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Merry Christmas From The Angel Gabriel

By

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[Originally published December 22, 2016]

Christmas really is a *most wonderful time of the year*, especially when we understand *why*. God has done great things for us, things we do not deserve. God has bestowed His great **favor** on us, even though we deserve His **disfavor**. Someone has said that God's grace means our getting what we *do not deserve* and not getting what we *do deserve*.

We understand this clearly through special messages from the angel Gabriel.

“I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God.”

Luke 1:19

Let those words penetrate your mind and heart. The angel Gabriel “stands in the presence of God.” That means he knows who God is, what God wants, what God says, what God commands.

God created Gabriel to be a powerful, supernatural being who would stand in His presence and do His will. Gabriel knows that God is All-Powerful, All-Knowing, Everywhere Present, and Unchangeable. When Gabriel speaks for God, he understands the great importance of what he is saying. He is speaking “God’s Word” with all the Truth and Authority that comes with it.

Gabriel's name means "strong man of God," "mighty man of God," "God is my strength." Gabriel is mentioned by name four times in the Bible: twice in Daniel (Chapters 8 & 9) and twice in Luke's Gospel (Chapter 1). He is one of three angels in the Bible who are named. While Michael and Satan are said to be in command of other angels and involved in fighting (e.g. Revelation 12:7-9), Gabriel is presented as a messenger of God.

Gabriel delivered messages to Zecharias and Mary and may have also spoken to Joseph and the shepherds near Bethlehem. Let's begin with Gabriel's message to Zecharias, who was the father of John the Baptist.

"Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, 'Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife

Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.' And Zacharias said to the angel, 'How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.' And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings." Luke 1:11-19

Gabriel told Zecharias that his son (John) would be –

- great in the sight of the Lord
- would drink neither wine nor strong drink
- would be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb
- would turn many of the children of Israel to their Lord their God
- would go before God in the spirit and power of Elijah
- would turn the hearts of the fathers to their children
- would turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the just
- would make ready a people prepared for the Lord

Gabriel called his message “glad tidings.”

Gabriel spoke next with a virgin girl in Nazareth by the name of Mary who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph –

“Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, ‘Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!’ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.’ Then Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I do not know a man?’ And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you,

and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible.’ Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her.” Luke 1:26-38

Gabriel told Mary that –

- she had found favor with God
- she would conceive in her womb and bring forth a Son
- she would call His name Jesus
- Jesus would be great
- Jesus would be called the Son of the Highest

- Jesus would receive the throne of King David and reign over the house of Jacob forever
- the Holy Spirit would come upon Mary, and the power of the Highest would overshadow her
- the Holy One who would be born to her would be called the Son of God
- with God nothing will be impossible

If Gabriel was also the angel who spoke to Joseph, here's what he said –

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph,

son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.’ So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: ‘Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,’ which is translated, ‘God with us.’ Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife, and did not know her till she had brought forth her firstborn Son. And he called His name Jesus.

The angel told Joseph –

- not to be afraid to take Mary as his wife
- that the child Mary conceived in her was of the Holy Spirit
- that Mary would give birth to a Son and should be called Jesus because He would save His people from their sins

If Gabriel was the angel who spoke to the shepherds near Bethlehem, here's what he said –

“Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For

there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ‘Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!” Luke 2:8-14

The angel told the shepherds –

- that his message contained good tidings of great joy which would be to all people
- that born to them that day in the city of David was a Savior, who is Christ the Lord
- they would find the Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger

The angels sang to the shepherds –

- “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

When we understand the amazing message God gave Gabriel to share with human beings, we can see why the angels would sing that song.

Merry Christmas!

When Christians say “Merry Christmas” we join the angels in their declaration of the glory of God and the peace and goodwill He has provided for people everywhere. As we come to another Christmas celebration, we want to wish you and your family “Merry Christmas” in the truth and authority of the wonderful message of grace and love God has given to us.

Scripture taken from the New King James Version®.
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