

Anticipation

Monday

"Not Forgotten"

Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. (Luke 1:72-75)

In this segment of Luke's Gospel known as the *Benedictus*, Zechariah gives thanks to God for being faithful to the Divine Promise. For over 400 years since the captivity in Babylon, there was no word of a messiah who would deliver the people from their "enemies." Morale was low, and the Roman occupation was yet another reminder of God's seeming absence. The faithful longed for a sign.

Gabriel's revelation to Zechariah that his son would be a prophet in the mold of Elijah hearkened a new era. It rekindled a flame that had neared a point of diminishing. It renewed the hope that God had not forgotten God's promises, and it set a tone of anticipation for the wonders that might be revealed in the days to come.

For Christians, Advent sets this same anticipatory tone. We are mindful that God's purposes continue to unfold, and the lowly manger will soon symbolize this cosmic mystery. But this holy sign doesn't simply wait for Christmas—it unfolds in everyday moments. Like Gabriel's announcement to Zechariah, our hope is rekindled every time a child laughs, we share a good meal, or the wind blows gently across our faces. Every instance of wondrous grace reminds us that we are not forgotten.

Lord, thank you for being faithful to your promises. This Advent season, rekindle in us a spirit of hope and anticipation. Help us see you in the "mundane" moments of our lives, appreciating your wonders in our everyday movements. Remind us that we aren't forgotten. Amen.

Practice: Take time out several times today to see the grace in the moment. Let those periods trigger memories of when you knew God was present. Be thankful for God's fidelity in that moment.