

1:5 There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the division of Abijah. His wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

1:6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

1:7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.

1:8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,

1:9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into the temple of the Lord.

1:10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

1:11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

1:12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

1:13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

1:14 "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

1:15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

1:16 "And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

1:17 "He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

1:18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years."

1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

1:20 "But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

1:21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple.

1:22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

1:23 And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his own house.

1:24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months, saying,

1:25 "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my

reproach among people."

From today's sermon

Advent is about to begin.

The importance of perseverance is mentioned in Hebrews 10:36, which reads, "Forgive, and be patient; for this is the will of God, that you may do his will and receive what he has promised. Hebrews 10:36 says, "For patience is necessary to do God's will and to receive what He has promised.

Hebrews 10:36 says, "My brethren. When you are going through trials, consider them as a blessing, for you know that you have faith. For as you know, it is the testing of faith that produces perseverance."

The more our faith is tested, the more our faith is strengthened, and the more we are put through phases where, no matter how difficult the situation, no matter how much we are trampled on, no matter how much we cry, no matter how stormy the situation is where the light of hope is drowned out, our faith is not lost and we can persevere because we have faith, Our faith and our perseverance will increase. What we cannot do without are faith and hope. We believe and hope because of God's love that is given to us and poured out upon us.

When Zacharias heard the news of his wife's conception, he said, "How can I find this out, when I am old and she is old? He could only see things from his own side.

Things had come to a point far beyond human understanding. His wife Elisabeth danced with joy, saying, "The Lord has now caught my eye in this way. The good news of the Lord is fulfilled.

Good morning everyone.

Yesterday morning there was an untimely snowfall, and I heard that there was 10 centimeters of snow in Koya. Some of you may have hurriedly changed your winter tires. We were surprised to hear that it was going to be a mild winter, but it seems that the warm weather will return from now on.

We are about to enter the season of Advent.

We add a candle to the candle each week for a month before Christmas, and when we reach four candles, we look forward to the time of the Lord's Nativity.

Regarding the fact that we do not celebrate the time of Christmas right away, but wait for it

every week, every day for a month, and finally celebrate it, I thought that we do it that way because Christmas, the Nativity of the Lord, is a joyous occasion, so waiting for it is also joyous. I think that is the reason, but I have come to think that there is another way of thinking that this "waiting" period has great significance, so we impose this "waiting" on ourselves every year.

There was a couple, Zacharias and Elisabeth.

5 In the reign of Herod, king of Judea, there was a man named Zacharias, a priest of the house of Abijah, whose name was Zacharias. And his wife was one of the daughters of the house of Aaron, whose name was Elisabeth.

6 Both of them were righteous before God, and had done all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord without fault.

7 But they were barren, because Elisabeth was a barren woman; and they were both old.

They both came from venerable origins, were righteous before God, and had all done the Lord's commandments and ordinances without fault, and yet, "by the way". And yet, "by the way. This is how it happens.

After many years of prayer, both of them are already gone. They had "already" passed the time, and both of them were already old.

They were both righteous people before God, but "however," their prayers went unanswered, and they were "already" old.

This incomprehensible, blank space of God. A place where the meaning of what is meant cannot be measured. A place where we can't get a conclusion no matter how much we think about it. What is God thinking? Why does God ignore us? Is God indifferent? How can God not answer our prayers? Many such reflections, worries, and doubts swirled in my mind for a long, long time.

8 Now Zacharias, when he was on duty and performing his priestly duties before God, was in the presence of God,

9 And he cast lots according to the custom of the priestly office, and it came to pass that he was to go into the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense.

Here we suddenly have God's action.

It is no coincidence that "when they drew lots according to the custom of the priestly ministry, they entered the sanctuary of the Lord to burn incense. This happened in the midst of God's

action.

10 While the incense was being burned, all the people were outside praying.

11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared and stood at the right of the altar of incense.

12 And when Zacharias saw this, he was distraught and terrified.

13 Then the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elisabeth will give birth to a son. And you shall name him John.

Zacharias was suddenly bewildered and terrified by the suddenness of the event.

He was gripped by fear. This was not how he wanted it to turn out.

He had been chosen for the glorious task of burning incense. It is an honor that comes but once in a lifetime, just because you are a priest. It was no coincidence that it fell to him at this time. The ministry of entering the sanctuary, offering incense, and praying, this ministry was interrupted by the appearance of an angel. This was no coincidence either. Everything was as God had ordained it. We have many scenarios in our minds. We have many scenarios in our minds, and we sometimes feel that it is best that things happen the way we think they should. We wish and picture in our minds the timing of things, the things that will happen, that what we pray for will come true and that our wishes will be fulfilled as soon as we pray. But things don't always turn out the way we think they will. That does not mean that we have been betrayed. It does not mean that God is not there, that He is indifferent, but that His own deep thoughts are there.

But when He says, "Fear not, Zacharias, for your prayer has been heard!" but the answer to his prayer came too late. It must have sounded like a bad joke, as if it was completely untimely and all too late to take it all back.

God continues to speak His plan through His angel, whether Zacharias fears it or does not understand it.

14 He will bring you joy and pleasure, and many will rejoice at his birth.

15 He will be great in the sight of the LORD; he will drink no wine or strong drink; he will be filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he was in his mother's womb,

16 And he will cause many sons of Israel to return to the Lord their God.

17 He will go before you in the spirit and power of Elijah, and he will turn the hearts of the fathers toward their children, and he will bring righteousness to those who oppose them, and

he will prepare a prepared people for the Lord.

He will "rejoice and be glad," "great in the presence of the Lord," "already filled with the Holy Spirit from the time he was in his mother's womb..."

Finally, Zacharias' patience runs out. He must have felt as if he was being left behind, and he must have even felt angry at the fact that this event was being carried out without any detailed explanation and without any consideration for his will. He must have even been angry at the fact that this event was being carried out without any explanation in detail and without any consideration for his will.

18 Then Zacharias said to the angel, "How can I know such a thing? I am an old man, and my wife is old.

I do not understand such things. How do you know that such a thing will happen? I am an old man, and my wife is old.

Why did you leave us alone until now? I think he is angry that we are now too old to be told that our prayers have been heard.

I am sure we have that feeling as well. We want what we wish for to be granted immediately when we wish for it. We wish for answers to our prayers that are easy to understand, that are in a way that we can understand, that say, "That's right, thank you," etc. But sometimes that is not God's will.

But sometimes that is not God's will. And it is not God's whim, or meanness, or sarcasm, but His best for us.

19 The angel answered and said, "I am Gabriel standing before God, and I have been sent to tell you this glad tidings.

20 Because thou hast not believed my words, which shall be fulfilled in due season, thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not speak until the day that this thing shall come to pass.

21 The people were waiting for Zacharias, and they wondered at his leisure in the sanctuary.

God has good news, joyful good news, planned for us. Our lives are full of good news, good tidings, and joyful good news from God.

God's word will come true in due time. God's good word, God's good will, is accompanied by

the certainty that it will come to pass in due time. God's word is powerful, gracious, and approaches us with the certainty that it will come to pass in due time for those who believe it with all their hearts.

You will be dumb..." This is not a punishment. It is God's arrangement for us to be still and go straight to Him, so that we do not commit further sins through misguided words spoken to Him in our own selfishness and without regard for God.

Psalm 46:10 "Be still and know that I am God. I am praised among the nations, I am praised in all the earth.

22 At last he came out, but because he could not speak, the people realized that he had seen a vision within the sanctuary. He only signaled to them, but remained dumb for the rest of the day.

23 Then, when the day of his ministry was over, he returned home.

24 Then Elisabeth his wife withdrew, and was shut up for five months,

25 "Now the Lord has taken me to heart, and has done this to remove my shame from among the people," she said.

I feel that Elisabeth's words are all that matters.

The Lord has now taken me to his heart." I think the original text implies, "In this way, by this manner, He has been mindful and attentive to me.

In this way, in this way, I finally come to an agreement that this was the way. At this time, in this way. I dare to be in such a way, at this time, at this moment.

God's will will be realized when the time comes, and it will be realized in the best and highest way.

We may pray fervently, or we may give up and feel anger and disappointment in the midst of incomprehension, but we will persevere because of our trust in God and continue to believe in God's best time and best way with the devil. If we persevere in our trust in God and continue to believe in His best times and His best ways with the devil, we will see His glory.

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

11:26 And he that liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Do you believe this?

11:39 Jesus said, "Remove the stone. Martha, sister of Lazarus, who was dead, said, "Lord, it

already stinks. It has been four days.

11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?"

11:41 The people removed the stone. Then Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, I thank you that you have heard my request.

11:42 I know very well that you are always ready to hear my requests. But I tell you this so that those who are standing by may believe that you have sent me.

2 Peter 3:9 The Lord is not delaying the fulfillment of His promise, as some people think. But He is long-suffering toward you, desiring that no one should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

Matthew 24:42 "Therefore, keep your eyes open. For you do not know when your Lord will come.

Until that time when we meet the Lord of the Second Coming and enter into eternal rest, it is our hope that we too will continue to believe and advance in the good news of God, protected, celebrated, and blessed.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank you for today's worship. Thank you for the message of Christmas because it is a sure message that those who believe and wait will be rewarded. Thank you for the events that we rejoice and look forward to, for the glad tidings that are spoken, for God's true word that will come true when the time is right, and for the joyful confession that "the Lord has now and thus fixed his eyes on me. Please protect our faith so that we can continue to believe and wait until the time comes that the joy the Lord gives us is realized at this time. Bless our families and the people in our community. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus. Amen.