

'tis the Season: Sermon Notes

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LUKE 1:5–38

Promise is a key concept in understanding Advent. We are all familiar with broken promises; indeed, it sometimes seems that broken promises are the only promises there are. This is a sign of the old age. The gospel announces the promise of God, which has an entirely different character from the human promises because it is anchored in the very nature of the righteous God with whom 'all things are possible' (Matt. 19:26). Therefore, the principle defining characteristic of the Christian community, along with faith and love, is hope (1 Cor. 13:13).

Fleming Rutledge, Advent, 22

THE EXAMPLE OF ZECHARIAH

⁵In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. ⁶And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.

⁸Now while he was serving as priest before God when his division was on duty, ⁹according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And the whole multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of incense. ¹¹And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. ¹³But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. ¹⁴And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great before the Lord. And he must not drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. ¹⁶And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God, ¹⁷and he will 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 for the Lord a people prepared."

¹⁸And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." ¹⁹And the angel answered him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. ²⁰And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." ²¹And the people were waiting for Zechariah, and they were wondering at his delay in the temple. ²²And when he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the temple. And he kept making signs to them and remained mute. ²³And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home.

²⁴After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, ²⁵"Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people."

THE SETTING (v. 5-7)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT (v. 8-17)

- The Name—John (*God has been gracious*)
- The Character
 - "Great before the Lord"
 - "He must not drink wine or strong drink"—Special dedication to the Lord
 - "He will be filled with the Holy Spirit"—Presence & power of God
- The Mission
 - Prophet
 - Turn man back to God—Repentance
 - Prepare the way for the Messiah
 - Elijah—OT Prophet

⁵See, I will send the prophet Elijah to you before that great and dreadful day of the Lord comes. ⁶He will turn the hearts of the parents to their children, and the hearts of the children to their parents; or else I will come and strike the land with total destruction

Malachi 4:5-6

THE RESPONSE (v. 18-23)

The fact that Zechariah doubted the angel's word meant he was already at risk. What God promised, he will perform—only he will do it in his time and sometimes in surprising ways.

Darrell Bock, *Luke*, 55

- Zechariah doubted God's faithfulness

THE FULFILLMENT (v. 24-25)

THE EXAMPLE OF MARY

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹But she was greatly troubled

at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

³⁵And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Luke 1:26–38

THE SETTING (v. 26–27)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT (v. 28–33)

- The Name – Jesus (*The Lord Saves*)
- The Character
 - "He will be great"—unqualified greatness
 - "He will be called the Son of the Most High"
 - "The Lord God will give to him the throne of his Father David"
- The Mission
 - Savior
 - King

¹¹Moreover, the LORD declares to you that the LORD will make you a house.

¹²When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

1 Samuel 7:11b–13

THE RESPONSE (v. 34–37)

- "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" (v. 34)
- THE POINT: "For nothing will be impossible with God" (v. 37)

- Mary trusts God's faithfulness

THE FULFILLMENT (v. 38)

Behind the availability to service is an attitude that trusts God for direction and enablement.

Darrell Bock, Luke, 60

²¹And Jesus asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, "From childhood. ²²And it has often cast him into fire and into water, to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us."²³And Jesus said to him, "If you can! All things are possible for one who believes."²⁴Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, "I believe; help my unbelief!"

Mark 9:21-24

GOD IS FAITHFUL TO KEEP HIS PROMISES

- God was faithful to give Zechariah & Elizabeth a son
- God was faithful to give Mary a son
- God was faithful to send us a Savior
- God will be faithful to send us a King
- God will be faithful to you!

Increase our faith to trust a faithful God.