

# LUKE IN ADVENT

For our next two Sundays we are looking at how people dealt with the coming of Jesus. What were they looking for and what did they expect? Here are just a few questions to help you reflect on the coming of Jesus.



## Elizabeth and Zechariah

### Luke 1 : 5 to 25

1. Take time to reflect on this story – maybe read it through together. Reflect on how Zechariah dealt with an extraordinary event in his life. The couple had been childless for so long and here, in later years, comes the promise of a son. He knew that was unlikely at his age so he was caught between the promise of God which he wanted to believe and the reality that had faced them for years.  
**How well do you think he handled it?**
2. The priestly order at the time of Jesus was less than perfect. Jesus often took them on because they reacted badly to his teaching. Both Zechariah and Elizabeth were from the priestly line yet were known as godly and obedient.  
**How hard is it to stay close to God when the group around you are being disobedient?**
3. Zechariah was clearly terrified by the arrival of the angel.  
**Why was that? Because it was unusual, the mere sight of Gabriel was terrifying or because nobody had experienced such a thing for centuries?**
4. This priestly couple must have prayed to God for the gift of a child for all of their adult lives. Until this point this remained an unanswered prayer.  
**How do you cope with long term unanswered prayer?**

5. It all happens. Elizabeth falls pregnant and John is born. Despite pressure (v 59) this godly couple name him as they had been instructed to by Gabriel. (v 13). Zechariah writes his name on a tablet (v 63). As soon as he writes the name, his tongue is released.  
**Try to read through what follows (v 67 to 80) – it's come to be known as the Benedictus and is the outpouring of a man filled with the Holy Spirit.**  
**When God blesses, do we sometimes forget to praise him for his goodness?**
  6. Spend some time in prayer asking God that this Christmas time will be filled with the wonder of God's wonderful intervention in human history that each of us might be saved.  
**Pray that many will hear this good news of great joy.**
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## **No 2 - Mary and Joseph**

### **Luke 1 : 26 to 38**

1. Mary and Joseph are truly incredible. A young couple in love promised to each other and looking forward to getting married – their whole life spread out before them and they are probably just a little excited about the future !!!  
**Reflect a little while on what their conversations would have been like after the angel's visit to Mary and after the angel's visit to Joseph and how those talks differed.**
2. Mary's reaction to the angel's words was confused. She didn't know the meaning of his words and it troubled her. Mary was poor, young and female – all that was against her in 1<sup>st</sup> century culture. Yet God could use her in a miraculous way.  
**Do we sometimes select the people we think God can most likely use rather than letting God choose who he uses?**  
**Have you any experience of God using unlikely people?**
3. Mary was clearly confused by how things were going to work out. No sex – yet pregnant. Betrothed but likely to be dumped. Likely to be the subject of gossip and ridicule.  
**How hard is it to trust God when so many things appear to be stacked against you?**
4. Mary was given the good news of the hope of the world. In her state she can be forgiven for asking 'how can this be?'.  
**Is it sometimes hard to believe that Jesus is the hope of the world?**  
**How can we get better at trusting God for our own futures?**
5. It is clear from the text that God CHOSE Mary. This was not God cruising around his people and making a random choice.  
**Is it difficult to believe that God has chosen us for works of service – and his choice is specific and fits our gift mix.**
6. Mary, Elizabeth, Joseph and Zechariah all started out with fear and doubt? But they trusted God and were blessed and became a blessing to others.  
**Let's pray, that whatever God leads us into, we will trust him for what's to come.**