

DEC 24TH | THE

Jesus

CANDLE



Christmas EVE, 2024

The **REST** of the **STORY**

with Pastor Mark Sterlace



LIVESTREAM

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Five Tests of Our Faith - Luke 1:57-80

57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son. 58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown His great mercy toward her, and they were rejoicing with her. 59 It happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child [as required by the Law], and they intended to name him Zacharias, after his father; 60 but his mother answered,



“No indeed; instead he will be called John.”
61 And they said to her, “None of your
relatives is called by that name.” 62 Then
they made signs to his father, as to what he
wanted him called. 63 And he asked for a
writing tablet and wrote as follows, “His
name is John.” And they were all astonished.
64 At once Zacharias’ mouth was opened and
his tongue freed, and he began speaking,
praising and blessing and thanking God.
65 Then fear came on all their neighbors;



and all these things were discussed throughout the hill country of Judea. 66 All who heard these things kept them in mind, saying, “What then will this little boy turn out to be?” For the hand of the Lord was certainly with him [to bring about his birth].

Zacharias' Prophecy

67 Now Zacharias his father was filled with the Holy Spirit and empowered by Him, and he prophesied, saying, 68 “Blessed (praised, glorified) be the Lord, the God of Israel,



Because He has visited us and brought redemption to His people, 69 And He has raised up a [a]horn of salvation [a mighty and valiant Savior] for us in the house of David His servant—70 Just as He promised by the mouth of His holy prophets from the most ancient times—71 Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us; 72 To show mercy [as He promised] to our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant [the promised blessing],



Because He has visited us and brought redemption to His people, 69 And He has raised up a [a]horn of salvation [a mighty and valiant Savior] for us in the house of David His servant—70 Just as He promised by the mouth of His holy prophets from the most ancient times—71 Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us; 72 To show mercy [as He promised] to our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant [the promised blessing],




73 The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness [being set apart] and righteousness [being upright] before Him all our days. 76 “And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; For you will go on before the Lord (the Messiah) to prepare His ways; 77 To give His people the knowledge of salvation by the forgiveness of their sins,



78 Because of the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Sunrise (the Messiah) from
on high will dawn and visit us, 79 To shine
upon those who sit in darkness and in the
shadow of death, To guide our feet [in a
straight line] into the way of peace and
serenity.” 80 The child continued to grow
and to become strong in spirit, and he lived
in the deserts until the day of his public
appearance to Israel [as John the Baptist,
the forerunner of the Messiah].





**5 AFFIRMATIONS FROM
Zacharias, 5 QUESTIONS
FOR US TODAY:**

1. “I believe in God’s redemption and salvation!” (vs. 68-69)

- “Blessed (praised, glorified) be the Lord, the God of Israel, Because He has visited us and brought redemption to His people, And He has raised up a [a]horn of salvation [a mighty and valiant Savior] for us in the house of David His servant—



**What do you believe
about your eternity?**




2. “I believe in God’s faithfulness to Israel!” (vs. 70-72)

“Just as He promised by the mouth of His holy prophets from the most ancient times –71 Salvation from our enemies, And from the hand of all who hate us; 72 To show mercy [as He promised] to our fathers, And to remember His holy covenant [the promised blessing]”



**What do you believe
for your nation?**



**“Righteousness exalteth
a nation: but sin is a
reproach to any people.”**

Proverbs 14:34

3. “I believe in the trustworthiness of God’s promises!” (vs. 73-75)


“The oath which He swore to Abraham our father, 74 To grant us that we, being rescued from the hand of our enemies, Might serve Him without fear, 75 In holiness [being set apart] and righteousness [being upright] before Him all our days.”



**What do you believe about
the promises of God?**

4. Zacharias: “I believe in the future greatness of my son!” (vs. 76-77)

“And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; For you will go on before the Lord (the Messiah) to prepare His ways; 77 To give His people the knowledge of salvation By the forgiveness of their sins,”



**What do you believe about
the next generation?**

**5. Zacharias: “I believe in the coming
Messiah!” (vs. 78-79)**

**“Because of the tender mercy of our God,
With which the Sunrise (the Messiah) from
on high will dawn and visit us, To shine upon
those who sit in darkness and in the shadow
of death, To guide our feet [in a straight line]
into the way of peace and serenity.”**



**What do you believe
about Jesus?**





**GOD'S MESSAGE
TO THE WORLD...**





1. God's message is for real people living real life.





2. God's message for the world is good news.



3. God's message for the world demands a decision.



**4. God's message
changes lives forever.**



Their newfound faith prompted them to do at least two things:

- A. Tell others about Jesus.
- B. Offer praise to God.





Merry
Christmas

