

The things we believe about God are nonsense...
but nonetheless true.

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER

God, You are the source of all things. You are, by definition, a mystery "without edges," yet You are knowable.

Through Christmas we celebrate as You draw near to us through the birth of Jesus. This holiday season, allow us to hear Your call to approach You by leaving behind our childish desire that insists on defining and understanding You.

Let us return to a childlike faith which believes in, hopes on and loves You. You are our God.

We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son and the Holy Spirit. Fill us with joy, longing, and awe as we lose ourselves in the mystery that is You. Amen.

R_____ Faith

In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. ⁶ Both of them were upright in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commandments and regulations blamelessly. ⁷ But they had no children, because Elizabeth was barren; and they were both well along in years.

Luke 1:5-7

Once in a L_____

Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹ he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰ And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

Luke 1:8-10

Once in _____ Years

Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹² When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³ 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 give him the name John. ¹⁴ He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵ for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. ¹⁶ Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. ¹⁷ And he will go

ridiculous



on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Luke 1:11-17

Crisis of F____: How can this be? It's r_____!

Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years." ¹⁹ The angel answered, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰ And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their proper time."

Luke 1:18-20

Feeling R_____

When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴ After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵ "The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

Luke 1:23-25

S_____ of J_____ Written in S_____

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, ⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven ⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace."

Luke 1:76-79

GOD IS G_____

NEXT STEPS

Recommended Reading:

[The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe](#) ~ C.S. Lewis

[The Silver Chair](#) ~ C.S. Lewis

[A Guide to Prayer for All God's People](#) ~ Rueben P. Job and Norman Shawchuck

[Crazy Love](#) ~ Frances Chen

[Orthodoxy](#) ~ G.K. Chesterton

December 12/13, 2009