

ROCKY RIVER CHURCH
HIDDEN HOPE: WHEN GOD SEEMS SILENT
ADVENT: WEEK #1 – CANDLE OF HOPE
HIDDEN CHRISTMAS – NOVEMBER 30, 2025
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LUKE 1:5-15 (NIV)

⁵In 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. ⁶Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. ⁷But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old.

⁸Once when Zechariah's division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, ⁹he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to go into the temple of the Lord and burn incense. ¹⁰And when the time for the burning of incense came, all the assembled worshipers were praying outside.

¹¹Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. ¹²When Zechariah saw him, he was startled and was gripped with fear. ¹³But the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John. ¹⁴He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, ¹⁵for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he is born. ¹⁶He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. ¹⁷And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

¹⁸Zechariah asked the angel, "How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years."

¹⁹The angel said to him, "I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I have been sent to speak to you and to tell you this good news. ²⁰And now you will be silent and not able to speak until the day this happens, because you did not believe my words, which will come true at their appointed time."

²¹Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah and wondering why he stayed so long in the temple.

²²When he came out, he could not speak to them. They realized he had seen a vision in the temple, for he kept making signs to them but remained unable to speak.

²³When his time of service was completed, he returned home. ²⁴After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. ²⁵"The Lord has done this for me," she said. "In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people."

Advent means "arrival" – the arrival of someone very important.

FIVE THINGS TO REMEMBER WHENEVER GOD SEEMS SILENT:

#1. Remember that God sees you even when life seems _____.

“Both of them were righteous in the sight of God... But they were childless...”

-Luke 1:6, 7

#2. Remember that works behind the scenes _____.

“Once when Zechariah’s division was on duty... he was chosen by lot to go into the temple...”

-Luke 1:8, 9

#3. Remember that God hears the prayers we have _____.

“Do not be afraid... Your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son...”

-Luke 1:13

#4. Remember that God’s promises _____.

“How can I be sure of this? I am an old man and my wife is well along in years.”

-Luke 1:18

#5. Remember that God fulfills His Word and does His will, _____

_____.

“The Lord has done this for me... In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.” -Luke 1:25



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