**Advent Devotional December 20, 2026**

**Scripture**

**Luke 1:5–25**

*5 In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly order of Abijah. His wife was descended from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. 6 Both of them were righteous before God, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and regulations of the Lord. 7 But they had no children because Elizabeth was barren, and both were getting on in years.*

*8 Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. 10 Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. 11 Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. 13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him 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. He must never drink wine or strong drink; even before his birth he will be filled with the Holy Spirit. 16 He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. 17 With the spirit and power of Elijah he will go before him, to turn the hearts of parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." 18 Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I know that this will happen? For I am an old man, and my wife is getting on in years." 19 The angel replied, "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. 20 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."*

*21 Meanwhile the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering at his delay in the sanctuary. 22 When he did come out, he was unable to speak to them, and they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He kept motioning to them and remained unable to speak. 23 When his time of service was ended, he returned to his home.*

*24 After those days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she remained in seclusion. She said, 25 "This is what the Lord has done for me in this time, when he looked favorably on me and took away the disgrace I have endured among my people."*

**Devotion**

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There are seasons in our lives when God seems quiet. We pray, but the answer does not come. We wait for healing, restoration, direction, or simply some sort of indication that God has heard us. Days become months. Months turn into years. Eventually, we may begin to wonder if heaven has gone silent.

Luke 1:5-25 introduces us to a couple who knew something about waiting. Zechariah and Elizabeth were described as righteous before God. They were faithful people who lived according to His commands. Though righteous, Zechariah and Elizabeth carried the sorrow of not being able to conceive a child. Both advanced in years, what they hoped for seemed impossible.

Their story reminds us of a truth that we often forget: *faithfulness does not exempt us from seasons of disappointment.*

Sometimes we assume that if we are doing what is right, then life should become easier. Yet Scripture tells us that even when Zechariah and Elizabeth were faithful, served in the temple, and loved God, their personal prayer remained unanswered for years. Their story is not merely about an elderly couple finally receiving a child. It is about what happens when God appears to be silent. Their story reminds us that God can be working long before we recognize what he is doing.

Even when things feel impossible right now, God may be working quietly. We must learn to sit still and listen for his whisper. Just as God made a way for this couple to have a child, God has prepared us to bear freedom through Jesus Christ.

When God seems silent, let us not assume he is absent. Let us trust that he is working, even when we cannot yet see it. Let us wait with faith, listen with patience, and act according to his commands.

The same God who heard Zechariah and Elizabeth still hears you today.

**Prayer**

Gracious and merciful Father, prepare my heart to trust You, like Zechariah and Elizabeth. Help me continue believing when I cannot see the answer. I surrender my doubts, struggles, and fears to You. Holy Spirit, remind me that nothing is impossible with You. Help me walk with hope, peace, and faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.