

God Has Not Forgotten

Luke 1:5-17 Sunday AM, May 26, 2024

Prelude – Scripture: Luke 1:5-17 (NASB95) In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah; and he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both advanced in years. 8 Now it happened that while he was performing his priestly service before God in the appointed order of his division, 9 according to the custom of the priestly office, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense. 10 And the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of the incense offering. 11 And an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. 12 Zacharias was troubled when he saw the angel, and fear gripped him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 “You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. 15 “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; and he will drink no wine or liquor, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother’s womb. 16 “And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God. 17 “It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Last week, Luke began with an explanation. **Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, 2 just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order,** Because of their great importance, real events have been recorded, investigated, and compiled. Luke investigated so that the prominent man, **Theophilus . . . might know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.** Whether it was so Theophilus might believe, grow, or be kept from falling away from what he had been taught, we ALL benefit from these eyewitness accounts of Jesus—God’s final word and confirmation of His promises to deliver His people from their sins and reconcile them to Himself. These accounts show us God is with us and for us. Praise God for His gift of these God-breathed words. Praise God for Jesus, the Word of God Incarnate.

*Hymn #269: O Word of God Incarnate

And how do we show honor to the God of the Word? By responding to God according to His Word in worship, prayer, and obedience. And such a response characterized Zacharias and his wife Elizabeth. **6 They were both righteous in the sight of God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord.** Today, Zacharias comes to the temple—chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense **while the whole multitude of the people were in prayer outside at the hour of incense offering.** What reverence before God. What intention and decorum in their worship. What humility as they prayed. What an example for us. Do you come before God habitually? Do you come with your doubts and fears, with your heavy hearts? Zacharias and Elizabeth felt the weight of their childlessness—yet continued under God with the work of worship and praise. Child of God, come before God with ALL of it. Behold the mercies of our God.

*Hymn (Powerpoint): Approach My Soul the Mercy Seat

*Pastoral Prayer: Pastor Jahn **Choir:** Blessed Are the Ones Who Wait for You

Scripture: Malachi 3:1-4:6 (NASB95) “Behold, I am going to send My messenger, and he will clear the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple; and the messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight, behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts. 2 “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like fullers’ soap. 3 “He will sit as a smelter and purifier of silver, and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver, so that they may present to the LORD offerings in righteousness. 4 “Then the offering of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old and as in former years. 5 “Then I will draw near to you for judgment; and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those who swear falsely, and against those who oppress the wage earner in his wages, the widow and the orphan, and those who turn aside the alien and do not fear Me,” says the LORD of hosts. 6 “For I, the LORD, do not change; therefore you, O sons of Jacob, are not consumed. 7 “From the days of your fathers you have turned aside from My statutes and have not kept them. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. “But you say, ‘How shall we return?’ 8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you say, ‘How have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. 9 “You are cursed with a curse, for you are robbing Me, the whole nation of you! 10 “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house, and test Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until it overflows. 11 “Then I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of the ground; nor will your vine in the field cast its grapes,” says the LORD of hosts. 12 “All the nations will call you blessed, for you shall be a delightful land,” says the LORD of hosts. 13 “Your words have been arrogant against Me,” says the LORD. “Yet you say, ‘What have we spoken against You?’ 14 “You have said, ‘It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked in mourning before the LORD of hosts?’ 15 “So now we call the arrogant blessed; not only are the doers of wickedness built up but they also test God and escape.” 16 Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who esteem His name. 17 “They will be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “on the day that I prepare My own possession, and I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him.” 18 So you will again distinguish between the righteous and the wicked, between one who serves God and one who does not serve Him. 1 “For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze,” says the LORD of hosts, “so that it will leave them neither root nor branch.” 2 “But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. 3 “You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing,” says the LORD of hosts. 4 “Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. 5 “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. 6 “He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.” how long O Lord—wait for the consolation of Israel

Offering: *Doxology:

And in the middle of honoring God according to accustomed ritual, Zacharias meets the angel of the Lord. “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John. 14 “You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth. Answered request, but in God’s timing, for God’s purposes, and for God’s mission. **15 “For he will be great in the sight of the Lord; 16 “And he will turn many of the sons of Israel back to the Lord their God.** Can you gaze heavenward with the proper humility so that when heaven breaks through and there is an answer, you see it? Zacharias hears it, but as we will hear next week, struggles to believe it. You say, I would too. And what do we both miss? The goodness of God found in His trustworthy word. Church praise God for His mercies to us!

*Hymn (Powerpoint): God is For Us

The Lord comes—for those who wait—Did you hear the choir number? Blessed Are the Ones Who Wait for You—speaking of the long wait of the people of God through deserved judgment to the undeserved good promises of God for them leading to the ultimate promise to bring those who believe His word to live with Him under His righteous rule forever. There is no coming of God without preparation, so listen as Pastor preaches for John the Baptist’s preparatory work. 17 “It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, TO TURN THE HEARTS OF THE FATHERS BACK TO THE CHILDREN, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous, so as to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” As Pastor Jahn prepares to look at this familiar passage, pray for a heart to trust, to live under His righteous rule until He comes—Lord, quiet my heart, change me, help me live for heaven’s treasure.

*Hymn #347: Be Still My Soul

Message: God Has Not Forgotten Luke 1:5-17 *Hymn #280 (Red): Moment by Moment *Prayer