed hopes and pulls them into the gospel drama of God.

God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah that Elizabeth would have a son. With every word Gabriel spoke, Zechariah became more fearful. When Gabriel finished, Zechariah spoke doubtfully—and then couldn't speak! He couldn't see past the reality of his wrinkled hands, the crow's feet around his eyes, and Elizabeth's being long past childbearing age.

We are often doubtful too. When our disappointments are smothered in the fog of hopelessness, God has to shock us into astonishment because we can't believe the good news is really for us. I'm sure that when-ever Zechariah touched Elizabeth's baby bump, he was astonished. Astonishment only happens when we give up trying to control the very thing that only God can give.

Prayer

Lord, help me see beyond my past to the gift of your astonishing power in my life. In Jesus, Amen.

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