



SEEMINGLY INSIGNIFICANT

# WEEK 1

# STUDY GUIDE

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*NOVEMBER 20-24, 2023*



# Monday, November 20, 2023

**Read:** Luke 1:5-25

**Scripture Verse:** *“And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.” Luke 1:6-7*

## Today's Thought:

God always exercises his power in strange and extraordinary ways to attract man's attention to himself; with the aim of reminding him of his origin, of proving his love to him, and of testifying to his greatness. For example, Moses at the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21-27); Joshua facing the wall of Jericho (Joshua 6:20); Sarah, Abraham's wife, gave birth when she was ninety years old (Genesis 17:17). Despite everything he does to prove to man his greatness, to bring him closer to him, man flees the presence of God, day after day. He proves his indifference and his incomprehension towards the living and true God. Instead of believing in the greatness of God, he seeks to distance himself from God to attach himself to evil. We read: “I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, “Here I am, here I am,” to a nation that was not called by my name. I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices” Isaiah 65:1-2.

In the text we are studying, we see a couple that proves the opposite. We see a couple, despite their age, who have proven their faithfulness to God. They are Zechariah and Elizabeth. They were faithful to God. They lived in a way that pleased God. They loved God and showed him respect. The text tells us that his wife Elizabeth was barren, she could not have children. We see that despite their infertility problem, they were faithful to God, and they kept faith in God. They did not view their barrenness as a burden and curse to break their relationship with God. Rather, amid their trials, they showed their faith in God and became more engaged in God's work. They never stopped making requests to God. In the dark days of their lives, they invoked God, they did not allow themselves to be carried away by circumstances. It seems that they have already encountered this passage from Isaiah: “Seek the Lord while he may be found; call upon him while he is near.” Isaiah 55:6. They did not let the days of trouble take them away. They rooted their faith in God despite times and circumstances. Despite their advanced age, the Lord had not yet finished with them. From the incredible, God will make his glory shine.

This is why we say at the beginning that the Lord always does strange, unusual things, to show man the necessity of his presence in his life. He always does extraordinary things to manifest his glory.

What we can take away from this study is that as Christians we must not let circumstances shake us away from God. We must not let any situation prevent us from investing our time, our money, our lives in the work of God. We must not let circumstances prevent us from praying and seeking the face of God, for our prayers will not be in vain, for in due time God will send us deliverance. Sometimes in our lives there are challenges that seem too big, too lofty, and insurmountable. There are inaccessible mountains blocking our path; we find ourselves in dead ends. In everything, we must call upon God from the midst of distress. We must not let doubt and despair overwhelm us. Believe that his mighty arm will save us; and believe in his promise. If everything is dark, don't lose heart. Do not doubt the living God, even amid the fury of the storm, keep believing, keep trusting, and he will work. If he kept his promise by giving us his Son Jesus to redeem us from the curse of sin, what else will he not give us? Stay at peace, be happy and have confidence. Soon your voice will exalt him. If you remain confident, sooner or later you will be amazed and ask, "What kind of God is this?" Even my mountains have been removed! Please note! It is never too late for God. He who made the promise will not fail to fulfill it.

Lord, thank you for your word. You are the God who always hears our prayers and always keeps his promises. Lord, I give myself entirely to you. I believe in your power and in your promises. I am confident that you will topple my mountain, no matter how big it is. In the name of Jesus.

- Why does God constantly exercise his power in strange and extraordinary ways?
- What is man's behavior in the face of God's love?
- What was Zechariah's attitude toward God despite his wife's sterility?
- What should our attitude be towards the circumstances of life?

**Further Reading:** Psalms 50:14-15

## Tuesday, November 21, 2023

**Read:** Luke 1:5-25

**Scripture Verse:** *“But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.” Luke 1:13*

### Today’s Thought:

I don’t really know what the world was like in which Zechariah and Elizabeth, his wife, lived. But when we consider verse 13, we can see that although they were faithful to God, although they were upright before God, there were many things happening in their lives or around them that caused fear. One of the things that created fear in their lives was that they were old and had no children. This situation worried them greatly, so they continually brought this concern to God in prayer for a solution. The Bible does not tell us how long it has been since Zechariah and Elizabeth prayed for a child. But the Bible tells us that God heard their prayer and sent an angel named Gabriel to comfort them and said, “Do not be afraid, your prayer has been heard.”

The angel told him not to be afraid, which means to have firm trust in God. Do not doubt because you serve a good God. His hands are not too short to reach out to you, nor his hearing too weak to hear you. Today is the day of your deliverance. You have a powerful weapon in your hand; you have been using it for a long time and it is very effective. It’s more powerful than the weapon of the enemy. Now it has produced results. This weapon is “prayer!” Prayer is a powerful weapon that God has given Christians to speak to Him, share concerns, and invite Him into every detail of their lives.

The enemy’s plan is to create fear in our lives and raise it higher than a mountain in our minds, showing us that the problem is insurmountable. It’s a lie! We must always believe that God is in control. We must raise our faith higher than our fear. Fear only increases our problems and installs negative thoughts in our subconscious, disrupting our day and ruining our lives. Fear and doubt cannot change circumstances. Instead of being afraid of circumstances, cling to God, trust and praise His name. It is he who can change times and circumstances. We read in Daniel 2:20-21: “Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, to whom belong wisdom and might. He changes times and seasons; he removes kings

and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.”

The world we live in is full of things that can scare us and make us lose our focus on God: health issues, relationship issues, socio-political issues, faith issues, identity problems, financial problems, religion problems, etc. We must build our faith on the promises of God. He has good news for you. Hold on to God! For he has indeed seen your situation, he has heard your prayer, and he is concerned about your suffering. Then he will come down to deliver you from the hand of the enemy to give you a future and a bright hope. So, rest assured! Have faith in God and his promises. Faith moves mountains and changes circumstances. Don't view problems with a human dimension; face them with a spiritual dimension and cling to God. Do not look at your challenges with carnal eyes but look at them with faith and trust that God will solve them. Whatever happens, believe that God has already given you everything in his Son Jesus Christ to remain faithful to him just as Zechariah and Elizabeth remained faithful to God no matter what. They did not view their barrenness as a curse that would break their relationship with God. We must understand that through Jesus Christ, God has made very great and precious promises to us. By trusting Jesus, we will be able to escape this world, rotten by the desires of evil, and we will be able to unite with God Himself. Therefore, let us live a righteous life toward God and, at the same time, learn to know His will for us.

Lord, thank you for your word. I know that in the world there are many reasons to worry, but I know that you are in control; indeed, I am more than a conqueror. I am convinced that my prayers are not in vain. As you heard Zechariah's cry and sent your angel to give him a positive response, I wait patiently for you. I believe that the answers to my prayers are on the way.

- What was Zechariah and Elizabeth's greatest concern?
- What did God do for Zechariah and Elizabeth?
- What was the answer to Zechariah's prayer?
- What is your biggest concern?
- What should you do?
- How should you view your challenges?
- What is the greatest promise God has made to us?

**Further Reading:** 1 Peter 1:6-9

## **Wednesday, November 22, 2023**

**Read:** Luke 1:5–25

**Scripture Verse:** *“And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth” Luke 1:14.*

### **Today’s Thought:**

We have seen the greatest worry of Zechariah and Elizabeth, his wife. We saw that Zechariah and his wife were very old and had no children. According to Elizabeth’s statement in verse 25, not having a child at that time meant a lot to them. The promise of this child is for them a satisfaction in the eyes of people. She said: “These days he has shown his favor and removed my disgrace among the people.” She said that the Lord had taken away all their humiliations and shames.

The joy they lost since their marriage will now be found again. The Lord promised them that He would turn their sadness and lamentation into perfect joy. He will bring them back to life and rejuvenate their soul. Sadness and shame will no longer be their daily life. It won’t be just any child. “He will be a joy and a delight to you, and many will rejoice at his birth.” Luke 1:14. The enemy wanted to steal the joy of Zechariah and Elizabeth, but the Lord took it in his hands.

This is the same thing the enemy wanted to do with our lives. All he wants is to take away our joy and install his fear, sadness, dread, anxiety, and depression into our lives to lead us off track and destroy us.

Bernard Emkeyes says, “If you want to stay happy, you must learn to worship God, not your problems. You must trust him; he is great and can transform any situation. The more you look to God, the more your faith grows, and your problems diminish. Conversely, by focusing on your difficulties, you lose your joy and become weak.”

The enemy knows exactly why he wanted to steal our joy. Joy is therefore an emotion that helps us maintain our mood and is the source of our strength (Nehemiah 8:10). When we have joy, we have strength, and when we have strength, we can face daily adversities and trials. Zechariah and Elizabeth knew the limits of their strength, they relied on God to make the impossible possible for them. Zechariah and Elizabeth are a good example for us today.

We should always hope in God because it is never too late for God. When the enemy of our soul says it’s over for you, God always has the last word. Brothers and sisters, when faced with new challenges, instead of bowing down to them, it is better to rely on God, who is the God of the



impossible. It will always be tempting to find your own solution, but it will not be the best without consulting your God.

Sometimes when we try to figure it out on our own, we get it wrong. When we submit everything to God, he brings us the result we did not expect. In our daily lives, it is very important to use Zechariah's patience, faith, righteousness, and faithfulness to improve our relationship with God and to get the result we didn't expect.

Lord, thank you for your word today. I know the enemy's plan is to take away the joy I have in you. Help me not to look at life with eyes of sadness or depression; on the contrary, may your happiness be my portion every day. In the morning, as soon as I get up, may the name of your Son Jesus be in my mouth. Lord, thank you for each new day you grant me and continue to bless every step I take.

- Why would Zechariah want to have a child?
- What did God promise Zechariah and Elizabeth?
- What is the plan of the enemy of our soul?
- What is God's plan for us?
- What should we do in times of great challenges?

**Further Reading:** Zephaniah 3:17, Isaiah 61:10

## Thursday, November 23, 2023

**Read:** Luke 1:5–25

**Scripture Verse:** *“And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.” Luke 1:18–19.*

### **Today’s Thought:**

We saw that God wanted to remove the disgrace and shame of Zechariah and Elizabeth, his wife, in the eyes of his people. To do this, God promised them a child who would be special in the eyes of God and his people. This child will not be just any child because, according to the angel’s description, he will have a great responsibility on his shoulders. His mission will be to bring a large part of the people of Israel back to the Lord their God. With the power of God upon him, he will also have the mission of preparing a people for the Lord.

In our observations we can see that he will not be just any child. When Zechariah received this good news, he could not believe it. Firstly because of his advanced age. Second, as if Zechariah were saying, “Who am I to receive such favor from God?” By questioning what God has promised, doubt is created in your heart.. When there is doubt, the devil takes advantage of it to destroy your hope in God. Doubt is evil because it extinguishes the flame of your faith in God and His power to intervene in your needs (Genesis 3:1). This is exactly what the enemy did in Zechariah’s life. The devil created doubt in his heart, and he began to doubt the goodness of God. He saw that the promises were too great for his faith to believe. He couldn’t believe that such a child could come from him. He tried to create his own obstacles to prevent him from obtaining God’s blessings. Despite his previous experiences with God, doubt was always present in his life.

He said to the angel, “How can I be sure? I am an old man, and my wife is elderly.” Age is not God’s problem in manifesting his glory. As I said in the previous study, God has always used strange things to make things happen for His children. God’s love, mercy and compassion are greater than our doubts. God is the master of time and circumstances. He needs no advisor to carry out his plan for his children. He doesn’t need advice to act. God knows the right time to meet the needs of his children. He intervened in time for Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Normally, your need might be different from that of Zechariah and Elizabeth. What is important is that you do not doubt God's word, power, and authority. Due to Zechariah's skepticism, God's messenger told him that he would remain silent and would not be able to speak until the day it happened because he did not believe in God's intervention. Brothers and sisters, if you want to see the glory of God accomplished in your life, just believe. If you want to see the hands of God working miracles, banish all doubt from your heart (Matthew 14:31). What God has already sealed and stored up for you, the enemy cannot steal. You must always trust that God has good things in store for you. Please do not monumentalize the doubt in your heart to insult and offend your good Lord. Doubt is the greatest enemy of faith (James 1:6). If you want to benefit from all of God's goodness and what He has in store for you, you must believe that God has everything and that it is available for His children. What God has in store for you is above anything you can see with your carnal eyes. We read: "But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him." 1 Corinthians 2:9. So, if you want to have a good life, live happy days and enjoy God's blessings and promises, cast out all doubt in your heart. Don't think negatively about yourself. Seek God's grace, believe, obey His word, and pray to him in faith. "The eyes of the Lord are turned toward those who seek Him with all their heart, and His ears are attentive to their cry" (Psalms 34:15).

Lord, thank you for your promises. I know you have a lot of things in store for me. Help me to put my trust in you alone, no matter what. In your mercy, banish all doubt from me. Increase my faith in you, support me with your powerful word. Help me to keep my mind from doubt, to focus on you and your faithfulness.

- What did the angel tell Zechariah about the promised child?
- What was Zechariah's reaction after this good news?
- Where does the doubt come from?
- What does the devil do in a doubtful heart?
- What does doubt cause?
- What should you do if in doubt?
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- What does God promise us in 1 Corinthians 2:9?

**Further Reading:** Psalm 31:19

*There are so many things we are thankful for this year. But at the very top of that list is you. Wishing you a wonderful THANKSGIVING filled with joy and happiness from Heaven. May you celebrate the Thanksgiving Day with love in your heart, prosperous vision in your mind, and gratitude to your God.*

## Friday, November 24, 2023

**Read:** Luke 1:5-25

**Scripture Verse:** *“After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”” Luke 1:24-25*

### Today’s Thought:

We saw previously that Zechariah was very skeptical of the angel’s message. God used the angel as a channel to convey the message, but the message did not come from the angel. Refusing to believe the angel’s message is refusing to believe God. The angel is only a vessel to convey God’s message. The message did not belong to the angel.

Doubt is a very bad thing in the Christian’s life. We see that God silenced Zechariah for doubting God’s word. Because of his doubts, the angel said that Zechariah would remain silent and would not be able to speak until the day it happened because he did not believe his words (Luke 1:20). Do you understand what doubt could cause? The Christian must keep his mind away from doubt and concentrate on the word of God. As a Christian, you must do your best to avoid doubting God’s word. Doubt is the greatest enemy of faith that can keep you from seeing the mighty hands of God in action.

We read: “Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be taken up and thrown into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.” Mark 11:23. Doubt of God’s word leads to disconnection with God, despair, and destruction if left unmanaged. We read: “But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.” James 1:6. Being a Christian does not exclude you from doubt but always be honest and sincere towards God. Always be ready to catch yourself when doubt wants to control you.

According to the previous verses, before receiving the good news from

the angel, Zechariah and Elizabeth felt alone, broken, and afraid. Elizabeth felt overwhelmed with shame and worry, confused, depressed and hopeless. But God saw them in their suffering and pain. God heard their prayer, he was concerned for them, and sent his angel to deliver them. We see that God gave them the desire of their hearts. Then, in verse 25, they showed their gratitude to God. They understood God's deep love and compassion for them; therefore, Elizabeth began to show her gratitude to God even before giving birth.

God loves the grateful heart. We see in the time span of Elizabeth's pregnancy that their faith in God grew. They have become mature during their journey with God. Elizabeth said, "The Lord has done this for me." What doctors, friends, family cannot do, God has done! What a mighty God!

Brothers and sisters, grow your faith in God in the times of trials you encounter today because tomorrow your testimony will be great. There is no insurmountable mountain; it depends on how you approach it. Faith in God is the only way to overcome anything that comes your way. And when God does it, give him all the credit because he deserves it. Moreover, God delights in a grateful heart. Elizabeth knew this well, so during her pregnancy, she began praising God even before giving birth to her son. If you pray for a job, a home, a healing, a breakthrough, or an open door, as soon as you receive it, don't hesitate to say, "The Lord did it for me." God loves it! A grateful heart is an intelligent person. It is also a heart that seeks more and more blessings from God.

Lord, thank you for your word. Sometimes when I pray, the enemy of my soul comes to sow doubt in my heart to prevent me from receiving the answer to my prayers. Lord, help me overcome doubt with full trust in you and your promises. Give me a faith ready to show gratitude to you even before I receive the answer to my prayer.

- What can the doubt do?
- What happened to Zechariah because he doubted?
- Why should Christian not doubt?
- What did God do for Zechariah and Elizabeth?
- How did Elizabeth show her gratitude to God after pregnancy?
- If you were in Elizabeth's position, what would your attitude toward

God be?

**Further Reading:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-8, 2 Thessalonians 1:3

Hey! Today is Friday! Saturday and Sunday are coming! Don't forget your divine appointment with your Mighty God!



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