

# GREAT FAITH TAKES COURAGE

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To walk in great faith takes courage. Let's look at the life of a young girl who had the courage to believe God and because of her faith, the Savior was born into the earth.

## Luke 1:5-7

- I want to point out how meticulous to detail our God is.
- Zechariah means 'God has remembered'.
- Elizabeth means 'oath or covenant of God'.
- Isn't it amazing that from these two people whose names together mean 'God has remembered His covenant' came the forerunner of Jesus Christ!
- Notice that they were doing everything right and did not have any children.
- In the culture of that day the Jewish people considered it a duty and an obligation to God to bear children.
- In bearing children, they were fulfilling the command to be fruitful and multiply.
- Notice verse 7. Get this!
- They were childless because Elizabeth was barren and now, they were both quite old—too old; Elizabeth's time clock had run out to be able to get pregnant.
- It may SEEM like it's too late or it's not going to happen because it has been too long, BUT with God ALL things are possible!
- NEVER give up faith.
- NEVER give up what you believe!

## Luke 1:8-10

- Zachariah was on duty at the temple.
- As was the custom of the priests they would draw lots to see who would have the honor of burning incense in the Holy of Holies.
- In the time of Jesus there were about 20,000 priests so that no priest would ever offer incense more than once.
- This was a once in a lifetime moment for Zachariah.

## Luke 1:11-20

- Zachariah enters the most holy place, where God's Presence was.
- There was no grace at this time.
- No mistakes could be made.
- Can you picture the large crowd of worshipers praying outside the veil?
- It was a very tense time until the priest came out.
- So, Zachariah is performing his duties, probably paying very close attention to every little detail when suddenly an angel appears!
- He was naturally startled;
- But notice the wording—overwhelmed with fear.
- Pay attention to the wording-
- God is showing grace to you—John's name means God is gracious or God shows mercy.
- Notice that the angel has come in answer to their prayer—singular.
- God only needs to be asked once.
- How many times do you think over the years they prayed for children?
- He heard their very first prayer.
- I'm telling you—believe that you receive when you pray, and you shall have it!
- Notice the past tense—has been answered.
- Do you hear the faith in the words of the angel?
- Elizabeth will bear you a son.
- Every word that the angel spoke concerning the life of John the Baptist came true.
- How many parents would love to hear these prophecies about their child?
- But notice Zachariah's response.
- HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THIS????
- GIVE ME A SIGN...
- How many times did the religious leaders say that to Jesus?
- And so, Gabriel gave him a sign!

Zachariah asked for a sign rather than believe the Word of the Lord, and he was given the sign of silence.

- Unbelief keeps a priest from speaking until faith arises.

### **Luke 1:21-25**

- When he finally came out the people were expecting him to speak the priestly blessing over them, but he could not speak.
- He was mute until after John's birth.

- Soon after....
- Something happened to Zachariah and Elizabeth physically...
- Two old bodies were touched by God...
- He really does make all things new...

**Two principles we can learn from this:**

- God always answers prayer—even when it seems He hasn't.
- It was the faith of Yehovah that brought about the miraculous birth of John the Baptist.

**Luke 1:26-38**

- In the culture of that day an engagement was considered a marriage.
- The betrothal period usually was one year.
- Unfaithfulness on the part of the bride was grounds for the death penalty.
- Do you see the courage it took for Mary to agree to do this?
- The greeting by Gabriel took her by surprise; she didn't know what it meant.
- Grace to you—Yehovah is with you---you are anointed with great favor...
- These words were spoken—this is what would happen to Mary.
- She would need the grace of God—the supernatural power to conceive and bear the Son of God.
- She would need the strength and peace of Yehovah's Presence with her to endure the gossip and talk of the folks in Nazareth.
- And she would definitely need great favor—it would be a very dangerous mission to be pregnant during the betrothal period.
- Notice what the angel said to her—do not yield to your fear!
- Mary knew exactly what Gabriel was talking about when he spoke of Jesus—the long-awaited Messiah!
- Every Jewish girl longed to become the mother of Messiah.
- So, notice her response:
- But how could this happen? I am still a virgin!

**God's glory cloud over-shadowed Mary.**

- It happened by Yehovah planting the seed of the Word as Gabriel spoke to Mary the plans of God.
- Mary embraced those Words
- She received the Word from God.
- She believed the Word from God.

- And the Word was made flesh.

**Listen to Mary's response: verse 38**

- This is amazing!
- She believes...
- She agrees with God—I will be a mother for the Lord...
- I ACCEPT WHATEVER HE HAS FOR ME...
- May everything you have told me come to pass.

**I believe it was at that moment that the power of God overshadowed her, and Jesus was conceived—the Word was made flesh!**

- What courage it took for that young girl to walk out her faith.
- She went into this agreement knowing full well the dangers.
- But she trusted God.
- She BELIEVED God when He told her He was with her.
- She believed Him when He told her she was anointed with great favor.
- She believed Him when He told her grace covered her.
- What she believed gave her the courage she needed to accomplish everything that God gave her to do.

**This is what we need to learn from this courageous young girl who became the mother of our Lord.**

- Do not yield to your fear!
- Be courageous!
- Believe God.
- Receive His Word.
- Bear spiritual children for the Kingdom.