



CAPITOL COMMISSION®

The Impossible Acquired through Prayer

JANUARY 22, 2026

Pastor David Andersen / 804-683-2285 / PO Box 2020, Chesterfield, VA 23832 / David.Andersen@capitolcom.org

Luke 1:5-14 *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6) And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7) But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years. 8) So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division, 9) According to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord. 10) And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense. 11) Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense. 12) And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him. 13) 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. 14) And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. (NKJV)*

What were the days of Herod known for? Would Zacharias have been well known? Did he have a double blessing in his wife? Were they different in how they lived than most of the people around them? Were they often falsely accused by the other Jews? Was having a son now doubly impossible for them? Is Zacharias first given the greatest privilege of his life? What were all the people doing while he was offering incense? Did the Lord do the impossible in answering his prayer?

FOCUS ON FUTURE BIBLE STUDIES:

- JANUARY 29: LUKE 1:15-22 **UNBELIEF UNSPOKEN!**
- FEBRUARY 5: LUKE 1:23-33 **THE ABSOLUTELY IMPOSSIBLE BIRTH OF THE MESSIAH**

Luke begins the narrative by reminding the Governor, Theophilus, of the historical background of the beginning of the Gospel. "*Herod, king of Judea,*" was on the throne. He was not a Jew, but an Edomite (among the descendants of Esau, the perpetual enemies of Israel). His father, Antipater, after gaining the favor of Julius Caesar, was made Governor of Judea. He then appointed his son, Herod (only 25), as Governor of Galilee. At his father's death, Herod fled to Rome to escape the Parthian invasion of Palestine. There he was made "*king of Judea*" by the emperors and confirmed by the Senate in 40 BC. By 37 BC, with the help of the Roman army, he expelled the Parthians and assumed his role as king. Though he continually enhanced the Temple, built the impregnable fortress of Masada, the port city of Caesarea, and rebuilt Samaria, the Jews hated him, because he was so merciless that he even slaughtered his own wife and sons, and especially the babies of Bethlehem (Mt. 2:16).

CALL TO ME, AND I WILL ANSWER YOU, AND SHOW YOU GREAT AND MIGHTY THINGS, WHICH YOU DO NOT KNOW.
JEREMIAH 33:3

ASK, AND IT WILL BE GIVEN TO YOU; SEEK, AND YOU WILL FIND; KNOCK, AND IT WILL BE OPENED TO YOU. FOR EVERYONE WHO ASKS RECEIVES, AND HE WHO SEEKS FINDS, AND TO HIM WHO KNOCKS IT WILL BE OPENED.
MATTHEW:7-8

BIBLE STUDIES

THURSDAY @ 6:30 AM –PRAYER MEETING – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

THURSDAY @ 7:00 AM –BIBLE STUDY – GAB 14TH FLOOR SPEAKER'S CONFERENCE ROOM

Virginia

The Impossible Acquired through Prayer

I. THE PRIEST'S ADVERSITY

LUKE 1:5-7

Zacharias was an ideal priest in every way except one. He was exceptional as a priest and admired for his priestly conduct in every way. He had even married another priest's daughter, and not just any priest's daughter, but a direct descendent from the first priest, Aaron himself. Elizabeth was not just a priest's daughter, she lived like a priest's daughter. The priests were to be such a godly example to those around them that not only were they to be consistent in obeying the truth of God's Word and Law, they were to be an example in interceding for those around them and especially the nation. The assumption of their Jewish neighbors was that if they were truly righteous before God, then He would bless them with children, maybe even the Messiah! But if a couple had secret sin in their lives, they would be cursed with barrenness. Thus, this exceptionally godly couple were considered a reproach to everyone around them. So their singular prayer was that God would give them a child.

NOW WHEN RACHEL SAW THAT SHE BORE JACOB NO CHILDREN, RACHEL ENVIED HER SISTER, AND SAID TO JACOB, "GIVE ME CHILDREN, OR ELSE I DIE!"
GENESIS 30:1

II. THE PRAYER ASSEMBLY

LUKE 1:8-10

This passage helps us understand why Jesus indignantly proclaimed, after He had cleansed the Temple, "*Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'*" At sunrise and at evening the priests pierced the air with their silver trumpets announcing the "*hour of incense*" and calling the people to come to the Temple to pray. Behind the scenes each day this was an elaborate, well planned ceremony, involving a whole division of priests. The priests represented the people in intercession before God and offering sacrifices for their sins as well as representing God's rule in Israel's theocracy through

interpreting and teaching the Scriptures, counseling and rendering justice in disputes from the Scriptures. The thousands of priests in Israel had been divided by David into 24 divisions, each serving twice annually for 8 days in the Temple, Sabbath to Sabbath. Zacharias was "*of the division of Abijah*" the 8th division of the 24. Twice a day, the priests would cast lots to decide who would be privileged with offering incense, which they were allowed only once in a lifetime. This singular opportunity of a lifetime fell to Zacharias and he must have prayed his singular prayer again with his prayers for the nation as "*the whole multitude of the people was praying outside.*"

IF MY PEOPLE WHO ARE CALLED BY MY NAME WILL HUMBLE THEMSELVES, AND PRAY AND SEEK MY FACE, AND TURN FROM THEIR WICKED WAYS, THEN I WILL HEAR FROM HEAVEN, AND WILL FORGIVE THEIR SIN AND HEAL THEIR LAND. 2 CHRONICLES 7:14

III. THE PRAYER ANSWERED

LUKE 1:11-14

It had been 400 years since God had revealed Himself to His people through an angel or prophet, and now the silence from God is lifted. "*Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.*" The natural response to an unexpected, supernatural being in your presence is fear, knowing that this one can also pronounce judgment. Instead, the angel responds to the fear of Zacharias by saying "*Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard.*" Thus there is immediate answer to the priest's and the people's prayer, at the very altar of incense—the most significant place of prayer, at the time of prayer, while all the multitude of God's people are praying together! Then the impossible is provided personally, only in answer to prayer: "*and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.*" Thus God's plan of redemption for His people through the Gospel begins with prayer for the impossible and a three-fold rejoicing in God's gracious answer!

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) Do you seek God's face in prayer in adversity or just try to work everything out your own way?
- 2) Most importantly, have you repented and prayed that first prayer receiving Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- 3) Are you obedient and strategic in prayer for others, especially remembering to pray for your leaders?