

## **Luke 1:1-25 – The beginning of Luke's gospel**

What are you waiting for? Many things, perhaps. What is the best of them all? If you are a Christian the answer is “to see Jesus face to face; to join with him in the new heavens and earth that he has promised, with no sin in me or anywhere else”. As the gospel of Luke begins, God's people were waiting for Jesus. Not for his second coming, but for his first. They waited for the promised Messiah who would suffer for sins and rise again in glory. Are you really waiting for Jesus? Let us see what Luke can teach us.

### **1. Why Luke wrote – what is this book? (v1-4)**

Luke tells us that he wrote this gospel so that we could know for sure that the Christian faith is true (v1, 4). He tells us that the gospel is about real history. It is not just ideas, like Hinduism. It is about real facts: Jesus entered the world, lived a perfect life, died for sinners, and rose out of the grave. You cannot deny history! Jesus really is Lord. Secondly Luke tells us that this history is reliable. It came from eyewitnesses who saw these events themselves (v2). They gave their lives to teaching and serving in the gospel, not for their own gain. Luke himself had carefully investigated everything (v3). What more could we ask for? He wrote so that we could be confident in these truths (v4). Are you working hard to study and know God's truth – are you taking it seriously? Have you believed?

### **2. Preparing the way (v5-17)**

In those days, there was a priest called Zechariah with a wife Elisabeth. They walked rightly with God, repenting of sin and trusting in him for salvation. But they had no child. Under the Old Covenant this was a sign of God's curse, and now Elisabeth was old. The nation of Israel was barren like this too: the time had gone far, but the promised Messiah had still not arrived. Yet Zechariah and Elisabeth were still trusting and praying. Are you still seeking God and going to continue until you find him, or will you soon give up? An angel appeared, and told Zechariah that they would have a son. The son (John the Baptist) would be the one to prepare the way for the Messiah. He was to be a holy man, full of the Spirit. He would turn the people back to God, ready for Jesus. He would teach them to repent. There is no salvation without repentance. Have you returned to God, or are you still walking in your own ways? In God's mercy he sent John to call the people back, not to destroy them. Have you received this mercy?

### **3. Responding to the good news (v18-25)**

How would you respond? Zechariah did not believe. He was speaking with and seeing an angel with his own eyes, but he asked how he could know if it was true! He asked for another sign; and he was given one. He had used his lips to doubt instead of to thank, and so he would be silenced for a time. Have you believed the gospel? Unbelief is a serious sin. You know that God is real. You should know that your sin is real too, and you need a Saviour. The gospel shows you a perfect Saviour. Elisabeth turned to God in thanks. Will you do the same? Believe and live!