

FINDING PEACE IN HIS PURPOSE
BIG IDEA: God used faithful people to achieve His purpose of redemption through Jesus.
DATE: Sunday, December 6, 2026
SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:5-38 (CSB)

OPENING QUESTION

What's your favorite "unexpected" detail in the story of Jesus' birth? In another story from Scripture? *Why do you think God chooses to work in ways that surprise us? What's one unexpected way God has worked in your life lately?*

THE SETTING

Luke wrote his Gospel to give "an orderly account" of how God kept His promise to send a Deliverer who saves people from their sins. Throughout the book, he presents Jesus as that Deliverer—the perfect human and Savior. This opening chapter pairs two birth announcements: one to Zechariah, a respected priest in Jerusalem's temple, and one to Mary, a humble girl in a Galilean village. Together they show that Jesus both continues the prophetic tradition and is uniquely the Messiah and Son of God. Zechariah and Elizabeth teach us to bring both our questions and our rejoicing to God, and Mary shows that God works through anyone willing, however unassuming.

SCRIPTURE

Luke 1:5-38 (CSB)

5 In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest of Abijah's division named Zechariah. His
wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 Both were righteous in
God's sight, living without blame according to all the commands and requirements of the Lord.
7 But they had no children because Elizabeth could not conceive, and both of them were well
along in years.

8 When his division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, 9 it happened that he
was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord
and burn incense. 10 At the hour of incense the whole assembly of the people was praying
outside. 11 An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense.
12 When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified and overcome with fear. 13 But the angel said to him,

"Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. [14]There will be joy and delight for you, and many will rejoice at his birth. [15]For he will be great in the sight of the Lod and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb. [16]He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. [17]And he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to make ready for the Lord a prepared people."

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

[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 has seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was making signs to them and remained speechless. [23]When the days of his ministry were completed, he went back home. [24]Afther these days his wife Elizabeth conceived and kept herself in seclusion for five months. She said, [25]"The Lord has done this for me. He has looked with favor in these days to take away my disgrace among the people."

BIBLE STUDY

READ: LUKE 1:5-25

What characteristics of Zechariah and Elizabeth made them good candidates for a special assignment from God?

What do you do when your prayers go unanswered? How is your relationship with God affected?

Why did Zechariah doubt the angel's word that he would have a son (v. 18)? How can you relate to his reaction? What was the angel's response?

What parallels do you see between these verses predicting Jesus' birth and the previous set of verses predicting John the Baptist's birth?

In what ways do you sometimes take God's grace for granted? What do our day-to-day lives reveal about our appreciation for God's grace?

How did Mary's reaction to the angel's news compare with Zechariah's reaction in Luke 1:11-18? What are a few key differences between *questioning* God (as Zechariah did) and *asking* questions of Him (like Mary)?

APPLICATION

The angel told Mary, "Nothing is impossible with God." What feels impossible about your life right now? When God moves in unexpected ways we too can find peace in His purpose.