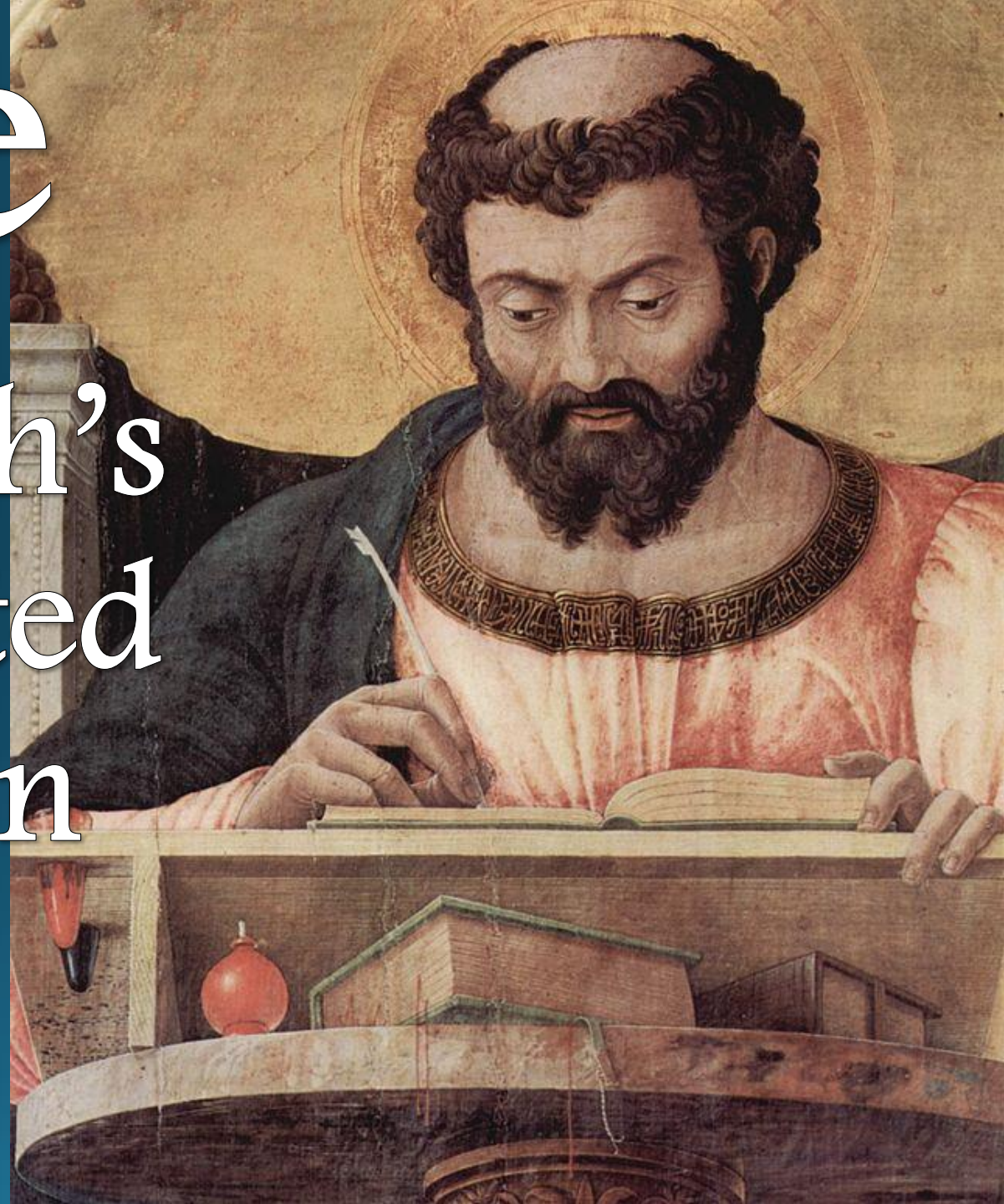




# Luke

## Zechariah's unexpected visitation

Luke 1.5-25



# The Background: Israel waiting on God

- For 400 years, there had been no prophets in Israel and the Holy Spirit was recognizably absent (2 Baruch 85:1-3; 1 Maccabees 4:46; 9:27; 14:41; Babylonian Talmud Yomah 9b)

1 Maccabees 9:27 So there was great distress in Israel, such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them.

*Babylonian Talmud Yomah 9b* After the latter prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi had died, the Holy Spirit departed from Israel...

# The Background: Israel waiting on God

- For 400 years, there had been no prophets in Israel and the Holy Spirit was recognizably absent
- The nation of Israel was subject to foreign powers—Greece, Syria, and Rome—for all but a brief period of these 400 years
- The prophets had promised a future messianic age when God would once again be active and fulfill His covenantal promises. The coming of Elijah the prophet was a sign of this fulfillment (Mal 4:5–6)

# The Beginning: Zechariah faithfully serving God

- Zechariah and Elizabeth modeled a God-honoring lifestyle of obedience to God's law (Luke 1:6)
- God interrupted Zechariah's daily business with a divine appointment (Luke 1:11)
- Zechariah's prayer had been heard (Luke 1:13)
- Zechariah was a bit unprepared for the role he and his wife would play in God's fulfillment (Luke 1:18)

# Putting it into Practice

- Make the decision to obey God, in spite of any negative circumstances we may be going through
- Be alert to recognize and seize the “divine opportunities” which come our way
- Commit to being mindful of and contributing to God’s plan (Est 4:14)

