

# Elizabeth

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## FAITH IN THE WAITING ROOM



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## INTRODUCTION

Elizabeth, a remarkable figure in the Gospel of Luke, was not only the devoted wife of Zechariah and the beloved mother of John the Baptist but also a cherished relative of Mary, the mother of Jesus. Despite enduring the immense societal and personal challenges of barrenness well into her later years, Elizabeth's narrative is one of fierce faith, unwavering obedience, and ultimately, awe-inspiring miraculous fulfillment that shines with hope and resilience.

Elizabeth's journey, though only a brief gleam in the biblical narrative, resonates with profound significance. She and her husband are portrayed as righteous and blameless in the sight of God, steadfast even amidst the heartache of childlessness. Their unwavering faith shines as a brilliant testament that God's divine plans unfurl in His perfect timing, far beyond our own understanding. Elizabeth emerges as a beacon of support and encouragement to Mary during her miraculous pregnancy, exemplifying the beautiful bonds of community and sisterhood engendered by faith. Furthermore, her prophetic recognition of Mary's unborn child as "my Lord" reveals her deep spiritual insight and her intimate connection to God's grand tapestry of salvation.

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## IN THE WORD

The following is all scriptural references to Elizabeth in scripture. As you read through the scripture, make any notes about her character, who she was, major events that happen, and anything that reveals the character of God or His work in her life.

### Gabriel Predicts John's Birth

<sup>5</sup> In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest of Abijah's division named Zechariah. His wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> Both were righteous in God's sight, living without blame according to all the commands and requirements of the Lord. <sup>7</sup> But they had no children because Elizabeth could not conceive, and both of them were well along in years.

<sup>8</sup> When his division was on duty and he was serving as priest before God, <sup>9</sup> it happened that he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense. <sup>10</sup> At the hour of incense the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. <sup>11</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the altar of incense. <sup>12</sup> When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified and overcome with fear. <sup>13</sup> But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. <sup>14</sup> There will be joy and delight for you, and many will rejoice at his birth. <sup>15</sup> For he will be great in the sight of the Lord and will never drink wine or beer. He will be filled with the Holy Spirit while still in his mother's womb. <sup>16</sup> He will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. <sup>17</sup> And he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the understanding of the righteous, to make

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ready for the Lord a prepared people.”

<sup>18</sup> “How can I know this?” Zechariah asked the angel. “For I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years.”

<sup>19</sup> The angel answered him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and tell you this good news. <sup>20</sup> Now listen. You will become silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their proper time.”

<sup>21</sup> Meanwhile, the people were waiting for Zechariah, amazed that he stayed so long in the sanctuary. <sup>22</sup> When he did come out, he could not speak to them. Then they realized that he had seen a vision in the sanctuary. He was making signs to them and remained speechless. <sup>23</sup> When the days of his ministry were completed, he went back home.

<sup>24</sup> After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived and kept herself in seclusion for five months. She said, <sup>25</sup> “The Lord has done this for me. He has looked with favor in these days to take away my disgrace among the people.”

## Gabriel Predicts Jesus’s Birth

<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged<sup>[c]</sup> to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> And the angel came to her and said, “Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you.”<sup>[d]</sup> <sup>29</sup> But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be. <sup>30</sup> Then the angel told her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father

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David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end.”

<sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, “How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?” [e]

<sup>35</sup> The angel replied to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God.”

<sup>38</sup> “See, I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary. “May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

## Mary’s Visit to Elizabeth

<sup>39</sup> In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah <sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah’s house and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. <sup>42</sup> Then she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed!” [f] <sup>43</sup> How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup> For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me. <sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he has spoken to her!”

46 And Mary said:

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My soul magnifies the Lord,  
47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
48 because he has looked with favor  
on the humble condition of his servant.  
Surely, from now on all generations  
will call me blessed,  
49 because the Mighty One  
has done great things for me,  
and his name is holy.  
50 His mercy is from generation to generation  
on those who fear him.  
51 He has done a mighty deed with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud  
because of the thoughts of their hearts;  
52 he has toppled the mighty from their thrones  
and exalted the lowly.  
53 He has satisfied the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.  
54 He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering his mercy  
55 to Abraham and his descendants[g] forever,  
just as he spoke to our ancestors.

56 And Mary stayed with her about three months; then she re-  
turned to her home.

## The Birth and Naming of John

57 Now the time had come for Elizabeth to give birth, and she  
had a son. 58 Then her neighbors and relatives heard that the  
Lord had shown her his great mercy, and they rejoiced with her.

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59 When they came to circumcise the child on the eighth day, they were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. 60 But his mother responded, “No. He will be called John.”

61 Then they said to her, “None of your relatives has that name.” 62 So they motioned to his father to find out what he wanted him to be called. 63 He asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they were all amazed. 64 Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. 65 Fear came on all those who lived around them, and all these things were being talked about throughout the hill country of Judea. 66 All who heard about him took it to heart, saying, “What then will this child become?” For, indeed, the Lord’s hand was with him.

## Zechariah’s Prophecy

67 Then his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

68 Blessed is the Lord, the God of Israel,  
because he has visited  
and provided redemption for his people.  
69 He has raised up a horn of salvation for us  
in the house of his servant David,  
70 just as he spoke by the mouth  
of his holy prophets in ancient times;  
71 salvation from our enemies  
and from the hand of those who hate us.  
72 He has dealt mercifully with our ancestors  
and remembered his holy covenant—  
73 the oath that he swore to our father Abraham,  
to grant that we,

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74 having been rescued  
from the hand of our enemies,  
would serve him without fear  
75 in holiness and righteousness  
in his presence all our days.  
76 And you, child, will be called  
a prophet of the Most High,  
for you will go before the Lord  
to prepare his ways,  
77 to give his people knowledge of salvation  
through the forgiveness of their sins.  
78 Because of our God's merciful compassion,  
the dawn from on high will visit us  
79 to shine on those who live in darkness  
and the shadow of death,  
to guide our feet into the way of peace.  
80 The child grew up and became strong in spirit, and he was in  
the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 1:5-80

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*<sup>5</sup> In the days of King Herod of Judea, there was a priest of Abijah's division named Zechariah. His wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. <sup>6</sup> Both were righteous in God's sight, living without blame according to all the commands and requirements of the Lord.*

Luke 1:5-6

Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah were celebrated as "righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord." In a world where the cruel weight of social stigma crushed those who were barren — deemed a marker of divine disfavor — Elizabeth's unwavering faith in God shone brilliantly. Her spirit teaches us a powerful lesson: to cling fiercely to our faith and remain steadfast in our obedience, even when life hurls its daunting challenges our way.

Despite their devout faith, the couple remains heart-wrenchingly childless. The Old Testament Law clearly proclaims that those who faithfully adhere to God's commandments would not suffer the anguish of barrenness (Deut. 7:12-14). Thus, infertility was seen not just as a misfortune, but as a glaring mark of divine disapproval, a crushing burden laden with profound shame. This stigma weighed especially heavily on women, as childbearing was regarded as the very essence of a woman's purpose in biblical times. Tragically, the sorrow of infertility was often unjustly attributed solely to the woman, overshadowing her husband's role in their shared longing for a family.

Throughout history, several remarkable women in Israel have endured the profound anguish and societal shame of infertility, only to be graced later in life with miracle children — offspring destined for greatness and leadership.

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Among them is Sarah, whose son Isaac emerged as a revered patriarch, and Manoah's wife, whose son Samson became a fierce deliverer and judge. Then there's Hannah, blessed with Samuel, the prophet and judge who would guide a nation. Even Rebekah and Rachel, initially plagued by infertility, found hope and fulfillment. And let us not forget Elizabeth, whose miraculous child would rise to fame as the prophet John the Baptizer. Each story resonates with the triumph of faith and perseverance against all odds.

But let us dive deeply into the essence of bareness. Regrettably, in many Christian circles today, we often perceive what we label as a "lack" in another's life as a mark of disfavor from the Lord. Why do we fall into this trap? A person may be impoverished or simply lacking what the world deems valuable in life. As a society, we view them through a lens of judgment, assuming they must be in the wrong. While this may hold some truth at times, we go further to condemn them, asserting that the Lord must not favor them. At the core of this belief lies a toxic pride: "I am blessed, therefore the Lord must favor me." It is crucial to recognize the monumental difference between mere blessings and the genuine favor of the Lord. Let us examine this issue with greater scrutiny.

## Blessings of God vs. Divine favor: a biblical perspective

While the terms "blessing" and "favor" weave together beautifully throughout the biblical narrative, it is essential to delve deep into the vibrant nuances that set them apart, revealing a rich tapestry of meaning and significance.

### 1. Blessing (Hebrew: Barak; Greek: Eulogia)

Blessing in the Bible fundamentally describes God's enablement for flourishing and fruitfulness, bestowing His life-giving power. Blessings can appear as tan-

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gible provisions like wealth and health, as well as divine protection. Blessings can also encompass spiritual growth and bearing good fruit. While a gift from God, receiving blessings also involves responsibility.

**Read the following verses. What does God's Word speak about Blessings?**

- Proverbs 10:22
- Deuteronomy 28:1-2
- John 15:5

## 2. Favor (Hebrew: Chen; Greek: Charis)

Divine favor embodies the incredible love and attention of God, shining a radiant light on our lives and paving the way for extraordinary opportunities! This favor is like a divine embrace, infusing us with assistance and unlocking doors we never thought possible. It's a powerful testament to God's approval, revealing His wonders in our journey and serving as an invitation for abundant blessings to overflow in our lives!

**Read the following scriptures. What does God's Word say about His favor?**

- Psalm 5:12
- Genesis 6:8
- Luke 1:28

Favor can be understood as the opportunity that allows blessings to become reality. When God's blessing is present, favor often accompanies it. As Psalm 84:11 states, "For the Lord God is a sun and shield. The Lord grants favor and honor; he does not withhold the good from those who live with integrity."

Blessings are a beautiful testament to God's boundless goodness and empowering grace, while favor embodies His extraordinary approval, opening the

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door to divine opportunities. These two are intricately intertwined, as favor often ignites the vibrant manifestation of blessings in a believer's life, transforming ordinary moments into extraordinary encounters with the divine!

## Can God bless me but not favor me?

That's an incredibly thought-provoking question about the profound relationship between God's blessings and favor! These concepts are intimately intertwined, yet there are intricate nuances that deserve our fervent exploration. This distinction may be subtle, but recognizing it is essential for a deeper understanding of divine grace in our lives!

**God's marvelous blessings:** God showers His breathtaking blessings upon all of humanity, whether believers or non-believers. Just pause for a moment to appreciate the rain that nourishes the earth, the sunshine that warms our souls, and the awe-inspiring beauty of creation that surrounds us every day. These gifts are magnificent expressions of His boundless grace and goodness.

Matthew 5:45 boldly proclaims that God sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous alike, reminding us that His generosity knows no bounds.

The essence of blessings embodies the incredible impartation of God's life-giving power, igniting flourishing and fruitfulness in our lives.

**God's extraordinary favor:** Divine favor represents a profound and intentional act of God, often ignited by our faith or obedience. It is the essence of preferential treatment, unlocking doors and creating opportunities that may otherwise remain closed to others.



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Psalms 5:12 passionately declares, "For surely You, O LORD, bless the righteous; You surround them with the shield of Your favor."

Luke 1:28 reveals the profound moment when Mary found favor with God, leading to an extraordinary and unique calling that changed the world forever.

Experiencing God's favor is an extraordinary and transformative journey! While it's true that we can encounter a measure of His blessings – a glimpse of His general goodness – without being fully enveloped in His explicit favor, those who earnestly walk with God and diligently seek to live righteously, in harmony with His commands, are destined to encounter His abundant blessings and favor in a truly profound and consistent manner. This divine partnership is not just about receiving but about passionately deepening our relationship with Him and aligning our hearts with His will, ultimately unlocking the overflowing fullness of both blessings and favor.

## Bareness

Elizabeth was not sinless. She, however, did not have habitual sin in her life. This is why she is described as blameless. Even though she walked close to the Lord, she was barren. Elizabeth's barrenness in the Bible teaches us several important lessons:

### 1. Righteousness doesn't guarantee easy circumstances

Elizabeth and her husband Zechariah shine brightly as examples of righteousness, living blamelessly according to all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. Yet, despite their unwavering faith, they endured the profound heartache of childlessness for many years. This poignant reality confronts the age-old Jewish belief that barrenness is a mark of divine disfavor or a dire conse-



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quence of sin. Their story powerfully illustrates that **even the most faithful can encounter life's harrowing trials, reminding us that suffering does not necessarily stem from wrongdoing.** I want us to read that statement again.

## 2. God's timing is perfect and mysterious

Elizabeth and Zechariah were well into their years when the miraculous angel Gabriel appeared before Zechariah, proclaiming the incredible news that Elizabeth would give birth to a son named John. This moment reveals the breathtaking sovereignty of God and His extraordinary ability to transcend human limitations and expectations. Their arduous wait for a child was not a mere denial; rather, it was a divine orchestration in God's perfect plan to showcase His unmatched power and to usher in a remarkable child destined to play an essential role in preparing the way for the promised Messiah.

## 3. Barrenness can be a period of preparation and spiritual growth

Instead of merely being a sign of rejection, Elizabeth's barrenness emerges as a profound season of spiritual preparation and fiery refinement. In this sacred time, she and Zechariah clung to their faith with unwavering expectation, ultimately receiving the miraculous blessing of a son. This powerful narrative illustrates the truth that sometimes God permits us to endure barren periods—be they physical, spiritual, or emotional—to pull us closer to Him, ignite our faith, and ready us for the extraordinary works He has divinely orchestrated for our lives.

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## 4. God's faithfulness to His promises

Elizabeth's story is a powerful testament to God's faithfulness in fulfilling His promises, even when they seem impossible. He remembered Elizabeth and answered her prayers in His perfect timing. This offers hope and reassurance to those who are waiting for God to fulfill a promise in their lives.

In conclusion, Elizabeth's barrenness echoes with powerful truths about God's sovereignty, His perfect timing, His unwavering faithfulness to His promises, the vital importance of a persevering faith, and the extraordinary, transformative power of the Holy Spirit. It stands as an impassioned reminder that even in the depths of difficult circumstances and long waits, God is diligently at work, weaving plans that are unequivocally for our ultimate good and His glorious purpose.

## Reflect, Ponder, Meditate.

To reflect on your own life concerning barrenness and your relationship with the Lord, consider these points for contemplation and application:

### 1. Defining "barrenness" in your life

- Beyond the physical: While Elizabeth's barrenness was physical, consider what areas in your life feel unproductive, stalled, or lacking desired outcomes. This could be your relationships, career, spiritual growth, creative endeavors, or personal development.
- Identify the specific areas: Pinpoint what exactly you are longing for and feel is missing. This clarity is crucial for directing your prayers and reflections.

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## 2. Examining your response to "barrenness"

- Faith and trust: In moments of barrenness, like Sarah and Rachel, it's easy to question God's plan or try to force outcomes in our own strength. Reflect on whether you have been trusting God's timing and sovereignty or striving to control the situation.
- Patience and perseverance: Barren seasons are often periods of waiting. Do you view this waiting as unproductive or an opportunity to deepen your faith and character?
- Honesty and vulnerability: Are you honest with God about your pain, disappointment, and doubts regarding your barrenness? Elizabeth and other biblical figures wrestled with these feelings, reminding us that expressing our struggles to God is a part of drawing closer to Him.
- Gratitude in the midst: Even in barrenness, can you identify and thank God for the blessings present in your life? Devotions by Chris Hendrix suggests this practice can shift your perspective and remind you of God's faithfulness.

## 3. Seeking God's purpose in the "barren" season

- Spiritual growth and refinement: Elizabeth's barrenness was a time of preparation and ultimately, led to a powerful purpose. Consider how this season might be refining your character, strengthening your faith, or preparing you for future blessings.
- Lessons from Scripture: Reflect on biblical examples like Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, and Hannah, who experienced seasons of barrenness before God's promises unfolded. What can you learn from their responses – both positive and negative – to inspire your own journey?
- Abiding in Christ: Jesus teaches in John 15:5 that fruitfulness comes from

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abiding in Him. Are you prioritizing your relationship with God through prayer, Bible study, and seeking His guidance? These spiritual disciplines are essential for experiencing spiritual fruitfulness.

- Embrace non-traditional fruitfulness: Even if your desired outcome doesn't manifest in the way you expect, are there other ways God is calling you to be fruitful? Can you find purpose and meaning in serving others, nurturing relationships, or using your gifts in new ways?

## 4. Embracing hope and trust

- God's faithfulness: Remember that God is faithful and His promises are true. He sees the bigger picture and His plans are always for your good.
- Trust His timing: God's timing is perfect, even when it feels delayed. Trust in His wisdom and goodness, even when you don't understand the reasons for the waiting.
- Seek encouragement: Don't isolate yourself in your struggles. Seek support from trusted friends, mentors, or a faith community who can pray with and encourage you.

By passionately delving into these profound questions and reflecting on the powerful biblical examples, you can boldly navigate the challenging seasons of barrenness with unwavering purpose and inspiring hope, enriching your relationship with the Lord and positioning yourself for the abundant fruitfulness He ardently desires for your life.

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18 *"How can I know this?" Zechariah asked the angel. "For I am an old man, and my wife is well along in years."*

Luke 1:18

The world sets us up for incredible failure when we try to use the world's standards for patience. Let us be real... the world knows no patience. Everyday our patience is tested. In traffic. At the stop light that never seems to change when we are late. In the drive thru line at the fast food restaurant that is anything but fast. At the pharmacy while in along line waiting for the elderly woman to stop asking questions about a new medication. At the store when someone didn't see the sign of 15 items or less who has 100 times. At the office waiting on your partner to finish their presentation. In the classroom. At home with toddlers or teenagers. In our marriages. Every single day we are bombarded with opportunities we never asked for to exercise patience.

Even worse, we are always waiting on the right timing. What we fail at is realizing, our timing is not the Lord's timing.

You can get a sense of the humor in Zachariah's question. I mean, it is a legitimate question. Messenger of God, we are old, how can this be?

Elizabeth and Zechariah held a deep yearning for children, pouring out their hearts in fervent prayers over many years. In a breathtaking turn of events, God blessed them with a son in the twilight of their lives. This beautiful story showcases the profound truth that God's timing is nothing short of magnificent, fulfilling His promises even when circumstances seem insurmountable to us. We are fiercely encouraged to place our trust in God's grand design, embracing the journey of waiting, even when it diverges from our own expectations and desired timelines.



# TRUSTING IN GOD'S TIMING

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## How to trust God's timing

Trusting God's perfect timing, especially in those agonizing moments of barrenness or when our fervent prayers seem to go unanswered, is not just a principle of faith; it's a fervent commitment that demands our utmost intentionality and a profound shift in perspective.

Here's how to cultivate that trust:

### 1. Remember God's sovereignty and His perspective on time

God sees the bigger picture: Unlike us, who are limited to a small segment of time, God views the entirety of time — past, present, and future — simultaneously. This means He's orchestrating events beyond our comprehension, weaving a beautiful tapestry that will lead to His intended outcomes. His timing is always perfect: God's timing is never too early, preventing us from stepping into situations before we're ready. It's also never too late, as He knows exactly when to act for our ultimate good. As it says in Ecclesiastes 3:11, "He has made everything beautiful in its time."

### 2. Lean on God's promises and His character

God is faithful and trustworthy: Recall times when God has been present in your life, even when the wait was long or difficult. These experiences serve as reminders of His faithfulness. His plans are for your good. Recall verses like Jeremiah 29:11 which says, "'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a future and a hope.'" Hold onto these promises, particularly when doubt or anxiety arises. In His word is hope. Spend time with Scripture, especially verses that bring you hope, patience, and God's timing. Allow these words to be a source



of encouragement, renewing strength as you wait.

### 3. Develop patience and surrender control through prayer

Patience is a virtue that grows through trials. View the waiting period as an opportunity for spiritual growth. James 1:2-4 says, "Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything." Pour out your heart in prayer. Discuss anxieties, frustrations, and desires with God. Ask Him for the patience to trust His timing and to align your heart with His will. Release the need to control. Wanting to control outcomes and timelines is natural, but trusting God means surrendering plans to Him. Remember Proverbs 16:9, which states, "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps."

### 4. Expect the best and celebrate small victories

God is working behind the scenes. Even without immediate results, trust that God is always working, preparing for something greater than you can imagine. Find joy in the process. Practice gratitude for the blessings in life and celebrate small steps forward. These can help maintain hope and enthusiasm during the waiting period. Trusting God's timing is an exhilarating journey of faith. By fervently focusing on His sovereignty, clinging tightly to His promises, surrendering control through heartfelt prayer, and embracing unshakeable hope, you can boldly navigate the challenging seasons of barrenness and waiting. With unwavering confidence, know that He is intricately weaving all things together for your ultimate good.

## Reflect, Ponder, Meditate:

Read, study and meditate on the following scriptures.

- Ecclesiastes 3:1, 11
- Isaiah 55:8-9
- 2 Peter 3:8
- Lamentations 3:25-26
- Psalm 37:4
- Habakkuk 2:3
- Isaiah 40:31
- Psalm 27:14
- Galatians 6:9
- Proverbs 3:5-6
- Jeremiah 29:11
- 1 Peter 5:7
- Philippians 4:6-7

### 1. What is God's character revealing in this time of waiting?

- Instead of focusing solely on unmet desires or a perceived lack of progress, contemplate how God's character is being revealed during this period.
- Is patience, perseverance, or strengthened faith being taught? Is God showing aspects of His love, faithfulness, or wisdom that might otherwise be overlooked?
- Psalm 27:14 says, "Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." How might this waiting strengthen the heart and build reliance on Him?

### 2. What areas in life need to be surrendered more fully to God?

- Delays or seasons of barrenness can expose areas where control or manipulation of outcomes is attempted, rather than trusting God's timing and process.
- Ask yourself where you might be leaning on your own understanding instead of acknowledging God in all ways, as advised in Proverbs 3:5-6.
- Are there desires, ambitions, or timelines that need to be laid at His feet and yielded to His perfect will?

### 3. How is this season of waiting being stewarded?

- Waiting on God doesn't necessarily mean being inactive.
- Consider how time and opportunities are currently being used. Are spiritual disciplines being cultivated, are others being served, or are skills being developed that will prepare for the next season God has planned?
- Galatians 6:9 encourages us not to become weary in doing good, "for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up." How can you continue to "sow" faithfully in this current season, trusting that a harvest will come in God's timing?

### 4. What past experiences can remind you of God's faithfulness?

- Reflecting on God's past provision and guidance can build confidence in His present and future faithfulness.
- Think back to moments when God came through, even when circumstances seemed difficult or the wait felt long. Keeping a journal of answered prayers can be a helpful tool for this.
- Lamentations 3:25-26 reminds us that "the Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul who seeks him." How has God's goodness manifested in life while waiting on Him in the past?

### 5. How can desires be aligned more closely with God's desires?

- Sometimes, struggles with God's timing come from a disconnect between wants and what God knows is truly best.
- Seek God's heart and ask Him to shape desires to be in line with His will so that when you ask, you are praying according to His desires.
- Psalm 37:4 tells us to "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." How can you find the greatest delight and satisfaction in a relationship with God, allowing Him to fulfill His desires through you, in His perfect timing?

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GRATITUDE

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Elizabeth radiated immense humility and profound gratitude when Mary, the bearer of the Lord, came to visit her. Rather than dwelling on her own incredible pregnancy, she wholeheartedly acknowledged and celebrated the extraordinary favor bestowed upon Mary by God, exclaiming, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" Elizabeth's heartfelt response serves as a powerful reminder to embody humility and gratitude for God's abundant blessings, urging us to genuinely rejoice alongside those who rejoice.

*39 In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah 40 where she entered Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. 41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 Then she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and your child will be blessed! 43 How could this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 44 For you see, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped for joy inside me. 45 Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill what he has spoken to her!"*

Luke 1:39-45

Elizabeth, though older and also miraculously pregnant, demonstrates striking humility and gratitude towards Mary in the Visitation account (Luke 1:39-45). Her response goes beyond a simple greeting; it's filled with spiritual insight and genuine respect.

Here's how Elizabeth showed these qualities:

**Recognition of Mary's unique role:** Filled with the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth immediately recognized the significance of Mary's pregnancy. She didn't boast

## HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

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about her own miraculous conception or advanced age. Instead, Elizabeth exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!" This shows a humble spirit that recognizes and celebrates the work of God in others.

**Acknowledging Jesus as "Lord":** Even before Jesus' birth, Elizabeth recognized Him as "my Lord". The statement, "Why am I so honored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" shows profound humility and awe at being in the presence of the Messiah's mother. "Lord" was a title often used for God.

**Celebrating Mary's faith:** Elizabeth praised Mary for her faith, saying, "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her". This highlights Elizabeth's humility by recognizing and affirming the faith of her younger cousin, which was a vital factor in God's plan unfolding.

**Joyful and Spirit-filled response:** The encounter between Elizabeth and Mary was marked by joy, with Elizabeth's baby (John) leaping in her womb at Mary's greeting. This response signifies a heart overflowing with gratitude and wonder at God's work.

*46 And Mary said:*

*My soul magnifies the Lord,*

*47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*

*48 because he has looked with favor  
on the humble condition of his servant.*

*Surely, from now on all generations  
will call me blessed,*

*49 because the Mighty One  
has done great things for me,  
and his name is holy.*

*50 His mercy is from generation to generation  
on those who fear him.*

## HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

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51 *He has done a mighty deed with his arm;  
he has scattered the proud  
because of the thoughts of their hearts;*  
52 *he has toppled the mighty from their thrones  
and exalted the lowly.*  
53 *He has satisfied the hungry with good things  
and sent the rich away empty.*  
54 *He has helped his servant Israel,  
remembering his mercy*  
55 *to Abraham and his descendants forever,  
just as he spoke to our ancestors.*

Luke 1:46-55

**Setting aside personal circumstances:** Despite her own miraculous pregnancy after years of barrenness, according to Compelling Truth, Elizabeth did not dwell on her own situation. Instead, she celebrated Mary and the greater work God was doing.

Elizabeth's example radiates a profound humility and fervent gratitude as she ardently acknowledges God's miraculous work in the lives of others, even amidst her own abundant blessings. Her unwavering focus on God's divine plan and the joyous arrival of the Messiah through Mary showcases her deep faith and transformative spirit.



# HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

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## How to cultivate Elizabeth's humility and gratitude for God's work in others

Elizabeth's example in the Bible provides a blueprint for how we can genuinely celebrate and appreciate God's blessings in the lives of others, even when we ourselves might be facing difficulties. Here's a breakdown of how to cultivate that humility and gratitude:

### 1. Recognize God's sovereign hand

- Acknowledge God's work: Just as Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, recognized the significance of Mary's pregnancy, we can seek to recognize and celebrate God's activity in the lives of those around us. This involves acknowledging that God is sovereign and has a plan for each individual.
- Trust His timing: Understanding that God's timing is perfect, not only in our lives but also in the lives of others, is crucial. Even when we long for a specific outcome in someone's life, we can trust that God is working behind the scenes and His timing is always the best.

### 2. Shift the focus from self to others

- Avoid comparison: Comparison can be the thief of joy. Instead of comparing our own journey with others, we can embrace our own unique path and celebrate their successes without feeling inadequate.
- Celebrate with others: Romans 12:15 encourages us to "rejoice with those who rejoice". We can actively choose to share in the joy and excitement of others' blessings, whether through words of encouragement, practical support, or simply expressing heartfelt congratulations.

# HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

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## 3. Practice gratitude for God's goodness

- Cultivate a grateful heart: Gratitude is a spiritual discipline that requires conscious effort and involves choosing to be thankful and joyful. We can cultivate this by:
- Praising God: Even when you don't feel like it, praise God for who He is and what He's done.
- Keeping a gratitude journal: Regularly jot down the blessings in your life, no matter how small.
- Practicing mindful moments: Take pauses to appreciate the beauty and goodness around you.
- Sharing your gratitude: Express your appreciation to those who have been part of God's blessings in your life.
- Being a vessel for blessing others: Look for ways to extend God's love and blessings to others through acts of kindness and generosity.

## 4. Seek guidance and strength from the Holy Spirit

- Depend on the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit can help us recognize God's work in others, give us courage to share, and equip us with love, joy, and peace.
- Pray for discernment and a humble heart: Ask the Holy Spirit to help you see others through God's eyes, to have a heart that rejoices in the blessings of others, and to avoid the trap of pride and comparison.

By wholeheartedly engaging in these spiritual disciplines and fervently seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can ignite a heart that embodies Elizabeth's profound humility and overflowing gratitude, empowering us to dis-

# HUMILITY AND GRATITUDE

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cover boundless joy and jubilantly celebrate God's magnificent work in the lives of those around us.

Elizabeth

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encouragement  
AND  
SUPPORT

# Elizabeth

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*39 In those days Mary set out and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judah*

**Luke 1:45**

Elizabeth became a beacon of much-needed encouragement and unwavering support for Mary, who was navigating the storm of uncertainty and the weight of potential judgment surrounding her miraculous pregnancy. Elizabeth's heartfelt affirmation of Mary's steadfast belief in God's promises is a striking testament to the vital role we play in uplifting and fortifying one another on our faith journeys. This powerful moment captured in Luke 1:45 illuminates the profound impact we can have when we empower others, igniting their spirits and bolstering their confidence in the divine path laid before them. Here's how:

## **1. Validates and confirms the word of God**

- Mary had just received a challenging and seemingly impossible message from the angel Gabriel.
- When Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, affirmed Mary's belief, it wasn't just a friendly gesture, but a Spirit-led confirmation of the truth of what Mary had heard.
- Elizabeth's words, "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!" essentially reinforced Mary's faith by assuring her that God's word was reliable and would surely come to pass.

## **2. Provides encouragement and strengthens faith**

- Mary, a young woman facing potential social stigma and the enormity of

# ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

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her calling, needed encouragement.

- Elizabeth's words provided the needed affirmation, helping Mary to stand firm in her belief and find strength for the challenging path ahead.
- This act of encouragement shows how we can spur one another on toward love and good deeds and that our words have the power to lift up and strengthen others.

## 3. Fosters community and shared joy

- Mary sought out Elizabeth, and their meeting highlights the importance of community and mutual support during times of both challenge and joy.
- Elizabeth's response wasn't filled with envy or comparison, but with genuine joy and celebration for what God was doing in Mary's life.
- Their shared experience of pregnancy, both miraculous, brought them together and allowed them to affirm God's work in each other's lives.

## 4. Models true Christian fellowship

- The encounter between Mary and Elizabeth serves as a model for how believers should interact.
- It demonstrates the importance of being open to the Holy Spirit's leading to recognize and affirm God's work in others.
- The love and support these women offered each other serves as a beautiful example of sisterhood.
- Elizabeth's powerful affirmation of Mary's faith demonstrates that we can passionately engage in God's magnificent plan by speaking uplifting words, fiercely affirming the beliefs of those around us, and embodying a support-

# ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

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ive presence throughout their faith journeys. This incredible act not only uplifts the individual but also glorifies God, joyfully celebrating His unwavering faithfulness.

## How to model Elizabeth in encouraging others in their spiritual journeys

Elizabeth's encounter with Mary (Luke 1:39-45) is a powerful testament to the art of uplifting others in their journey of faith. She didn't merely speak platitudes; her words of encouragement flowed from a wellspring of profound faith, ignited by the very presence of the Holy Spirit.

Here's how you can model Elizabeth's approach:

### 1. Seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit

- Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit when she affirmed Mary's faith,. This enabled her to discern God's hand in Mary's life and speak words of truth and encouragement.
- **Application:** Before you seek to encourage someone, pray and ask the Holy Spirit for discernment and for the right words to speak. Your words will be more impactful if they are Spirit-led and address the person's specific needs.

### 2. Be observant and recognize God's work in others

- Elizabeth didn't need Mary to tell her everything; she recognized the blessing on Mary's life through the leaping of her child in the womb.
- **Application:** Pay close attention to the lives of those around you. Observe how God is at work, even in the small victories or challenges they face. Notice their faithfulness, growth, or the fruit of the Spirit



# ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

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blossoming in their lives.

## 3. Offer heartfelt affirmation and specific praise

- Elizabeth's words, "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!", were a powerful affirmation of Mary's faith.
- **Application:** Don't just give general encouragement. Be specific about what you see God doing in the person's life and offer praise and affirmation for their faith, obedience, or growth, identifying the fruit of the Spirit and the spiritual gifts you see in them.

## 4. Point others to God's promises

- Elizabeth's encouragement pointed Mary to the trustworthiness of God's promises, reminding her that what God had spoken would be fulfilled.
- **Application:** Share relevant scripture verses and remind others of God's faithfulness and promises. Let them know that their hope and strength come from Him, not their own abilities.

## 5. Be present and offer support

- Mary went to Elizabeth for reassurance and support, and Elizabeth welcomed her with open arms.
- **Application:** Make yourself available to others. Offer your presence, listen attentively, pray for them (and let them know you're praying), and share your own experiences of God's faithfulness when appropriate.

# ENCOURAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

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## 6. Focus on their spiritual growth, not your own recognition

- Elizabeth humbly recognized Mary's unique role and the significance of Jesus' coming, not seeking the spotlight for herself.
- **Application:** When encouraging others, your goal should be their spiritual growth and the glory of God, not personal recognition or comparison.

By embracing Elizabeth's extraordinary example, you can ignite a profound source of encouragement, empowering others to discover the unshakeable strength, boundless confidence, and unwavering hope that await them in their spiritual journeys.

# Elizabeth

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PRIORITIZING GOD'S  
WILL

# Elizabeth

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*59 When they came to circumcise the child on the eighth day, they were going to name him Zechariah, after his father. 60 But his mother responded, "No. He will be called John."*

*61 Then they said to her, "None of your relatives has that name."*

Luke 1:59-61

When it came time to name her son, Elizabeth insisted on the name "John" as instructed by the angel, even though it wasn't a family name and went against societal expectations. This highlights the importance of obeying God's commands and prioritizing His will above the opinions of others. Elizabeth's insistence that her baby be named John, despite the community's expectation to name him after his father, Zechariah, demonstrates a clear prioritization of God's will over cultural and familial customs.

Here's how her actions showed this prioritization:

## 1. Defying cultural norms

- In ancient Jewish culture, it was common practice to name the firstborn son after the father or another male relative, especially the grandfather.
- When the community gathered for John's circumcision, they naturally assumed the baby would be named Zechariah.
- Elizabeth's firm declaration, "No, he shall be called John!", was a direct opposition to this tradition and a surprise to the relatives and neighbors present.

# PRIORITIZING GOD'S WILL

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## 2. Obedience to divine instruction

*13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John.*

Luke 1:13

- The angel Gabriel had explicitly instructed Zechariah that his son's name was to be John (Luke 1:13).
- Although Zechariah was unable to speak, he had clearly communicated this divine instruction to Elizabeth.
- Elizabeth's insistence was not based on personal preference or a desire to be rebellious, but on a commitment to obey God's explicit command.

## 3. Acting on revealed truth

- Elizabeth's knowledge of the name John wasn't a guess or a personal desire, but a received revelation. Whether this was through Zechariah's written communication or a spiritual revelation, she knew it was God's will.
- Her steadfastness in the face of questioning and opposition from the community shows her trust in the revealed truth and her unwavering commitment to God's plan.

## 4. Understanding the significance of the name

- The name John (Yochanan in Hebrew) means "God is gracious" or "God shows grace".

# PRIORITIZING GOD'S WILL

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- Elizabeth and Zechariah understood that this name was divinely chosen to signify the special purpose their son would fulfill as the forerunner of the Messiah.
- By insisting on the name John, Elizabeth was not only obeying God's will but also acknowledging the child's prophetic destiny and his crucial role in salvation history.

In conclusion, Elizabeth's bold actions at John's naming ceremony electrified the air with a fierce commitment to God's will, triumphing over the weight of human tradition. Her unwavering insistence on the name John, defiantly standing against societal pressure, illuminated her profound faith in God's promises and her deep obedience to His divine instructions. This extraordinary act of faith not only unleashed the potential within John but also catapulted him onto the glorious path that God had meticulously ordained for him.

## How can I prioritize the will of God in my life like Elizabeth did?

Just as Elizabeth fearlessly embraced God's will above the pressures of cultural norms, you too can ignite a fervent commitment in your life by passionately seeking to know, understand, and wholeheartedly obey His divine wishes. This exhilarating journey of faith demands intentional practices and an unwavering desire to follow His guiding light!

Here's how you can model Elizabeth's prioritization of God's will:

### 1. Seek to know God's will through Scripture and prayer

- Elizabeth received a direct revelation from God through Zechariah about the naming of her son. While direct angelic appearances are not



# PRIORITIZING GOD'S WILL

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common today, we need to make the role of scriptures in learning God's will a priority.

- **Application:** Regularly engage with God's Word. Study the Bible to understand His character, principles, and commands. Dedicate time to prayer, asking God for guidance and discernment in specific situations and for your life as a whole. Commit your decisions to God and trust that He will make His will known to you.

## 2. Cultivate a heart of obedience and surrender

- Elizabeth's unwavering commitment to naming her son John, despite pressure from her relatives, was a clear act of obedience to God's instruction.
- **Application:** Prioritize obedience to God in all areas of life, even when it means going against popular opinion or personal desires. Be willing to surrender your own plans and desires to God, trusting that He knows what is best for you, according to Harvest.org. Remember Jesus' example in Gethsemane, praying, "Not My will, but Yours be done",.

## 3. Resist conforming to worldly pressures

- Elizabeth's choice to name her son John defied the cultural norm of naming the firstborn son after the father or grandfather.
- **Application:** Be aware of societal and cultural pressures that might lead you away from God's will. Don't be afraid to stand for your convictions, even if it means going against the grain. Romans 12:2 encourages us to "not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the

# PRIORITIZING GOD'S WILL

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renewing of our mind" so we can discern and embrace God's will.

## 4. Seek wise counsel and support

- While Elizabeth made her own decision, it's likely she discussed the situation with Zechariah, who confirmed the name John through his written response.
- **Application:** Surround yourself with a community of believers who can offer godly advice and support in your spiritual journey. Seek counsel from trusted mentors or spiritual leaders who can help you discern God's will and encourage you in obedience.

## 5. Trust in God's faithfulness and timing

- Elizabeth and Zechariah had to wait many years for the fulfillment of God's promise of a child, but they remained faithful and eventually saw it come to pass.
- **Application:** Trust that God is faithful to fulfill His promises in His perfect timing, even when it seems delayed or unclear. Focus on being obedient in the present moment, trusting that God is working behind the scenes and will guide you each step of the way.

Prioritizing God's will is a profoundly transformative journey that ignites your relationship with Him, fortifies your faith, and floods your life with unparalleled peace and purpose. By wholeheartedly seeking His guidance, courageously surrendering your own desires, bravely resisting the pull of worldly pressures, surrounding yourself with unwavering support, and boldly trusting His faithfulness, you can truly live a life that glorifies God and resonates with

# PRIORITIZING GOD'S WILL

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His magnificent plan.

# Elizabeth

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THE POWER OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT

# Elizabeth

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41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped inside her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Luke 1:41

Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit when Mary greeted her, allowing her to recognize Jesus' presence in Mary's womb and to speak prophetically. This reminds us that God can empower us through the Holy Spirit to discern His will, speak His truth, and be agents of encouragement and comfort to others. From Elizabeth's experience in Luke 1, particularly her encounter with Mary, we learn several key things about the Holy Spirit and His work in the lives of believers:

## 1. The Holy Spirit reveals truth and grants discernment

- Upon hearing Mary's greeting, Elizabeth was "filled with the Holy Spirit".
- This filling enabled her to immediately recognize the significance of Mary's pregnancy and the divine identity of the child she carried. She exclaimed, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!", even before Mary had explicitly shared her news.
- The Holy Spirit granted Elizabeth supernatural insight, allowing her to perceive a truth she couldn't have known through natural means.
- This demonstrates that the Holy Spirit reveals truth and grants discernment to those He fills, empowering them to understand and acknowledge God's work.

# THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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## 2. The Holy Spirit inspires prophetic proclamation and praise

- Elizabeth, under the Spirit's influence, spoke prophetically, not only blessing Mary but also affirming the fulfillment of God's promises, declaring, "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill His promises to her!".
- Her words of praise to God were inspired by the Holy Spirit's presence and the realization of God's unfolding plan.
- This highlights the Holy Spirit's role in inspiring prophetic words and leading believers to express heartfelt praise to God.

## 3. The Holy Spirit empowers for specific purposes

- Elizabeth's filling with the Holy Spirit empowered her to recognize and affirm Jesus' identity even in Mary's womb.
- The Spirit's work in Elizabeth prepared her to be the mother of John the Baptist, who himself would be filled with the Holy Spirit from birth to prepare the way for Jesus.
- This shows that the Holy Spirit empowers individuals to carry out specific tasks and callings in God's plan.

## 4. The Holy Spirit brings joy and confirmation

- John the Baptist leaped in Elizabeth's womb at the sound of Mary's greeting, a joyful response to the presence of the Messiah within Mary.
- Elizabeth's subsequent words of affirmation served as a confirmation for Mary, providing reassurance and strength in the face of her unique situation.



# THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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- The Holy Spirit brings joy and confirms God's word in the hearts of believers, fostering a sense of peace and assurance.

In essence, Elizabeth's experience teaches us that the Holy Spirit is actively involved in revealing God's truth, inspiring praise and prophetic words, empowering individuals for their God-given roles, and bringing joy and confirmation to believers. Her encounter with Mary vividly illustrates the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in recognizing and responding to God's presence and work in the world.

## How can I apply Elizabeth's experience with the Holy Spirit to my life?

Elizabeth's experience with the Holy Spirit offers powerful lessons for experiencing His presence and guidance in your own life. Here's how you can apply those lessons:

### 1. Cultivate a receptive spirit to recognize God's work

- Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and recognized God's hand in Mary's life.
- **Application:** Pay attention to the lives of those around you and look for evidence of God's work. Make it a habit to ask God to show you where He is at work in all the events of your life,. Recognize that God, who is within you, holds you safe in His hands,.

### 2. Seek divine guidance through prayer and Scripture

- Elizabeth's words to Mary demonstrate Spirit-led discernment and understanding of God's plan.

# THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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- **Application:** Regularly engage with God's Word through reading, study, and meditation to discern His will,. Dedicate time to prayer, asking for guidance and discernment in specific situations and for your life as a whole.

## 3. Embrace moments of stillness and reflection

- Elizabeth, in her own season of waiting, sought solitude and reflection.
- **Application:** Schedule regular quiet time with God through prayer, meditation, and reflection. Find a quiet place where you can be present and attentive to His voice. Plan regular moments of solitude simply dedicated time alone with Him.

## 4. Prioritize God's will over personal desires and worldly pressures

- Elizabeth's choice to name her son John defied cultural expectations, highlighting her commitment to God's plan.
- **Application:** Examine whether personal desires or worldly pressures might be influencing your decisions. Be willing to surrender your own plans and desires to God, trusting that He knows what is best for you.

## 5. Be a source of affirmation and encouragement for others

- Elizabeth's powerful affirmation validated Mary's faith and provided her with much-needed encouragement.
- **Application:** Actively seek opportunities to affirm and encourage others in their spiritual journeys,. Share relevant scripture and remind

# THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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them of God's faithfulness and promises. Let them know that their hope and strength come from Him, not from their own abilities.

## 6. Trust in God's faithfulness, even during waiting periods

- Elizabeth's story reminds us that even when waiting on God's promises, we can trust in His faithfulness and timing.
- **Application:** Be patient and persevere during challenging times, knowing that God is working behind the scenes for your ultimate good. Rest in the knowledge that God is sovereign and His plans will come to fruition in His perfect time.

By wholeheartedly embracing these sacred principles and aligning your heart with God's divine will, you can unlock the incredible transformative power of the Holy Spirit! Experience the awe-inspiring guidance He offers, recognize His marvelous work in every aspect of your life, and discover boundless joy in His glorious presence!

# Elizabeth

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THE POWER OF  
THE HOLY SPIRIT

# Elizabeth

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Here are some journal prompts to help you reflect on Elizabeth's life and apply its lessons to your own spiritual journey:

## 1. On righteousness and waiting

- Elizabeth and Zechariah were righteous and blameless, yet faced the disappointment of barrenness.
- **Prompt:** Think about a time when you felt you were doing all the right things but still faced a challenging or unmet desire. How did you respond? What did you learn about God's timing and His plans during that period?

## 2. On the power of encouragement

- Elizabeth's Spirit-filled affirmation of Mary's faith was a powerful source of encouragement for the young, pregnant woman.
- **Prompt:** Who in your life needs encouragement right now, particularly regarding their faith journey? How can you specifically affirm and support them, just as Elizabeth did for Mary?

## 3. On prioritizing God's will

- Elizabeth insisted on naming her son John, defying cultural expectations but remaining faithful to God's instruction.
- **Prompt:** Reflect on a situation where you had to choose between societal expectations or personal desires and God's will. What did you choose? What was the outcome? What lessons did you learn about the importance of prioritizing God's will?

# JOURNAL PROMPTS

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## 4. On the Holy Spirit's guidance

- Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, recognized Mary's role as the mother of the Lord.
- **Prompt:** How can you cultivate a greater sensitivity to the Holy Spirit's leading in your daily life? How can you better discern God's hand at work in the lives of others?

## 5. On gratitude and joy

- Elizabeth's encounter with Mary was filled with joy and praise for God's goodness.
- **Prompt:** What are you grateful for in your life today? How can you express that gratitude to God and to those around you? How can you cultivate a heart that rejoices in the blessings of others, even in challenging times?



# Elizabeth

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CONCLUSION

# Elizabeth

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Drawing insights from Elizabeth's life ignites a fervent source of wisdom and inspiration for our own spiritual journeys. Her relentless faithfulness in the face of years of barrenness, her Spirit-filled affirmation of Mary's unwavering belief, and her brave obedience in naming her son John all beckon us to embrace powerful lessons on living a life profoundly anchored in God.

May we, like Elizabeth, wholeheartedly prioritize God's will above our deepest desires and the relentless expectations of the world around us! Let us fervently cultivate a spirit of joyful gratitude, eagerly seeking to recognize and celebrate God's magnificent work in the lives of those we encounter. In those seasons of waiting and uncertainty, may we draw immense strength and unshakable peace from the promise that God is unwaveringly faithful to fulfill His promises, even when the path ahead seems shrouded in mystery. Just as Elizabeth devotedly prepared the way for John, who in turn prepared the way for Jesus, let us passionately respond to God's divine invitation to deepen our faith, walk boldly in obedience, and become vessels of His boundless love and truth in a world that is desperately yearning for hope. As articulated in *Rock Solid Faith*, may Elizabeth's inspiring example ignite within us a profound commitment to God and a steadfast trust in His amazing ways of orchestrating His purposes in our lives!

As you close out this study, spend time reflecting on what the Lord has revealed to you about you and Him and take those bold courageous steps of faith in moving through obedience in the way He has prompted you. Spend time with Him today in prayer and thanksgiving.



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