## Zechariah: The Incredulous Priest-Turned-Prophet: Biblical-Theological, Psychological, and Phenomenological Perspectives in Relation to Prophetic Legitimacy

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The story of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, is instructive, both in terms of the church’s prophetic history and its understanding of prophetic legitimacy.[[1]](#footnote-1) Within the NT canon, it also serves as an example of unbelief engendered by the negative impacts of personal experience. Importantly, these impacts cause a priest who is versed in the Scriptures and Tradition to resist an otherwise welcome and truthful message from God.

Luke’s gospel account begins with a flurry of Holy Spirit activity replete with prophetic expression and implications. Luke seems intent in reinforcing our awareness that Israel’s God is the God of the marginalized.[[2]](#footnote-2) Zechariah and Elizabeth loom large in Luke’s opening chapters, being “of the priestly class,”[[3]](#footnote-3) according to their “priestly division” (Luke 1:5).[[4]](#footnote-4) However, they are perhaps at the margins of the favored class. As outliers from Judah’s hill country (Luke 1:39), they are much like Elkanah and Hannah, who lived “in the backwaters of the hill country of Ephraim.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

Luke notes the couple’s reverence for the deity, stating that they are “righteous in the sight of God” (Luke 1:6 NASB).[[6]](#footnote-6) Because the ancient prophets equated righteousness with faith (see Hab. 2:4), Luke’s description seems intended to foster our comprehension of how their “faith enabled them to be open to God’s revelation.”[[7]](#footnote-7) The couple’s righteousness does not preclude their struggle with infertility. When Luke describes Elizabeth as “barren” (Luke 1:7), he is aware of Israel’s history and covenant relationship with Yahweh. The implications of “the barren woman” are both historic and foundational to the narrative, to Israel’s self-proclaimed identity, and to the nation God declares Israel to be. Thus, Elizabeth’s barrenness identifies her with Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Manoah’s wife, and Hannah.[[8]](#footnote-8) Apart from the blessing of fruitfulness, “the perpetuation of the tribe and its religion” was not possible.[[9]](#footnote-9) By Mosaic tradition, this blessing was unattainable to barren women (Exod. 23:26; Lev. 26:9; Deut. 28:11, 7:14), who instead lived with the consciousness of shame. Elizabeth testified to the stigma, which she bore prior to conceiving John (Luke 1:24–25).[[10]](#footnote-10)

Communally and individually, moving from barrenness to fertility is possible only by the work of the Spirit. The text reiterates that Elizabeth’s state is reminiscent of Sarah’s in that both couples were advanced in years and beyond their ability to procreate (Gen. 11:30; Rom. 4:19; Luke 1:7). Luke’s account heightens the awareness of an impending divine intervention, which is revealed at the appropriate moment, after the casting of lots assures Zechariah’s service in “the offering of incense twice daily in the Temple.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

The climactic moment in the narrative occurs when Zechariah is offering incense and encounters the archangel Gabriel (Luke 1:19).[[12]](#footnote-12) Gabriel declared that Zechariah’s prayer was answered (Luke 1:13). Numerous times, particularly relating to Jesus, this too seems related to righteousness, as Luke equates answered prayer and intercession with the righteous.[[13]](#footnote-13) Given the ensuing conversation about John the Baptist’s birth, the mentioned prayer would have concerned the birth of a son. However, Zechariah’s response suggests that he and Elizabeth have long since abandoned this prayer.

Now that the prayer’s intent has resurfaced, Gabriel adds instruction and some details of John’s role in readying God’s people for the Messiah’s coming.[[14]](#footnote-14) Zechariah is predictably overwhelmed. Assuming he has indeed surrendered his desire for a child, Gabriel’s announcement would present a challenge to his sense of impossibility, prompting the question: “How will I know that this is so? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years” (Luke 1:18).[[15]](#footnote-15) Whether it reveals a lack of faith or utter incredulity, Zechariah’s question clearly attaches to his aged-related concern.

Regardless of whether the question might be considered fair, it prompts a rebuke and physical consequences. Keener notes that Zechariah’s question was not unlike questions posed by Abraham and Gideon, yet the two latter men “were not punished.” Zechariah’s fate suggests to Keener that “that this revelation is much greater than those which preceded it.”[[16]](#footnote-16) Is it greater, and if so, how? Gabriel responds to Zechariah’s incredulity, saying, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. But now, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will become mute, unable to speak, until the day these things occur” (Luke 1:20). Gabriel seems to say that because of who he is, the place he occupies (relative to God’s heavenly court), and the fact that he was “sent” (*apostello*—*ἀποστέλλω*),[[17]](#footnote-17) Zechariah’s skepticism is inexcusable.

**Zechariah’s Incredulity in Light of the Tradition**

Several dynamics will be considered biblically and theologically, psychologically and phenomenologically, and in relation to prophetic consciousness, perception, and enactment.[[18]](#footnote-18) For now, however, Luke seems to provide manifold evidence of Zechariah’s familiarity with the Tradition, the Scriptures, and the people’s expectation, which would explain Gabriel’s rebuke. Within the Tradition and covenant history, God often seems to deal severely with his prophetic agents, as in the case of Moses at Meribah (Num. 20:1–13).[[19]](#footnote-19)

Regarding the Lukan account of Gabriel’s prophetic utterance, the intimations seem strikingly like those in the Mosaic tradition: During Moses’s compromised representation of holiness, he stands in the tent, in God’s immediate presence, with the people outside the tent. Likewise, Zechariah is inside the holy place, while the people outside pray in anticipation of the Lord’s response. Zechariah also stands at the altar of incense, near the Ark of the Covenant in the Holiest of All.

Other reasons for Gabriel’s expectations of Zechariah are possible: Gabriel’s speech should prompt his being recognized, not only because of his history with Israel’s people but because of Zechariah’s familiarity with Daniel’s prophecies.[[20]](#footnote-20) Gabriel’s announcement that he stands in God’s presence is reminiscent of Elijah’s language in the court of Ahab and his declaration of being in the heavenly council (1 Kings 17:1).[[21]](#footnote-21) Jeremiah establishes the unquestioned prophetic legitimacy of members of this council, as they both “see and hear” God’s word (Jer. 23:18). Being from the Aaronic line, Zechariah is certainly aware of this. He is responsible to “know” the Lord (Jer. 9:23–24; Dan. 11:32; Hosea 6:3, 6), including the oral and written tradition and the priestly responsibilities regarding liturgical praxis and communion with the divine.

Owing to Zechariah’s skepticism, the occasion’s great joy is suspended until an appointed time following Elizabeth’s pregnancy when God will free Zechariah’s tongue to prophetically proclaim an event tied to the “fullness of times.” While John gestates, the prophetic word gestates in Zechariah’s spiritual womb until he is both congruent with it and convicted of it. Then his prophetic enactment will affirm the narrative and be rooted in prophetic consciousness, prophetic perception, and prophetic legitimacy. Both he and the inculcated covenant community will apprehend it, and the continuing narrative will reach its crescendo.

The Prophecy of Zechariah

Regarding Zechariah’s prophetic utterance, we now consider the biblical, theological, psychological, and phenomenological dynamics of prophetic legitimacy, in relation to consciousness, perception, and enactment.

#### *Zechariah from a Biblical and Theological Perspective*

On the day of her son’s circumcision, Elizabeth indicates that his name will be called “John” (Luke 1:59–60). The community resists the choice, wanting to maintain the tradition of naming a firstborn son after a relative, usually the father (Luke 1:59–61). They petition Zechariah, who replies by writing, “His name is John” (Luke 1:63).

During the gestational period, Zechariah recognized his struggle with Gabriel’s message and the silence that was necessary until its fulfillment. Now, however, “Zechariah regains his voice (Luke 1:64).”[[22]](#footnote-22) Concurrently, “fear came over all their neighbors” (Luke 1:65), precipitated by a moment that could qualify as numinous and would serve as a witness of God’s presence and intent.[[23]](#footnote-23)

Being filled with the Spirit, Zechariah’s way of speaking shows that Gabriel’s words have matured within him. Having already established from a Pentecostal perspective that speaking in tongues is part of prophetic function, the dynamic resonates with Luke’s witness of the Day of Pentecost, when by the filling of the Spirit they “began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability” (Acts 2:4). An additional connection seems evident between the loosing of the tongue to speak beyond its normal capacity and Zechariah’s tongue being loosed to speak prophetically, beyond his priestly craft. This enablement is nothing less than the Spirit’s influence through Zechariah’s being “filled” with the same Spirit.[[24]](#footnote-24)

Zechariah first blesses the “Lord God of Israel” and notes his favor regarding the promise of redemption (Luke 1:68). This praise and adoration contain a remembrance of God’s historic promises to King David about the coming Messiah, his descendant (2 Sam. 7:11–16).[[25]](#footnote-25) This commends prophetic legitimacy, which is preserved in inspired prophetic expressions that are rooted in previously spoken truths regarding the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 19:10). To such, the Spirit of Prophecy always bears witness.

Zechariah’s look back over God’s providence testifies to legitimate prophetic function.[[26]](#footnote-26) His weighty prophetic utterance allows him to connect past promises to what is unfolding in his current reality. Thus, he becomes a knowing participant in the story of John and the Messiah, his experience being rooted in the covenant God made with Abraham and in the promise that his seed would possess their enemies’ gate (Gen. 22:17).[[27]](#footnote-27) He seems to grasp that his son, “the prophet of the Most High,” will “go before the Lord,” and serve the child in Mary’s womb. Therefore, Zechariah prophesies that John is the prophetic messenger of whom Isaiah and Malachi spoke (Isa. 40:1–4; Mal. 3:1, 4:5–6). This resonates with Gabriel’s announcement of John’s coming in the “spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:16–17).[[28]](#footnote-28) It seems evident that, for Luke, John’s prophetic legitimacy is tied to the Christological intent of the promissory passages rooted in the Abrahamic covenant, the promise made to David, and utterances within the prophetic tradition of Israel.

Zechariah from a Psychological and Phenomenological Perspective

Zechariah is overwhelmed with fear at the appearance of Gabriel (Luke 1:12), despite Gabriel’s appearance “at the right side of the altar of incense” (Luke 1:11). Because the right or south side was the place of honor to the Israelite consciousness,[[29]](#footnote-29) the placement could have eased Zechariah’s mind.[[30]](#footnote-30) Instead, the appearance disturbed his peace.[[31]](#footnote-31) Lapide asserts that “it is the sign of a good angel if at first he causes fear and afterwards joy.”[[32]](#footnote-32) Yet, for Zechariah, there is only distress and emotional discomfort over Gabriel’s perplexing message (Luke 1:18),[[33]](#footnote-33) as Zechariah’s quizzing of the angel reveals.

From a psychological perspective, Zechariah’s fear leads to his being overwhelmed, despite a priest’s presumed familiarity with angelic encounters,[[34]](#footnote-34) most often with the numinous.[[35]](#footnote-35) Zechariah’s encounter involves the other-worldly but transpires in the community’s most sacred precincts, intensifying the effect on his psyche and consciousness. The aging priest is confronted with the holy as a “non-rational and irreducible element,”[[36]](#footnote-36) a purely religious experience touching and overlapping the psychological with the (religious) phenomenological domains.[[37]](#footnote-37) This moment (and all that transpires within and from it, including the imposed speechlessness) cannot be dismissed as an instance of conversion disorder.[[38]](#footnote-38) Rather, this is a “suprarational” encounter deeply rooted in transcendent mystery,[[39]](#footnote-39) which produces the psychological responses of fear and feeling overwhelmed. The phenomenological reality from a suprarational domain will affect the rational aspects of Zechariah’s psyche and his experience of it as a human being.

These reactions result from the event’s effects on Zechariah’s “beliefs.”[[40]](#footnote-40) The text establishes that Gabriel’s assigned message is good news meant to bless Zechariah, Elizabeth, and Israel. Ferguson suggests that such blessing affects beliefs because “to be a blessing, mere feeling must be transmitted into belief, and belief is only possible in rational terms.”[[41]](#footnote-41) The challenge then is the recalcitrance of Zechariah’s rational beliefs, as revealed by his query: “How will I know that this is so? *For I am an old man*” (Luke 1:18; italics mine)..

Zechariah’s psychological state reveals that he (1) becomes disoriented, (2) regains some sense of psychological inquiry, (3) is then perplexed by Gabriel’s reference to his answered prayer for a son, and (4) finds his perplexity demandingcertainty. His demand for certainty eliminates any diagnosis of neurosis or psychotic episode. Likewise, he does not present an anxiety disorder or a break with reality (as it truly is). Thus, when Scripture attests to genuine suprarational encounters in the angelic realm, they cannot be considered in terms of subjective expressions of psychological aberrations.

Although Zechariah is fearful, he maintains the presence of mind to question the promise. He experiences fear (*affect*)[[42]](#footnote-42) to the point of distress; yet he remains able to voice his concern, seems to quickly regain his presence of mind, and somewhat successfully regulates his emotions.[[43]](#footnote-43) No anxious impairment is evident in the exchange; nor can one infer a compulsive sense of apprehension and worry. Zechariah seems comfortable and conversant, raising his question without considering its implications (although he is still unaware of Gabriel’s identity).[[44]](#footnote-44)

The prophetic message that Gabriel delivers carries the substance of the Abrahamic faith and hope of redemption, serving as a summation of the Israelite narrative and covenant history.[[45]](#footnote-45) Because Zechariah understands these realities, his question of “how” might seem (or might be) cavalier. However, fear is present in the question, perhaps indicating misplaced expectations, disappointments, and sorrows suffered at an earlier season in Zechariah and Elizabeth’s shared life.[[46]](#footnote-46) These can produce a psychological state of resignation,[[47]](#footnote-47) which seems plausible and could explain his question. It might also explain the difference between his “How?” and Mary’s “How can this be?” (Luke 1:34). The latter is not a question of Mary’s credulity but of the ethical and moral fiber of holiness from an Israelite covenantal perspective. As one seasoned in the priestly tradition and the community’s narrative consensus,[[48]](#footnote-48) Zechariah’s question is an inadvertent affront, and Gabriel’s self-disclosure of his name renders the remonstrance palpable.[[49]](#footnote-49) His reply, “I am Gabriel,” is clearly reproof,[[50]](#footnote-50) the ancient equivalent to the contemporary colloquialism, “Do you know who you are talking to?” Zechariah had to know his resistance would lead to reproof.[[51]](#footnote-51) Therefore, he is answerable and subject to a corrective, even though he did not doubt Gabriel’s identity.[[52]](#footnote-52)

That corrective is Zechariah’s speechless gestational period. It parallels his wife’s gestational period and reorders his perceptions and cognitions, thus bringing him to internal convergence. This silent perfecting process relates to the weightiness of covenant history and the act of remembering. It ends in a prophetic expression that not only foretells and forthtells but also confirms Zechariah’s prophetic legitimacy. Being rendered incapable of speaking was a prophetic means to a prophetic end. A transformational psychological dynamic had to expand Zechariah’s cognitions and accompanying perceptions, allowing him to grasp by faith the divine fiat ordained to occur through him and Elizabeth. His silence served to impregnate his later speech with a radically new means of asserting what is only possible with God.

The centrality of language in the Zechariah narrative is telling. Jon Mills reminds us that language not only communicates but helps shape culture and thinking.[[53]](#footnote-53) Thus, language would have influenced the Hebrew culture and ways of thinking.[[54]](#footnote-54) Mills nods to Wilhelm von Humboldt’s postulate that “language completely determines thought and thought is impossible without language.”[[55]](#footnote-55) If Humboldt is correct, muting Zechariah interrupted an existing pattern *so that* he could eventually speak beyond himself and his personal, experiential constraints. The muting decoupled his interactions with the external world from his subjective, internal processing of the Spirit. This severance allowed a fresh coalescing in relation to prophetic legitimacy.

Zechariah’s exile from speech speaks to a necessary hiddenness. Elizabeth remains hidden from view during her pregnancy; Zechariah is hidden by his imposed silence. Arguably, the resistance rooted in his assumptions, perceptions, cognitions, and intuitions about God would be undone by a *metanoia*.[[56]](#footnote-56) His subsequent prophetic enactment would then disclose his transformation and supply an inspired message to the greater community (Luke 1:59–79).

Participation as a willing, legitimate prophetic agent required Zechariah’s embodied congruity. In Carl Rogers’s humanistic personality theory, *congruity* is “an instance or point of agreement or correspondence between the ideal self and the real self.”[[57]](#footnote-57) The *ideal self* is the “self [one] would like to be.”[[58]](#footnote-58) The *real self* answers the question, “Who am I *really*? How can I get in touch with this real self, underlying all my surface behavior?”[[59]](#footnote-59) Zechariah’s reconnection with the real self occurs when Gabriel’s truth-telling exposes what was hidden in Zechariah’s heart. Psychologically, the discrepancy is the gap between his fatherless real self and his ideal self as father. To realize congruity with himself, with God, and with God’s promise, that gap begs to be bridged internally.

Zechariah’s fatherless real self is unreceptive to the announcement of his imminent fatherhood. Concerning the apprehension and acceptance of Gabriel’s prophetic message, Zechariah is unwilling,[[60]](#footnote-60) leaving the community less able to accept it. Zechariah’s need to move toward congruence with his ideal self seems evident, but such movement needs to be understood theologically.

The internal challenge of incongruence occurs within what Rogers calls a “phenomenal field,”[[61]](#footnote-61) which is “our subjective reality.”[[62]](#footnote-62) Zechariah’s incongruence does not deny his being “righteous” and “living blamelessly” but exemplifies the paradoxical coexistence of realities seen within the faithful throughout Scripture (Luke 1:6). The Lukan text does not conceal its protagonists’ internal conflicts,[[63]](#footnote-63) but displays Zechariah’s in the contrast between God’s declaring his righteousness and his recalcitrance toward God’s promise.

Subtle yet present is the work of the Spirit in Zechariah.[[64]](#footnote-64) The nine-month movement to congruity is inseparable from the convictional work perfecting the *imago Dei* in him. Loder describes such work as “the necessary direction of one’s integrity.”[[65]](#footnote-65) For Loder, conviction is both phenomenological and psychological, and “the word ‘convict’ and its cognates are intended to mean what the Latin root, *convince*, suggests: ‘to overcome, to conquer, to refute.’”[[66]](#footnote-66) The experience of being convinced therefore requires an area that needs to be conquered and refuted.

That Zechariah’s recalcitrance is not benign is revealed by Gabriel’s remonstrance in direct relation to God’s righteousness, “specifically in regard to the coherence between his revealed will and his actions on behalf of his people.”[[67]](#footnote-67) His “communicable” attributes (being coherent with the incommunicable) offer grace and empowerment,[[68]](#footnote-68) permitting God’s holding us in a “disposition of mercy” toward our frailty and imperfection.[[69]](#footnote-69) When justice demands rectification, it is exercised to yield restoration and reconciliation.

Thus, God chastises Zechariah for his ultimate good, the remonstrance relating both to the prophetic expression and God’s mercy. Per Luke, the tongue discloses the heart’s content (Luke 6:45). When Zechariah’s speech is reinstated, his agreement with the child’s name suggests the Spirit’s work in conquering the incongruence that previously contradicted Gabriel’s message, and it points to the perfecting of the *imago Dei*.[[70]](#footnote-70)

Zechariah’s internal struggle is representative of the human condition. His reluctance to fully embrace the promise Gabriel delivered, likely for multiple reasons, is clear evidence of negation. In depth psychology, “the negative side of personality” is an aspect of the unconscious often referred to as the “shadow.”[[71]](#footnote-71) Arguably, Zechariah’s negative speech issues from his personal shadow, which had already compromised his ability to manage his hope of fathering a child. Therefore, he laid it aside and counted it as loss (childlessness). Now, in facing his desire’s fulfillment, his and Elizabeth’s advanced age further fuels his negation. Thus, he needs to become “fully convinced” of his hope being fulfilled, and his belief can be “reckoned to him as righteousness” (Rom. 4:21–22).

The loosing of Zechariah’s tongue at the filling of the Spirit marks the phenomenological saturation that was impossible apart from his cooperation with the Spirit’s inward work. The convictional work of the Spirit not only restored Zechariah’s ability to speak but also healed the hope that was disconnected from his forgotten prayers for a child. The same convictional process seems integral to the Spirit’s sanctifying work in Zechariah as an agent operating in prophetic legitimacy. To speak prophetically, Zechariah had to yield his will to that of the sovereign Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21). Then his willingness and his doing could culminate in his bearing witness to the Spirit amid the community (Phil. 2:13; Luke 1:65–66).

In considering the convictive aspect of Zechariah’s experience, we do well to see speechlessness as a particular but unsurprising response to the numinous. In commenting on Marion’s notion of saturated phenomenon, Wallenfang avers that speechlessness is “the proper and natural response” to “divine glory.”[[72]](#footnote-72) Any human attempt to speak “the saturating intuition of divine revelation” results in “utter gibberish.”[[73]](#footnote-73) Our inadequacy is to be expected, “for ‘only God can speak well of God.’”[[74]](#footnote-74) Perhaps Zechariah’s protracted muteness at his advanced age is a semiotic expression of what Wallenfang describes. In addition, Zechariah’s speechlessness keeps him from additional speech-related stresses that might be experienced in saturated phenomenon. When he is “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Luke 1:67), God speaks well of God through the aged priest’s human agency. After nine months of contemplative and reflective silence, this inspirationally matured priest-turned-prophet speaks faithfully and legitimately from a prophetic posture.

1. David E. Aune examines legitimacy in terms of prophetic function and uses the term “prophetic *legitimacy*” in this excerpt: “Conflict among various prophets or between prophets and other types of Christian leaders in which prophetic *legitimacy* is questioned is a way of solving the problem of conflicting authority as perceived in what appear to be conflicting norms and values.” David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1991) 229. I use the term *prophetic legitimacy* in regard to authentic and accountable prophetic function that bears in mind “the testimony of Jesus [which] is the spirit of prophecy” (Rev. 19:10). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. See Zeph. 3:12–13, in light of the Lukan account. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Gospel of Luke*, Sacra Pagina, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, vol. 3 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991), 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 32. As Johnson notes, this is as recorded in 1 Chron. 23:6–24:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Peter J. Leithart, *A Son to Me: An Exposition of 1 and 2 Samuel* (Moscow, ID: Canon Press, 2003), 37. An outlier priest’s chances of being chosen for such Temple service were slim. The suspense of that moment reveals and accentuates the mysterious workings of the divine Spirit in the fulfillment of prophecy. This outlier status reflects Zechariah’s times. Rather than being viewed as “learned” or “a model priest,” Rabbinists would have ranked Zechariah as an “‘idiot’ … and as an *Amha-arets*, a ‘rustic’ priest” worthy of “benevolent contempt.” Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (London: Longmans, Green, 1886), 1:141. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. J. Owen Carroll states, “An individual declared to be righteous in God’s sight faithfully followed the commands of the law and, because of God’s grace, was allowed to exist and minister in his presence.” J. Owen Carroll, “God’s Righteousness,” in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Brannon Ellis and Mark Ward (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), Logos Bible Software 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. *Barrenness* is variously expressed in the original OT and NT languages: “[Heb. *‘āqār*, *galmûḏ* (1 S. 2:5; Job 3:7; Isa. 49:21), *‘ōṣer* (Prov. 30:16); Gk. *steíros*, *nekrós* (Jas. 2:20), *nékrōsis* (Rom. 4:19)]; AV also SOLITARY, DESOLATE, DEAD, DEADNESS; NEB also CHILDLESS, DEADNESS. The term is generally applied to women who bear no children: Sarah (Gen. 11:30); Rebekah (25:21); Rachel (29:31); Manoah’s wife (Jgs. 13:2f); Hannah (1 S. 2:5); Elizabeth (Lk. 1:7, 36 [*steíros*]. In Israel and among oriental peoples generally, barrenness was a woman’s and her family’s greatest misfortune. The highest sanctions of religion and patriotism blessed the fruitful woman, because children were necessary for the perpetuation of the tribe and its religion. It is significant that the mothers of the Hebrew race, Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, were by nature sterile; God’s special intervention shows His particular favor to Israel. Fruitfulness was God’s special blessing to His people (Ex. 23:26; Dt. 7:14; Ps. 113:9). A complete family is an emblem of beauty (Cant. 4:2; 6:6). Metaphorically, Israel in her days of adversity, when her children were exiled, was barren, but in her restoration she will rejoice in many children (Isa. 54:1; Gal. 4:27). Jesus portrays the utter despair and terror of the destruction of Jerusalem when He speaks of a day when the barren will be called blessed (Lk. 23:29).” T. Rees, “Barren; Barrenness,” in *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, rev. ed., ed. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988), 432–433. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Rees, “Barren; Barrenness,” 432. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Elizabeth’s former barrenness is emblematic of the barrenness of Israel’s exile “in her days of adversity, when her children were exiled.” Rees, “Barren; Barrenness,” 433. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 32. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. “Within second Temple Judaism a more highly developed angelology has emerged as evidenced by what is written in 2nd Enoch 3, 4, and 5. In the first reference, the Angels carried Enoch into the 1st heaven. and the second reference Enoch is informed of the Angels that govern the stars. In the final reference there is reference to the Angels who guard the storehouses of snow.” James H. Charlesworth*,* ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 1, *Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (New York: Yale University Press, 1983), 110–112. Was this the evening or morning incense? The text does not say; yet in Luke 1:20 Zechariah is released from the consequences of questioning of Gabriel’s message at a similar appointed time. Similarly, when Gabriel instructed Daniel to prophesy regarding the seventy-two-week timeline that symbolized the unfolding of history, he did it at the offering of the evening incense (Dan. 9:20–27). [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Luke 3:21, 5:16, 6:12–16, 9:18–22, 9:28–29, 22:32, 23:34, 23:46, 11:5–8, 18:1–8; Acts 1:14, 2:42, 3:1, 10:31 “Scholars have long recognized, though as we have noted few have assessed its significance, that prayer is a characteristic emphasis of the Third Gospel … προσεύχομαι, ‘to pray, offer petition,’ appears nineteen times in this Gospel, as against ten occurrences in Mark and fifteen in Matthew. When the instances from Acts are added it is noted that the word is used by Luke thirty-five times (out of a total eighty-six occurrences in the New Testament).” P. T. O’Brien, “Prayer in Luke-Acts,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 24 (1973): 113. O’Brien lists the references: “Luke 1:10; 3:21; 5:56; 6:12, 28; 9:18, 28, 29; 11:1 (twice), 2; 18:1, 10, 11; 20:47; 22:40, 41, 44, 46. The cognate noun is used at 6:12; 19:46 and 22:45.” O’Brien, “Prayer in Luke-Acts,” 113n10. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Gabriel adds that the couple are not to fear; Elizabeth will birth a son; Zechariah will name him John; Zechariah and Elizabeth will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at John’s birth; John will be great in the Lord’s sight; certain practices are disallowed in John’s life (for example, the drinking of wine or strong drink, suggesting a form of asceticism); John will be filled with the Holy Spirit in utero; in his mature adulthood, he will fulfill certain aspects of his mission (for example, he will turn many Israelites to the Lord their God); he will walk in the spirit and power of Elijah, thereby turning the hearts of the parents to the children and fulfilling Malachi’s prophecy (Mal. 4:6); and he will turn the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous (Luke 1:13–17). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Regarding Zechariah’s questioning, “τίς, τί: [is] an interrogative reference to someone or something—‘who? what?’ τί ἔτι χρείαν ἔχομεν μαρτύρων; ‘what further need do we have of witnesses?’ Mk 14:63; τίς ἐστιν ὁ παίσας σε; ‘who is it that struck you?’ Mt 26:68; τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου; ‘who do people say the Son of Man is?’ Mt 16:13.” Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, eds., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), s.v. “τίς, τί.” [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Craig S. Keener, The IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), s.v. “Luke 1:18.” [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. *Apostello* (*ἀποστέλλω*): “To cause someone to depart for a particular purpose—to send.” Louw and Nida, [*Greek-English Lexicon*](https://ref.ly/logosres/louwnida?ref=LouwNida.31.30&off=6&ctx=31.30+~%CE%B4%CE%BF%CE%BA%CE%B5%CE%B9%CD%82+(impersonal+form):+to+hold+), s.v. “ἀποστέλλω.” [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Luke Timothy Johnson, “Prophetic Enactment,” in *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2011), 130–65. The term *enactment* is derived from Johnson’s work and adopted to denote the prophetic activity by which the prophetic agent stewards and communicates the divine message. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. God instructs Moses to speak to the rock, but he strikes it in anger. The needed water gushes out, but God chastises Moses and Aaron, who face rigorous consequences, including Moses’s exclusion from entering the Promised Land. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. One could say that Gabriel is the angelic prophetic messenger as relates to the Son of Man in Daniel 7, the announcement to Zechariah about his son John, and the annunciation to Mary as the chosen mother of the awaited Messiah. As to Zechariah’s failure to recognize him, questions understandably arise: Is such recognition within Zechariah’s purview, at least in relation to Israel’s later history and Daniel’s prophetic voice? (See Dan. 8:15–26, 9:21–27.) If Zechariah doesn’t immediately recognize Gabriel, does not his visceral reaction to the angel intimate the presence of the holy? Does that which follows not require him to pay closer attention? Does he not perceive the thread that binds the previous prophetic promises to five families in the Tradition with what is playing out before him? [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. There is an evident weightiness to the message but also to the angel’s expression, at some level, of the effulgence of the One he represents, which in and of itself is weighty. *Kabod* (Exod. 24:16–18, 33:9–11**)** implies weightiness as well as glory. The New Testament *doxa* lends itself to the same and implies “reputation.” In addition, standing in the presence of Yahweh, one is a member of the heavenly council (Jer. 23:18), which includes a certain rank of angels, along with the prophets appointed to be there (Zech. 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997), 111. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. The mentioned *fear* is “φόβοςa, ου*m*: a state of severe distress, aroused by intense concern for impending pain, danger, evil, etc., or possibly by the illusion of such circumstances—‘fear.’ ἀπελθοῦσαι ταχὺ ἀπὸ τοῦ μνημείου μετὰ φόβου καὶ χαρᾶς μεγάλης ‘with fear and great joy they quickly left the tomb’ Mt 28:8; ἐν παντὶ θλιβόμενοι—ἔξωθεν μάχαι, ἔσωθεν φόβοι ‘troubled in every way, conflicts without and fears within’ 2 Cor 7:5. In a number of languages there is no noun-like word for ‘fear.’ Accordingly, expressions containing such a noun in Greek must often be restructured so that the corresponding semantic unit may be expressed by a verb. Therefore, instead of ‘fear,’ one may have expressions such as ‘be afraid’ or ‘to fear.’ Instead of ‘fears within’ (2 Cor 7:5), one may translate ‘in our hearts we were afraid.’” Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “φόβος.” “Numinous. A word coined by R. \*Otto to denote the elements of a non-rational and amoral kind in what is experienced in religion as the ‘holy.’ The numinous is thus held to include feelings of awe and self-abasement (at the *Mysterium Tremendum*) as well as an element of religious fascination (the *fascinans*). Otto developed his psychological analyses for the first time in *Das Heilige* (1917; Eng. tr., 1923). nun. In popular usage, a member of any Religious Institute of women. In RC canon law, however, the term is correctly used only of members of enclosed orders whose members live in houses, which outsiders are not normally permitted to enter and which the members are only rarely permitted to leave (*CIC* (1983), can. 667).” F. L. Cross and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2005), s.v. “numinous.” [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. “Filled”hereis “πίμπλημιa: to cause something to be completely full—‘to fill completely, to fill up.’ λαβὼν σπόγγον πλήσας τε ὄξους ‘taking a sponge, he filled it with sour wine’ Mt 27:48. In a number of languages one cannot speak of ‘filling a sponge,’ and it may be necessary to render this expression in Mt 27:48 as ‘to make a sponge completely wet with cheap wine.’ καὶ ἔπλησαν ἀμφότερα τὰ πλοῖα ‘and they filled both boats’ Lk 5:7.” Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “πίμπλημι.” For Luke, prophetic expressions, the work of the tongue, are heavenly, sourced by the Spirit and considered to be “tongues of fire” (Acts 2:1–ff). For James, the fiery tongue is set ablaze by hell itself, is a restless evil, and needs to be tamed (James 3:5–12). The former releases the tongue; the latter is a tongue needing to be harnessed and tamed. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Zechariah parallels Gabriel’s announcement to him in Luke 1:32–33, suggesting the possibility that during his enforced silence, Zechariah meditated upon and contemplated Gabriel’s words and the promises from which they sprang. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Luke notes in Acts 15:18 that God has known his works from the beginning. This element is tied to Providence and is essential for the proclamation of inspired speech and prophetic expressions. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. This portends God’s people serving him in holiness and without fear. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Luke shows the fulfillment of these prophecies in the prophetic enactment of John the Baptizer and records Jesus’s own witness to the same ((Luke 3:1–6, 7:26–27). [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Regarding position, “ἐκ δεξιῶν τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου [is the] place of honour. It was ‘the right side of the altar,’ not of Zacharias, who was facing it. Comp. Acts 7:55, 56. The right side was the south side, and the Angel would be between the altar and the golden candlestick. On the left, or north side, of the altar was the table with the shewbread.” Alfred Plummer, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel according to S. Luke*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-lu?ref=Bible.Lk1.11&off=1413&ctx=.+p.+142%2c+2.+p.+751.~%0a%CE%B5%CC%93%CE%BA+%CE%B4%CE%B5%CE%BE%CE%B9%CF%89%CD%82%CE%BD+%CF%84%CE%BF%CF%85%CD%82+%CE%B8%CF%85), International Critical Commentary (London: T&T Clark International, 1896), 12. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Lapide suggests that “we may learn from this that angels stand by altars, priests and sacrifices, and co-operate with them in the worship and adoration of God. Of this there are many instances in the lives of the saints, some of which I have mentioned, Exod. 29:38; Lev. 9:24.” Cornelius à Lapide, *The Great Commentary of Cornelius À Lapide: S. Luke’s Gospel*, 4th ed., trans. Thomas W. Mossman (Edinburgh: John Grant, 1908), 4:10. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Lapide suggests this was “both because of the unusual sight, and because of the majesty in which he appeared, which human weakness could scarcely endure to behold.” à Lapide, *Great Commentary of Lapide*, 10. From a psychological and phenomenological perspective, encountering such a transcendent mystery and witnessing such an appearance are inherently disorienting and fear-producing. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. à Lapide, [*Great Commentary of Lapide,*](https://ref.ly/logosres/commlapide04?ref=Bible.Lk1.11&off=309&ctx=+moved.+S.+Ambrose.+~We+may+learn+from+th) 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. When Gabriel told Zechariah that his prayers were answered, did he address aspects of a twofold reality? Was he telling Zechariah, the priest serving in the holy place, that the saints’ collective prayers were being answered in relation to prophetic promise? Or did the angel refer to a couple’s long-abandoned prayer for a son (and is the answer difficult to determine)? “Not his prayer for offspring, S. Augustine says, of which he now so despaired that he did not believe the promise of the angel (verse 20), but thy prayer as a priest for the sins of the people and for the coming of the Messiah. But God, who goes beyond the merits and the prayers of suppliants, promised him a son who should be the prophet and forerunner. So Bede, Theophylact, S. Augustine, S. Chrysostom. Some, however, are of opinion that this prayer of Zacharias was for offspring, only that it had been offered not at this time, but formerly when he was younger.” à Lapide, *Great Commentary of Lapide*, 10. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. See Gen. 16:1–12, 19:1–23, 21:17–18, 22:1–19, 28:12, 32:1; Exod. 23:20–24; Num. 22:21–35; Josh. 5:13–15; Judg. 6:11–22, 13:3–7; 1 Kings 18:38–39, 19:1–ff; 2 Kings 2:11; Isa. 6:1–ff; Ezek. 1:4–2:1; Zech. 1:18–2:2. [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. “More often than not” alludes to the various scriptural contexts in which the recipient does not perceive the angelic encounter to be other-worldly. E.g., Gen. 18:2 notes that Abraham “looked up and saw three men standing near him.” Gen. 18:1 states that “the Lord appeared to Abraham,” which can be read as a narratorial insert framing what follows in the text and becoming a way of discerning a theophany. Although it eventually leads Abraham to recognize an encounter with God, this encounter does not necessarily indicate an initial sense of transcendent experience. Both psychologically and phenomenologically, an encounter with the numinous would produce a visceral response of awe and trembling; instead we see Abraham moved to hospitality. This seems to indicate his sense of the presence of human beings. In contrast, Zechariah responds with reverential awe and trembling, as Gabriel’s appearance in the holy place seems intended to suggest a weighty event. From a phenomenological perspective, that weightiness is perhaps a form of grace that will enable Zechariah to receive the message from God. Consider Skinner on Gen. 18: “This introductory clause simply means that the incident about to be related has the value of a theophany. In what way the narrator conceived that Yahweh was present in the three men—whether He was one of the three, or whether all three were Yahweh in self-manifestation (De.)—we can hardly tell.” John Skinner, [*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*](https://ref.ly/logosres/icc-ge?ref=BibleBHS.Ge18.1&off=25&ctx=hwe+appeared%2c+etc.%5d+~This+introductory+cl), International Critical Commentary (New York: Scribner, 1910), 299. Consider Sailhamer on Gen. 18: “In opening the narrative with the statement that the Lord ‘appeared’ to Abraham, the author leaves no doubt that in some (albeit unexplained) way the three men represented the Lord’s appearance to Abraham. Not all questions are answered by beginning the narrative in this way, however. In fact, such an opening gives rise to several new questions. But opening the narrative with a reference to the Lord’s ‘appearing’ to Abraham provides an important context to guide the reading of the remainder of the chapter. However the details of the story are sorted out, the fact remains that, in sum, the events of the chapter constitute an account of the Lord’s *appearance* to Abraham.” John H. Sailhamer, “Genesis,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, *Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990), 142. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Sinclair B. Ferguson and J. I. Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 484. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. *Religious experience* is the “experience of God or the holy or experiences of other things that require a religious interpretation or explanation. Examples of the former would include mystical awareness of God and experiences of visions and voices in which one becomes aware of God.” C. Stephen Evans, *Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics and Philosophy of Religion* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002), s.v. “religious experience.” [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. *Conversion disorder* according to“DSM–IV–TR, [is] a somatoform disorder in which patients present with one or more symptoms or deficits affecting voluntary motor and sensory functioning that suggest a physical disorder but for which there is instead evidence of psychological involvement. These conversion symptoms are not intentionally produced or feigned and are not under voluntary control. Symptoms can include paralysis, loss of voice, blindness, seizures, [globus pharyngeus](https://dictionary.apa.org/globus-pharyngeus), disturbance in coordination and balance, and loss of pain and touch sensations (see [motor conversion symptoms](https://dictionary.apa.org/motor-conversion-symptoms); [sensory conversion symptoms](https://dictionary.apa.org/sensory-conversion-symptoms)). The formal criteria for the disorder in DSM–5, which refers to it also as functional neurological symptom disorder, primarily emphasize that there must be clear clinical evidence of symptom incompatibility with recognized neurological pathology before a diagnosis can be made. That there may also be psychological involvement in the onset of symptoms, or that stress or trauma of any sort, either psychological or physical, may have etiological relevance, is recognized in DSM–5 as among “associated features” that, if found, support diagnosis. The absence of feigning, however, is no longer a required criterion for diagnosis due to the clinical challenge of reliably discerning its absence.” *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, s.v. “conversion disorder,” accessed January 17, 2022, <https://dictionary.apa.org/conversion-disorder>. [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Ferguson and Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology*, 484. The encounter involves more than the holy as something moral. [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Ferguson and Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology*, 485. [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Ferguson and Packer, *New Dictionary of Theology*, 485. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)
42. *Affect* is “any experience of feeling or emotion, ranging from suffering to elation, from the simplest to the most complex sensations of feeling, and from the most normal to the most pathological emotional reactions. Often described in terms of [positive affect](https://dictionary.apa.org/positive-affect) or [negative affect](https://dictionary.apa.org/negative-affect), both mood and emotion are considered affective states. Along with [cognition](https://dictionary.apa.org/cognition) and [conation](https://dictionary.apa.org/conation), affect is one of the three traditionally identified components of the mind.” *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, s.v. “affect,” accessed January 17, 2022, https://dictionary.apa.org/affect. [↑](#footnote-ref-42)
43. *Emotion regulation* is “the ability of an individual to modulate an emotion or set of emotions. Explicit emotion regulationrequires conscious monitoring, using techniques such as learning to construe situations differently in order to manage them better, changing the target of an emotion (e.g., anger) in a way likely to produce a more positive outcome, and recognizing how different behaviors can be used in the service of a given emotional state. Implicit emotion regulation operates without deliberate monitoring; it modulates the intensity or duration of an emotional response without the need for awareness. Emotion regulation typically increases across the lifespan. Also called emotional regulation.” *APA Dictionar*y of Psychology, s.v. “emotion regulation,” accessed January 17, 2022, <https://dictionary.apa.org/emotion-regulation>. [↑](#footnote-ref-43)
44. Does the text invite the reader to a greater level of self-awareness, God-awareness, and the interplay between the two? Are self-awareness and God-awareness essential for prophetic agents who claim to speak on God’s behalf? Does the text allude to a formative season that includes chastisement and precedes the prophetic agent’s release into prophetic enactment? [↑](#footnote-ref-44)
45. As such, the message is replete with the Israelite tradition and relationship with God and is laden with the overarching promise of joy and gladness. The message is descriptive of John’s relationship to the Lord and his Spirit, the life he will be called to live, the work he will be called to do, the message he will be called to proclaim, and his place in relation to Messiah in redemptive history. All of this coexists with the caveat that his coming is in “the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17). [↑](#footnote-ref-45)
46. Concerning prophetic legitimacy, the Zechariah narrative reveals the reality of human brokenness, fragility, and subjectivity, and the preserving of free moral agency even in the divine encounter. In being apprehended for divine purpose and the eventual exercise of prophetic agency, Zechariah never loses personal autonomy. The spirit of Zechariah is subject to Zechariah (1 Cor. 14:32). [↑](#footnote-ref-46)
47. *Resignation* is “an attitude of surrender to one’s situation or symptoms.” *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, s.v. “resignation,” accessed January 17, 2022, https://dictionary.apa.org/resignation. [↑](#footnote-ref-47)
48. “**κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο**; [is t]he very question asked by Abraham (Gen 15:8): ‘In accordance with what shall I obtain knowledge of this?’ *i.e.* What shall be in harmony with it, so as to be a sign of it? Comp. the cases of Gideon (Judg. 6:36–39) and of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:8), who asked for signs; also of Moses (Exod. 4:2–6) and of Ahaz (Is. 7:11), to whom signs were given unasked. The spirit in which such requests are made may vary much, although the form of request may be the same; and the fact that Zacharias had all these instances to instruct him made his unbelief the less excusable. By his ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι, κ.τ.λ., he almost implies that the Angel must have forgotten the fact.” Plummer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-48)
49. Regarding “ἀγγέλῳ ἀπιστεῖς, καὶ τῷ ἀποστείλαντι (Eus.)[:] The names of two heavenly beings are given us in Scripture, Gabriel (Dan. 8:16, 9:21) and Michael (Dan. 10:13, 21, 12:1; Jude 9; Rev. 12:7); other names were given in the later Jewish tradition. It is one thing to admit that such names are of foreign origin, quite another to assert that the belief which they represent is an importation. Gabriel, the ‘Man of God,’ seems to be the representative of angelic ministry to man; Michael, ‘Who is like God,’ the representative of angelic opposition to Satan. In Scripture Gabriel is the angel of mercy, Michael the angel of judgment. In Jewish legend the reverse is the case proving that the Bible does not borrow Jewish fables. In the Targums Gabriel destroys Sennacherib’s army; in the O.T. he instructs and comforts Daniel. The Rabbis said that Michael flies in one flight, Gabriel in two, Elijah in four, and Death in eight; *i.e.* mercy is swifter than judgment, and judgment is swifter than destruction.” Plummer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-49)
50. Regarding “Ἐγώ εἰμι Γαβριήλ. Gabriel answers his ἐγώ εἰμι with another. ‘Thou art old, and not likely to have children, but I am one whose word is to be believed.’” Plummer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-50)
51. “κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; The very question asked by Abraham (Gen 15:8): ‘In accordance with what shall I obtain knowledge of this?’ *i.e.* What shall be in harmony with it, so as to be a sign of it? Comp. the cases of Gideon (Judg. 6:36–39) and of Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:8), who asked for signs; also of Moses (Exod. 4:2–6) and of Ahaz (Is. 7:11), to whom signs were given unasked. The spirit in which such requests are made may vary much, although the form of request may be the same; and the fact that Zacharias had all these instances to instruct him made his unbelief the less excusable. By his ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι, κ.τ.λ., he almost implies that the Angel must have forgotten the fact.” Plummer, *Gospel according to Luke*, 16. [↑](#footnote-ref-51)
52. This “pedagogic hardship” is convictive and signifies a lesson to be learned. Johnson, *Gospel of Luke*, 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-52)
53. Jon Mills, “Linguistic Relativity and Linguistic Determinism: Idiom in 20th Century Cornish” (paper presented at the New Directions in Celtic Studies Conference, Newquay, UK, November 2000), 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-53)
54. It is the language they shared with one another and spoken liturgically to God in prayer. [↑](#footnote-ref-54)
55. Mills*. Linguistic Relativity*,1. [↑](#footnote-ref-55)
56. Ronald A. Simkins, “Worldview,” in Freedman, Myers, and Beck, 1387. “μετάνοια -ας, ἡ; (*metanoia*), n. *repentance*. LTW μετάνοια (Repentance). Noun Usage- 1.repentance ⇔ reconsideration — a change of self (heart and mind) that abandons former dispositions and results in a new self, new behavior, and regret over former behavior and dispositions.” Rick Brannan, ed., [*Lexham Research Lexicon of the Greek New Testament*](https://ref.ly/logosres/fbgntlex?hw=%CE%BC%CE%B5%CF%84%CE%AC%CE%BD%CE%BF%CE%B9%CE%B1), Lexham Research Lexicons (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2020), s.v. “μετάνοια -ας, ἡns.” [↑](#footnote-ref-56)
57. “Rogers’ Humanistic Theory of Personality,” Boundless, accessed January 18, 2022, https://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/personality-16/humanistic-perspectives-on-personality-78/rogers-humanistic-theory-of-personality-308-12843/index.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-57)
58. Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist’s View of Psychotherapy* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), chap. 11, Kindle. [↑](#footnote-ref-58)
59. Rogers, *Becoming a Person*, chap. 6. [↑](#footnote-ref-59)
60. Apprehension and acceptance are among the criteria for prophetic legitimacy. [↑](#footnote-ref-60)
61. “Rogers’ Humanistic Theory,” [https://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/psychology/ textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/personality-16/humanistic-perspectives-on-personality-78/rogers-humanistic-theory-of-personality-308-12843/index.html](https://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/psychology/%20textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/personality-16/humanistic-perspectives-on-personality-78/rogers-humanistic-theory-of-personality-308-12843/index.html). [↑](#footnote-ref-61)
62. *Subjective reality* is “all that we are aware of, including objects and people as well as our behaviors, thoughts, images, and ideas.” “Rogers’ Humanistic Theory,” https://oer2go.org/mods/en-boundless/www.boundless.com/psychology/textbooks/boundless-psychology-textbook/personality-16/humanistic-perspectives-on-personality-78/rogers-humanistic-theory-of-personality-308-12843/index.html. [↑](#footnote-ref-62)
63. Consider Acts 15:2 with Paul and Barnabas and Acts 10:13–16, when Peter resists Jesus in relation to ethnic privilege. [↑](#footnote-ref-63)
64. “33.215 εὐαγγελίζω: [is] to communicate good news concerning something (in the NT a particular reference to the gospel message about Jesus)—‘to tell the good news, to announce the gospel.’ ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς ταύτης εὐηγγελίσατο αὐτῷ τὸν Ἰησοῦν ‘starting from this very passage of Scripture, he told him the good news about Jesus’ Ac 8:35; ἀπεστάλην λαλῆσαι πρὸς σὲ καὶ εὐαγγελίσασθαι σοι ταῦτα ‘I have been sent to speak to you and tell you this good news’ Lk 1:19. In Lk 1:19, however, the reference is to the birth of John the Baptist.” Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “εὐαγγελίζ.” [↑](#footnote-ref-64)
65. James E. Loder, *The Transforming Moment*, 2nd ed. (Colorado Springs, CO: Helmers & Howard, 1989), 13. “Speaking of ‘conviction’ draws on judicial imagery and declares that one is thoroughly convinced; the case is incontestable; the conviction will stand as part of a permanent record.” Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 13. [↑](#footnote-ref-65)
66. Loder, *Transforming Moment*, 14. The convicting experience implies the overriding of resistant notions. [↑](#footnote-ref-66)
67. Carroll, “God’s Righteousness,” Logos Bible Software 9. God’s “revealed will and his actions” are “internally coherent” and “never in contradiction with each other.” Carroll, “God’s Righteousness,” Logos Bible Software 9. Given that coherence, his incommunicable attributes—his “eternality, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, [and] holiness”—are integrally coherent with his “communicable” attributes of “goodness, love, mercy, etc.” [↑](#footnote-ref-67)
68. Carroll, “God’s Righteousness,” Logos Bible Software 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-68)
69. Carroll, “God’s Righteousness,” Logos Bible Software 9. [↑](#footnote-ref-69)
70. Absent this work, Zechariah’s subjectivity would have further challenged the faithful transmission of prophetic utterance. [↑](#footnote-ref-70)
71. D. Smith, “Personal Unconscious,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*, ed. David G. Benner and Peter C. Hill, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999), 851. The unconscious, “in psychoanalytic theory, [is] the region of the psyche containing memories, emotional conflicts, wishes, and repressed impulses that are not directly accessible to awareness but that have dynamic effects on thought and behavior. Sigmund Freud sometimes used the term dynamic unconscious to distinguish this concept from that which is descriptively unconscious but “static” and with little psychological significance.” *APA Dictionary of Psychology*, s.v. “unconscious,” accessed January 26, 2022, <https://dictionary.apa.org/unconscious>. “A central aspect of the personal unconscious is the shadow, which represents the negative side of personality, the sum of all the unpleasant qualities or traits an individual wishes to hide. Along with those characteristics that the person refuses to acknowledge are insufficiently developed functions. The personal unconscious is thought to lie less deeply in the realm of psychic unconscious than does the collective unconscious. Therefore the contents can be brought into consciousness more easily than can the primordial messages contained in the archetypes. Projection is the chief vehicle for tapping the shadow. Since the data of the shadow are uniquely personal in nature, the projections will reflect themes that represent the person. Although the contents of the personal unconscious, particularly the shadow, are considered to be negative by the individual, this body of knowledge about the person is invaluable. It is only after these parts of personality are integrated with the more positive qualities that the individual can become a whole person.” Smith, “Personal Unconscious,” 851. [↑](#footnote-ref-71)
72. Donald Wallenfang, *Dialectical Anatomy of the Eucharist: An Étude in Phenomenology* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017), 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-72)
73. Wallenfang and Marion, *Dialectical Anatomy*, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-73)
74. Wallenfang and Marion, *Dialectical Anatomy*, 52. [↑](#footnote-ref-74)