



“This is the Story...”

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Week 31: Tell Those Who Wait

Luke 2:21-38

Intro Video: <https://youtu.be/JSn6aAJ8QfY>

Review the big story: God created the cosmos and humans and called it all good. We were created to live in harmony, but sometimes we miss the mark. All of humanity missed the mark, and they had to live with the consequences, but God stuck with them and continued to love them. Then God called a family to be a blessing to the whole earth. Like the humans before them, the generations of this family often missed the mark, but God was faithful.

When the people became slaves in Egypt, God raised up Moses to be their leader. God performed many signs and wonders, and delivered them from slavery. In the wilderness, they learned to be a people of God, trusting in God’s provision, living out God’s commandments, and wrestling with the law in shalom community. As they prepared to go into the promised land, they were given the *shema*, words of love to keep with their whole beings. Through miraculous works, God brought the people into the promised land. Once there, they had to learn again how to be God’s people. They missed the mark a lot, and God sent judges to guide them. Ordinary people showed creativity and steadfast love in the way they continued the story of the people of God.

When the people demanded a king, God sent prophets like Samuel to try to keep the people faithful to God. Kings Saul, David and Solomon continued to miss the mark, and the kingdom divided into the north. God stuck with the people through leaders and prophets, and continued to call the people back to God, even as first the northern, and then the southern kingdom fell to invading powers. Some of the people were sent into exile, and some were left in the ruins of the kingdom. Through prophets and everyday people, God continued to stick with the scattered people and to reveal that God is so much bigger than they imagined. The people were finally able to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild the temple. Through all the turmoil, prophets like Isaiah brought comfort to the people.

As we begin the story of the New Testament, Rome is the power in charge and the people of God are waiting for a Messiah. This Messiah is announced, first with a surprising genealogy, then through an angel to Mary. Mary and Joseph traveled to Bethlehem, and there, Jesus was born, proclaimed by angels and visited by shepherds.

- **Key verse:** Luke 2:30-31; Luke 2:34-35; Luke 2:38

Tell the story: According to Hebrew law, Jesus needed to be circumcised when he was eight days old, and presented to God at the temple. At the temple, a devout, elderly man named Simeon came and recognized Jesus as the Messiah, holding him and proclaiming him. An elderly prophet, Anna, also came to the temple, and she too recognized Jesus and began to proclaim him to others.

- Read Luke 2:21-38
- Read page 169 in the *Shine On* story Bible

Prime the pump:

- **Things to notice:**
 - Jesus gets circumcised! This was a fulfillment of the covenant God made with Abraham.
 - Jesus is presented at the temple in Jerusalem. Remember when this temple was built? It's not the one Solomon built; it's the second temple. Jesus will keep coming back to this temple in the story.
 - Notice how Simeon and Anna each come to be in the temple just when the infant Jesus is there.

- **Background information:**
 - We don't really know what is meant by "purification" in verse 22. There was not purification requirement for fathers or infants, and Mary's purification would have been 40 days after the birth.
 - In Simeon's speech in verses 29-32, he references familiar passages from Isaiah (Isaiah 52:10, Isaiah 49:6 and Isaiah 46:13). Then in verses 34-35, he foreshadows what will come. Read just the words spoken by Simeon and see what it tells you about Jesus.

- **Conversation starters:**
 - In verse 36, Anna off-handedly called a "prophet." How does this strike you?
 - Simeon had been promised he would see the Messiah, and after he did, he said he was ready to die. Imagine and talk about this.
 - Simeon and Anna are both described as old, wise and devout. They fill in a necessary piece of the story of Jesus' birth. Look back over the richness of the characters in this New Testament story so far.
 - Read verse 33. Imagine being Mary and Joseph in this situation, surrounded by wisdom and overwhelmed with this special child.

Microsong: "Tell Those Who Wait" (Listen: <https://youtu.be/ijNyfDQ12KY>)

The baby's presented to God in the temple, given his name and Abraham's sign. The Spirit sends Anna and Simeon to find him. To tell those who wait their Messiah's arrived.

Sing the big song: (Listen: <https://youtu.be/8bolY3kP2xs>)

This is the story of how it all began. God made matter, and chaos shattered.

Eve and Adam, they tried to hide. The world got violent and God replied with a mark and a flood
and a rainbow sign, God's love written on skin and sky,

And then God called a family to be a blessing to the earth, ohhh ohhhh

A mother and her favorite son wrestle for the blessing, another son becomes a slave, the land is
saved from famine.

God's family grows. Egypt oppresses. They groan to God and God sends Moses.

Ten strange signs say "Please release them!" By the sea God saves them. Ohh ohhh.

The people complain and God rains bread. Daily food and ten new rules.

Five sisters come and ask for land. God says "Yes, amend the law!"

*Moses says, "In your new life across the Jordan, love God with your whole heart and with all your
being, and your strength, now listen: God is One, only God. God is One, only God!"*

Cross over Jordan, stories and stones. Circuits and shouts and the walls come down.

God sends judges like Deborah and the land has rest.

Ruth's worth more than seven sons; Redeem the lost with steadfast love.

Corruption in the temple, then God sends Samuel.

God gives them a prophet, They ask for a king

Does God need a temple? A wise king forgets

And when a bully rules the land, a nation tears apart and loses David's heart...

A widow's gift and a prophet's cry. God brings life in desperate times.

Josiah reads this misplaced scroll. He turns to God wholeheartedly like David did. In his time.

God gives Jeremiah a picture of God's ruined family...

Is there any hope left, is there any hope left, is there any hope left for you, Jerusalem?

Any hope? Any hope left? Is there any hope left for you?

By the streams of Babylon, how can we sing when you are gone, Jerusalem...

I'm in a valley of human bones. These bones are Israel, God's breath is hope.

Haman plans death for Esther's exiles. She risks her life so they might survive.

Finally God's family rebuilds the temple in Jerusalem. God plunges them into a sea of joy and
celebration of Only God. God is One, Only God.

Comfort to Jerusalem, your warfare finally ceases.

Matthew lists these generations, Abraham to Jesus

The angel says, "You'll have a son and God will give him David's throne." Mary says, "God looked
at me, now I'm the luckiest person around.

Mary, now pregnant fiancé, makes a grueling journey.

She has her baby, shepherds see angels declaring God's glory and peace among people.

The Spirit sends shepherds and elders and prophets to tell those who wait their Messiah has
come.

God loves every one of us, it's true. And God loves the universe.

Go do your household project!