



Week #4: Waiting In Anticipation

But the angel reassured him, “Don’t fear, Zachariah. Your prayer has been heard. Elizabeth, your wife, will bear a son by you. You are to name him John. You’re going to leap like a gazelle for joy, and not only you—many will delight in his birth. He’ll achieve great stature with God.” Zachariah said to the angel, “Do you expect me to believe this? I’m an old man and my wife is an old woman.”

Luke 1:13-18 (MSG)

“Every word I’ve spoken to you will come true on time—God’s time.”

Luke 1:20 (MSG)

_____ in the waiting.

When the course of his priestly assignment was completed, he went back home. It wasn’t long before his wife, Elizabeth, conceived. She went off by herself for five months, relishing her pregnancy. “So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!” she said.

Luke 1:23-25 (MSG)

_____ in the waiting.

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to the Galilean village of Nazareth to a virgin engaged to be married to a man descended from David. His name was Joseph, and the virgin’s name, Mary. Upon entering, Gabriel greeted her:

*Good morning!
You’re beautiful with God’s beauty,
Beautiful inside and out!
God be with you.*

She was thoroughly shaken, wondering what was behind a greeting like that. But the angel assured her, "Mary, you have nothing to fear. God has a surprise for you: You will become pregnant and give birth to a son and call his name Jesus."

Luke 1:26-33 (MSG)

Mary said to the angel, "But how? I've never slept with a man."

The angel answered,

*The Holy Spirit will come upon you,
the power of the Highest hover over you;
Therefore, the child you bring to birth
will be called Holy, Son of God.*

"And did you know that your cousin Elizabeth conceived a son, old as she is? Everyone called her barren, and here she is six months pregnant! Nothing, you see, is impossible with God."

And Mary said,

*Yes, I see it all now:
I'm the Lord's maid, ready to serve.
Let it be with me
just as you say.*

Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:34-38 (MSG)

_____ out God's _____ in the waiting.

Mary didn't waste a minute. She got up and traveled to a town in Judah in the hill country, straight to Zachariah's house, and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby in her womb leaped. She was filled with the Holy Spirit, and sang out exuberantly...

Luke 1:39-41 (MSG)

_____ in the waiting.

*“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.
His mercy extends to those who fear him,
from generation to generation.
He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
He has brought down rulers from their thrones
but has lifted up the humble.
He has filled the hungry with good things
but has sent the rich away empty.
He has helped his servant Israel,
remembering to be merciful
to Abraham and his descendants forever,
just as he promised our ancestors.”*

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Luke 1:46-56 (NIV)

Discussion questions:

1. Have you ever related to Elizabeth or Mary? In what ways?
2. What would it look like to reframe the miracles you see in others' lives as glimpses into the God you serve and the kind of gifts He gives?
3. Who is someone else who has been surprised by God that you can celebrate?
4. How will you release your expectations, obey God where you are, pray, look for and anticipate being surprised by God?

Recommended resources:

[Community Church Movement Advent Devotional](#) (Free web/app resource)
[Fervent Prayer & Waiting for a Miracle from God](#), Sermon by Priscilla Shirer
[What Comes Next: 40 Days of Healing After Heartbreak, Burnout, or Brokenness](#), by Jess Connolly
[Experiencing Friendship with God](#), by Faith Eury Cho

(MSG) Message Version (NIV) New International Version

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“Every word I’ve spoken to you will come true on time—God’s time.”

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Release your expectations in the waiting.

When the course of his priestly assignment was completed, he went back home. It wasn’t long before his wife, Elizabeth, conceived. She went off by herself for five months, relishing her pregnancy. “So, this is how God acts to remedy my unfortunate condition!” she said.

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Obey God in the waiting.

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I’m the Lord’s maid, ready to serve.
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Seek out God’s surprises in the waiting.

Mary didn’t waste a minute. She got up and traveled to a town in Judah in the hill country, straight to Zachariah’s house, and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby in her womb leaped. She was filled with the Holy Spirit, and sang out exuberantly...

Luke 1:39-41 (MSG)

Worship in the waiting.

*“My soul glorifies the Lord
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has been mindful
of the humble state of his servant.
From now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me—*

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His mercy extends to those who fear him,
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