

The Delayed Blessing

Scripture Reading — Luke 1:18-25

"Now you will be silent ..."

Luke 1:20

Ever come to the big test of obedience in your life and blow it? That's what happens to Zechariah. He fails to take God at his word. His question-"How am I to know this?"-is the same question Abraham raised in Genesis 15:8 when he asked for a sign from God. The sign Zechariah receives, though, is that he will be tongue-tied until his son is born.

Why does God choose silence as the marker for Zechariah? Well, check out all those worshipers milling around the temple court, waiting for Zechariah to reappear. Zechariah is supposed to return to the sanctuary steps and pronounce the blessing over the worshipers. But Zechariah cannot give that benediction. When he stumbles out of the temple in a daze, all he can do is make hand motions.

The blessing the people are supposed to receive is delayed for more than 30 years. It will be given by the person for whom Zechariah's son will prepare the way. Zechariah's son will introduce us to the Lamb of God (John 1:29), who will go in silence to death (Isaiah 53:7). Yet after his triumph from the grave, this Lamb will speak the delayed blessing as he lifts up his hands before his disciples, shortly before ascending into heaven (Luke 24:50-52). Jesus, the abiding temple presence of God in this world, gives this blessing to you and me as well.

Prayer

Lord, may you bless us and keep us; may your face shine upon us and be gracious to us; may you grant us your peace, we pray, in Jesus our Savior's name. Amen.

Devotion topics: [Seasons](#), [Christmas](#)

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