

A close-up photograph of a golden candelabrum, likely a menorah, with three lit lamps and a central bowl. The scene is dimly lit, with the golden surfaces reflecting light. The text "A Priest Named Zacharias" is overlaid in white, bold font across the middle of the image.

# A Priest Named Zacharias

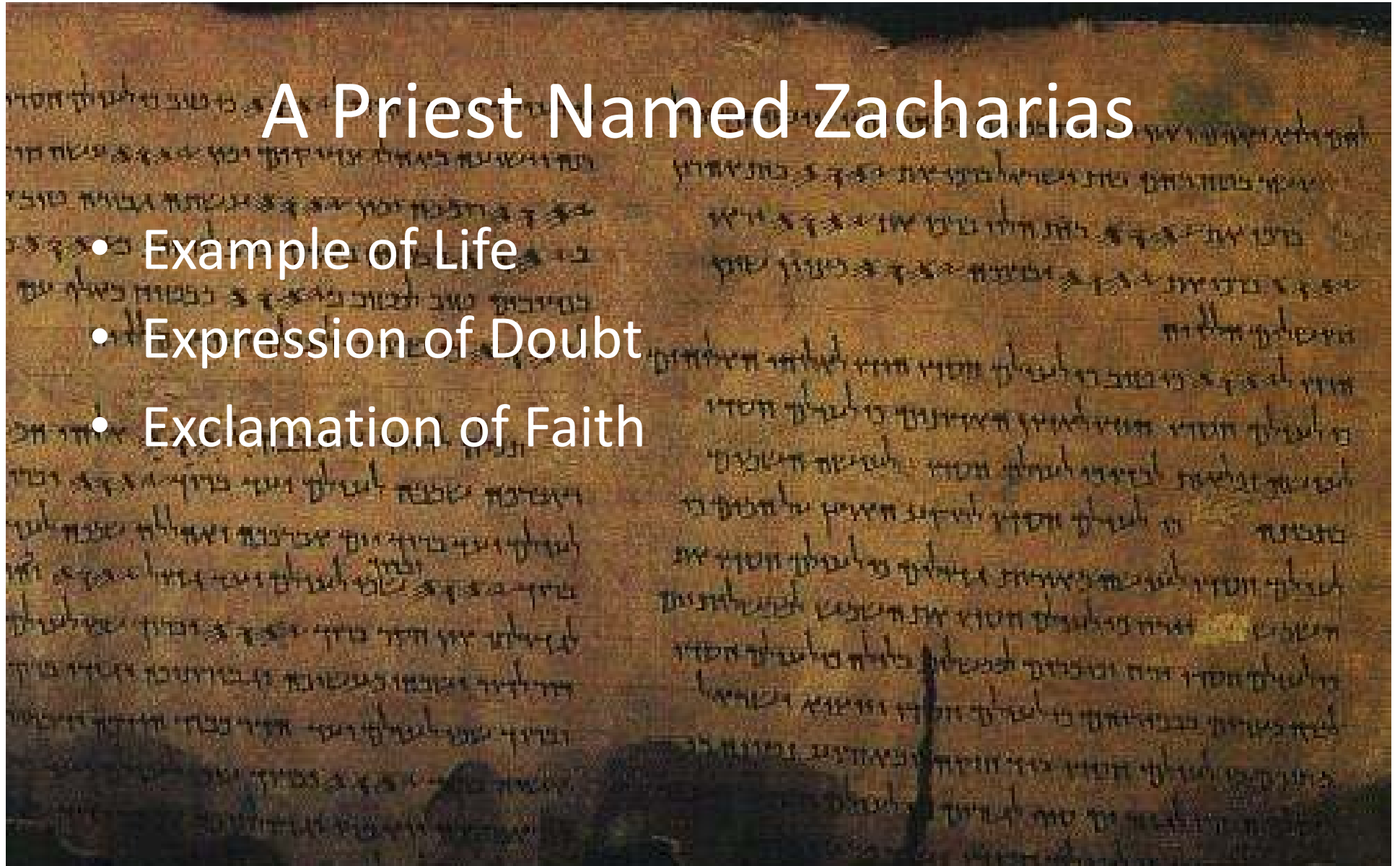
Luke 1:5-7

## Luke 1:5-7

- “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. 6 And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. 7 But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they were both well advanced in years.”

# A Priest Named Zacharias

- Example of Life
- Expression of Doubt
- Exclamation of Faith



# A Priest Named Zacharias

- Zacharias - “God has remembered”
- Zechariah - Ζαχαρίας in Greek, Zacharias in KJV
- The father of John the Baptist
- A priest of the sons of Aaron
- A prophet - Luke 1:67-79
- The husband of Elisabeth, cousin of Mary the mother of Jesus

# A Priest Named Zacharias

- The duties at the temple in Jerusalem alternated between each of the family lines descended from those appointed by David (1Chron. 24:1-19).
- Luke states that during the week when it was the duty of Zechariah's family line to serve at the temple of the Lord, the lot for performing the incense offering fell on Zechariah (Luke 1:8-11).



# A Priest Named Zacharias

- It is not known for certain when or how he died.
  - Killed at the temple (Matt. 23:35)?
  - Killed by Herod's soldiers for hiding John (tradition)?
- In 2003, a fourth century inscription on the Tomb of Absalom was deciphered as, "This is the tomb of Zachariah, the martyr, the holy priest, the father of John." The inscription agrees with a sixth century text stating that Zechariah was buried with Simon the Elder and James the brother of Jesus. (*Gideon Foerster, Hebrew University*)

# Example Of Life

- Zacharias and Elisabeth were both righteous and walked blamelessly.
- He took seriously God's pronouncement regarding divorce in Malachi 3:16, at a time when Jewish men often divorced barren wives

# Example Of Life

- He was a model priest
- Zacharias spent a lifetime in faithful service waiting

— Ecc. 7:8 - “The end of a thing is better than its beginning; The patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit.”



# Example Of Life

- How many in his day could be called blameless? No one could charge anything against him.

– Deut. 6:4-6 - “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one! 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart.”

# Expression Of Doubt

- Luke 1:8-20
  - When the angel appeared, Zacharias was afraid
  - Then Zacharias asked the wrong question
    - He would have known of the account of Abraham and Sarah.
    - He had been praying for a son in spite of his age
    - He was talking to an angel that miraculously appeared next to him
    - But he inexplicably felt and expressed doubt.
  - Gabriel gave him a sign. Zacharias would not be able to speak for a time because he did not believe Gabriel's words

# Expression Of Doubt

- The experiences of others with doubts can be enlightening
- Doubts can come to the faithful and devout
  - Matt. 28:17 - “When they saw Him, they worshiped Him; but some doubted.”
  - Mark 16:11 - “And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe.”

# Expression Of Doubt

- Thomas doubted the testimony of ten apostles

– John 20:24-25 - “Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 The other disciples therefore said to him, We have seen the Lord. So he said to them, Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

# Expression Of Doubt

- In spite of our doubt, God expects us to believe His message sent through reliable and trustworthy sources.
  - Mark 16:14 - “Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen.”
  - Rom. 10:17 - “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
  - Luke 1:19-20 - “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. 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.”



# Expression Of Doubt

- Doubts can be overcome by an honest investigation of truth.

— John 20:27 - “Then He said to Thomas, Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

— John 5:36 - “But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish--the very works that I do--bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.”

# Expression Of Doubt

- In spite of having doubted, when one returns to faith, the Lord will receive and use him to God's glory.
  - Zacharias became more than a priest; he was inspired to become a prophet, too.
  - Job 42:5 - "I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You."
  - Mark 9:24 - "Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'"

# Exclamation Of Faith

- God released his tongue, and Zacharias' first words were in praise of God

– Luke 1:21-25, 57-66

- Zacharias became more than a priest; he became a prophet

– Luke 1:67-80

# Exclamation Of Faith

- He bound together for the first time in the history of the world, all of the prophecies of salvation from the beginning of the world in the person of Jesus Christ
  - Gen. 3:15 - “And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”
  - Gen. 22:18 - “In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed”

# Exclamation Of Faith

- He revealed the role of his son John, who fulfilled the prophecies of the return of Elijah, greatest among prophets

– Mal. 4:5-6 - “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

– John 1:7-8, 29 - “This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. 8 He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light... 29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”



# Exclamation Of Faith

- What a transition from the weakness of doubt to powerful faith and proclamation of the glory to come!
- “If Christ spent an anguished night in prayer, if He burst out from the Cross, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?' then surely we are also permitted doubt. But we must move on. To choose doubt as a philosophy of life is akin to choosing immobility as a means of transportation.” *(Yann Martel)*