

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S3E16

Title – Can I Question God? - (Luke 1:18-20)

Description – Why is Zechariah punished for questioning God when Mary asks the same question? Today we'll discuss this, that while on the surface these look like similar questions, they're very different at the heart of the question.

The way they prepared the way for the lord back then isn't different than the way we prepare the way for the Lord today. We're not preparing a way for Jesus to physically appear like John was, but its the same today as it was then. It's all about repentance.

1. You acknowledge that God is God and you are not (Humility)
2. You acknowledge that you have sinned against God (Repentance)
3. You recognize your sin and see it the same way that God sees it (Confession)

Remorse is I got caught doing this...

Repentance is I have messed up big time, I need help...

Remorse can lead to repentance, but you have to see how the person responds.

Now, back to Luke 1:18

¹⁸ "How can I know this?" Zechariah asked the angel. "For I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years."

Look at the connection between Zechariah and Abraham

Genesis 15:8

⁸ But he said, "Lord GOD, how can I know that I will possess it?"

Luke 1:19-20

¹⁹ The angel answered him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news. ²⁰ Now listen. You will become silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time."

According to Jewish Literature (Mishna) there are 4 cardinal Archangels of God

1. Gabriel - Hero of God
2. Michael - Who is Like God
3. Raphael - Healing of God
4. Uriel - Light of God

Verse 20 - Gabriel says that because you didn't believe you will be silent until John is born.

The question is: Why does Zechariah get punished, when Mary asks basically the same question?

Luke 1:34

³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?"

On the surface, these look like very similar questions in English.

We have a few instances in the OT where God appears and the people ask for a sign

1. Abraham - asks for a sign, God promises a son, and makes a covenant with Abraham (Genesis 15)
2. Gideon - asks for a sign, God says lay out a fleece. (Judges 6)
3. Hezekiah - asks for a sign, God turns the sun back. (2 Kings 20:1-11)

The difference between Zechariah's question and Mary's question is this: Mary isn't saying How is this possible to God? She's saying humanly speaking, this is impossible, because I've not been intimate with a man. But Zechariah is questioning God and asking for a sign.

Verse 20 - "You will be silent and unable to speak." - In essence this is the sign from God.

Luke 1:21-22

²¹ Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. ²² When he did come out, he could not speak to them. Then they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was making signs to them and remained speechless.

They were not supposed to take a long time. They were supposed to go in, say a couple of the prayers, and come out.

What was the priest supposed to do the moment he came out of the temple? He was supposed to pray the Aaronic blessing. So now he can't.

They realized something happened in the temple. Because he went in nervous and speaking, and came out excited and mute.

Looking ahead for next week. What's the final phrase connected to the OT from Luke 1:25?