

Extremely Favored

Luke 1:5-38

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It's funny to see how some kids respond when they open their gifts and it's not what they have asked for or expected. Some become extremely happy or extremely disappointed. *I have heard kids pray at school that they get everything they want for Christmas. Usually when we pray, we would like God to intervene on our behalf. To help us, guide us or give us something we need.*

There was a priest named Zechariah who had prayed to God sincerely for his wife Elizabeth who could not have kids. One day he went to serve as priest; he went to burn incense while the worshipers waited outside. At the right side of the altar, an angel appeared to him. Zechariah wasn't ready for this visit. He went to do his priestly duty and God sent him a messenger.

-Zechariah panicked (v.12) He was gripped with fear.

The angel: *"Do not be afraid, Zechariah, your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John."*

This is John the Baptist and here is the destiny of this child. The angel informed Zechariah the future and God's plan for this child. (v.14-17)

-A joy and delight to you, many will rejoice because of his birth.

-He will not drink wine of fermented drink

-Filled with the Holy from birth

-Will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord

-Will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah (v.17)

-prepare the people for the arrival of the messiah.

Zechariah's response: v.18 ***How can I be sure of this?*** I am an old man and my wife is also old.

The angel told him his prayer has been heard by God and he's asking how can I be sure this is going to happen since I am old and so is my wife. He is doubting the angel's message.

God doesn't like when his people don't trust him. **Here is Gabriel's message to Zechariah's doubt. (v.19-21)**

God answered his prayer (v.24) Elizabeth became pregnant.

Her response: (v.25) *"Thus the Lord has done for me, to take away my reproach among people."* She felt extremely favored by God.

On the 6th month of her pregnancy, God sent Gabriel to Nazareth to deliver a message to a young woman who was planning a wedding. **Luke 1:26-29**

“Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” (v.28) “Favored one” ESV

Mary’s response: (v.29) troubled or perplexed at the angel’s greeting.

The angel then explained to her his greeting. **(v.30-33)**

But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.

31You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. **32**He

will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, **33**and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.

The angel explained to her that she would be the mother of the Messiah, the king of kings.

Mary’s response: “How will this be since I am a virgin?” (v.24)

The angel explained how this will take place. (v.35-36) It is as though the angel said to Mary, leave the details to God. What seems impossible for you it’s always possible with God. ***Nothing is impossible with God.***

Mary placed herself under the will of God. (v.38) “I am the Lord’s servant (slave) May it be to me as you have said.”

Mary surrendered her agenda to God.

Mary chose to trust God even when she didn’t understand how things will unfold in her life.

Sometimes saying yes to God means saying no to what you want, it may mean to say no to yourself or your family. Mary willingly accepted her role.

Elizabeth felt favored by God after God allowed her to be the mother of John.

She understood the grace of God. (V.25) ***“The Lord has done this for me. In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace.”***

Mary was highly favored for being chosen to be the mother by whom God will become flesh. She would be the mother of the Savior of the world. Wow, what a privilege. She was extremely favored.

You and I have been extremely favored by God. He loved us so much that he saw our disgrace and chose to show us his grace or favor. He sent his Son to take your disgrace away; to give you life in him. You are truly extremely favored by God in Jesus our Lord.