



Heroes & Villains Series, No. 45: Zechariah and Elizabeth, Luke 1
Mike Halpin ~ January 12, 2020

Intro— Is God ripping us off?

Winding down the *Heroes & Villains* series in 2020:

- 22 lessons in the next 8 months
- 15 heroes & 7 villains

Main point— *Sometimes faithfulness in the image of Christ means quiet, daily faithfulness without the benefit of seeing our hopes and dreams fulfilled.*

Timeline—



Milestones during the "400 silent years"

- Pharisees develop as a conservative, popular level movement
- Israel under constant strain from Ptolemies/Egypt to the south and Syria/Seleucids to the north.
- 4th-3rd centuries BC Jews flee to Egypt; the Hebrew OT is translated to Greek for these Greek speaking Jews.
- 2nd century BC Antiochus Epiphanes forbids circumcision and the Jewish Scriptures in Israel and desecrates the temple. The Maccabee family leads a revolt, defeating the Syrians and restoring Temple worship. The Feast of Lights/Hanukah commemorates renewed light in the Temple.
- For about one hundred years Israel enjoys autonomy again.
- 63 BC Roman general Pompey takes over Israel after helping the Pharisee party defeat the Sadducees
- 40 BC Herod, nominally Jewish in religion but an Edomite by birth, is made king of Israel by Roman senate.
- 27 BC Julius Caesar's adopted son Octavian made Rome's first King/Caesar, and re named Augustus.

Text: Luke 1:5-25

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I. A Life of Disappointment—

V. 7, 18 “they were both advanced in years”... I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.

V. 13 ... your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son....

Zack & Liz had lived into their old age without that which had been so important to them.

What kind of hopes are we living with that remain unfulfilled?

- _____
- _____
- _____

Liz & Zach also live with a sense of shame, v. 25

II. A Life of Faithfulness—

V 6 they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.

What did faithfulness in Zach & Liz’s lives look like? We can imagine....

Zechariah and Elizabeth are better models of faithfulness for most of us than Moses or Joshua, King David or the prophet Daniel.

III. God is Worthy of our Lives—

Most of us will be challenged to deny God the faithfulness he’s due because he’s given us something we didn’t want, or he’s withheld something we desired greatly.

Paul David Tripp: ... *What has caused the ministry to become hard and burdensome is disappointment and anger at God.*

Zach & Liz must have known and lived in light of key truths...

- Psalm 103:2-5
- Deuteronomy 6:4
- Psalm 96:5
- Job 13:15; 23:10

What hope do we need to give to God? _____

What desire has become an idol in our life? _____

What truth about God and his character do we need to meditate on? _____

Facing another day, with ordinary callings to ordinary people all around us is much more difficult than chasing my own dreams that I have envisioned for the grand story of my life. Michael Horton, Ordinary: Sustainable Faith in a Radical, Restless World