



## **Zechariah's Story**

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**Scripture:** Luke 1:5–27, Genesis 12:2–3

**Idea:** Wait faithfully.

### **Introduction**

#### ***Turn to Luke 1.***

1. Remember enduring the days before Christmas morning? It was the anticipation that made Christmas, Christmas.
2. And the assurance that Christmas was, in fact, going to arrive, along with Santa, shaped your behavior.

*How many searched for the presents your parents got you? Found 'em? Played with 'em? Broke 'em? Still remember sitting in the attic freezing playing my guitar.*

3. That same dynamic is what made the first Christmas so extraordinary. Men and women had been waiting for the birth of a messiah for generations with no assurance that they would live to see the day. Most did not.
4. In every generation, a remnant of Jews would live as if Messiah would one day come. They allowed the promise of a messiah to shape their behavior when there seemed to be no personal advantage in doing so.
5. If you ever find yourself wondering, “Is all this for real? Is God active in the world? Am I kidding myself, believing a myth? Is what I’m giving up by being a follower of Jesus worthwhile? Does God care? . . .

***Then the Christmas story is your story.***

*Luke introduces the characters of Christmas like this . . .*

#### **Luke 1:5–27 [TNIV]**

<sup>5</sup> In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron.

*[Double priest]*

*[Herod was the Roman-appointed KING of the Jews. He murdered two of his wives and three of his sons. He ordered the murder of the babies in Bethlehem. Not a descendant of David. Jews never accepted him as king.]*

<sup>6</sup> Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord’s commands and decrees blamelessly.

*[Really? Why? The whole idea of obeying commands and decrees is because God would bless the nation. Hadn’t seen any of that in about 700 years. Zechariah and Elizabeth, How’s that working out?]*