

Elizabeth
Sunday
Week Two
Attend Sunday Gathering

Monday
Week Two

Read: Luke 1v5-25

If there's anyone in the Christmas story who embodies the season of Advent best, it's Elizabeth. She was an older Jewish woman, the wife of a priest, and, for most of her life, childless. In her culture, barrenness wasn't just a private sorrow—it was a public shame. Others might have whispered that Elizabeth or her husband, Zechariah, had sinned, causing God to withhold children as punishment. For a priestly family like theirs, having children wasn't only a personal hope but also a way to pass on their religious and cultural heritage. A son, especially, could have carried on Zechariah's role in the temple. But without children, that legacy seemed lost.

The weight of being childless pressed on Elizabeth from all sides—cultural expectations, societal judgment, and her own heartache. The story tells us that she and Zechariah were righteous, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. Still, their prayers for a child had gone unanswered for years. Zechariah had been praying for a baby; we can only assume Elizabeth had prayed the same prayer countless times, only to be met with silence.

When Zechariah finally received the incredible news from the angel Gabriel that they would have a son, Elizabeth wasn't there to hear it. By the time he returned home, he was struck mute and couldn't even tell her what had happened. The story simply says, "he returned home. After this, his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion."

But for now, let's pause the story of the baby growing inside her. Let's focus on the waiting. We know Elizabeth was "advanced in years," which, in their time, likely meant decades of marriage filled with hope and heartbreak. Decades of praying, weeping, and watching others cradle the blessing she longed to hold in her arms.

A long suffering. Another pregnancy test discarded with trembling hands. Another holiday spent in quiet grief while others celebrated with growing families. Another doctor's visit with no new answers. Another season of waiting for a breakthrough that never seemed to come. Waiting can stretch on and on, leaving us raw and weary.

Elizabeth embodies Advent so well because she knew waiting intimately. Advent is a season of yearning, of hoping for what has not yet arrived. It's the tension between despair and faith, between longing and trust. And Elizabeth lived that tension for years, waiting for her deepest desires to be fulfilled.

Her story reminds us that waiting, though painful, is not without purpose. Advent invites us to lean into the waiting, just as Elizabeth did, trusting that in God's timing, hope will be born.

Listen

Elizabeth - Keith & Kristyn Getty, Ellie Holcomb

Reflect

*Again let's take a look at waiting. What are you waiting for right now? If there's nothing you're waiting on right now what has waiting looked like in the past?
What does waiting look like in this season? What does the day-to-day of waiting look like?
How does waiting make you feel? How often do you feel the waiting?*

Tuesday
Week Two



“Waiting on the Lord”

Waiting is personal, but it's unwanted. It's a part of every day, but we do everything we can to avoid it. Waiting is human—something we all face—but it's also deeply frustrating, even subversive to how we want life to go. Think about it: we switch grocery store lines, we weave through traffic, we scroll endlessly on our phones in waiting rooms. We tap our feet, sigh heavily, and check the time over and over. Waiting is just part of being human, yet it's not something we welcome.

Advent comes along, and suddenly we're invited to sit with the waiting. To reflect on it. And honestly? It's uncomfortable. The season of Advent is a beautiful reminder of what it means to wait, but it's also a hard one. Waiting well—what does that even mean? Maybe it looks like grasping for the Father with open arms, kneeling down in prayer until your knees are worn. It's yearning for Jesus to return and make all things new.

Waiting isn't passive, but it isn't entirely active either. It's the in-between. It's the tension of two faces—the longing for what is to come and the sorrow for what is. It's standing in the "now" of Jesus' birth while still yearning for His return, the "not yet". It's joy and ache woven together, praise and desperation in the same breath.

The Bible overflows with stories of waiting. Stories of people groaning, crying out, and hoping through the pain. These stories remind us that waiting is not foreign to God's people. It's a shared experience.

"We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently." Romans 8v 22-25

"I wait for the Lord, my whole being waits, and in his word, I put my hope. I wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning." Psalm 130 v 5-6

"If someone dies, will they live again? All the days of my hard service I will wait for my renewal to come." Job 14v14

"They called out in a loud voice, 'How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and avenge our blood?' Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer..." Revelation 6v10-11

How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? Psalm 13v1

Listen

How Long, O Lord, How Long (Psalm 13) - Sovereign Grace Music

Reflect

How long, O Lord?

How long will war and violence fill the earth?

How long will the weight of pain and sickness linger?

How long will children suffer unimaginable harm?

How long will homelessness haunt our streets?

How long will politics divide our tables?

How long will addiction claim lives?

How long, O Lord?

Wednesday

Week Two

Listen to Midweek Podcast

Thursday
Week Two

Read: Luke 1v57-66

Most of the week has been spent reflecting on Elizabeth's waiting. It would have felt amiss to jump straight to the part of the story where the waiting ends, but today, we turn our focus to the moment hope breaks through. To the answered prayer. To the fulfillment of longing. Elizabeth's story didn't end in barrenness or unanswered questions. It ended with a miracle—life in her womb, against all odds.

Elizabeth, an old woman far past childbearing age, became pregnant. Her waiting, though long and filled with pain, was not wasted. The child she carried would prepare the way for the Messiah, pointing to the ultimate hope of redemption. This is where hope takes center stage. It reminds us that God is who He says He is. That He will fulfill His promises. That He will return and make all things right again.

Hope is not just wishful thinking; it's anchored in God's character and faithfulness. Hope allows us to believe that our waiting is not in vain, even when it stretches longer than we ever imagined. Hope assures us that our stories aren't over, and the pain we endure is not purposeless. Whether you're hoping for your marriage to be restored, for a season of peace in your family, for financial stability, or for strength to endure your current struggle, hope holds us steady. It keeps us moving forward, even when the road is long.

Elizabeth carried her baby full term, a miracle in itself. Her young cousin Mary visited, carrying life in her own womb. Zechariah's voice, silenced during his season of disbelief, was restored, and he declared God's faithfulness with a song of praise. The child born to Elizabeth, John, became the forerunner for Jesus, preparing the way for the Savior. Scripture says, "The Lord's hand was with him... And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the wilderness until he appeared publicly to Israel."

Elizabeth embodies Advent so beautifully because her story didn't just end in waiting; it ended in hope fulfilled. It ended in the faithfulness of God made tangible in the form of a child. Her waiting wasn't wasted, and neither is ours. One day, Jesus will return, and the personal hopes we cling to will be met in Him. The waiting, though long, will be worth it.

Listen

May You Find a Light - The Brilliance

Reflection

What does hope look like for you in this season? How can you hold on to hope in the midst of uncertainty?

How might God be working in your waiting, even if the answers feel delayed or unseen?

How does the promise of Jesus' return change the way you wait today?

What can you do to remain hopeful and faithful as you wait for God's timing?

Friday
Week Two

There is hope in the coming Messiah. Today, reflect on the week, slow down and read this scripture several times throughout your day.

"A voice of one calling:

*"In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD ;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*

*Every valley shall be raised up,
every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level,
the rugged places a plain.*

*And the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.*

For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

Isaiah 40v3-5

Saturday

Week Two

You never imagined your life would go this way. When you were young, you probably thought your path was clear—marriage, children, and a home filled with love and laughter. You'd raise your kids to honor God, watch them grow, and pass down the legacy of faith you and your husband shared. You dreamed of little Zechariah becoming a priest. But then the years started to pass.

At first, you told yourself to be patient. These things take time, right? You prayed, you hoped, and you waited. But as more time passed, the waiting began to stretch—longer than you ever expected. The days turned to months, the months to years, and still, no child. Every month, the silence was deafening. You'd try not to cry as another year slipped away.

The waiting was more than just time—it was weight. Each day seemed heavier than the last. People started to whisper. They'd glance at you with pity—or worse, judgment. Surely you or your husband must have done something wrong, they thought. Why else would God withhold such a blessing? And their words stayed with you, lingering in the back of your mind even when you told yourself you shouldn't believe them.

You prayed. Oh, how you prayed. Both of you did. You tried to do everything right—following God's commands, living blamelessly, doing all the things a faithful woman should. But each prayer felt like it disappeared into the air, unanswered. Each passing year was another reminder of what wasn't. It wasn't just the disappointment of being childless—it was the ache of dreams delayed for so long they started to feel impossible. Joy delayed.

The waiting wasn't just in the stares from neighbors or the absence of a child's laughter. It was in the emptiness of your arms, the quiet of your home, the unspoken conversations between you and Zechariah. You knew he felt it too, though he didn't say much. You'd see it in the way he lingered over his prayers or avoided the questions of relatives during the holidays. He wanted a child just as much as you did, but he carried the burden in silence.

The years stretched on. You reached an age where you told yourself the waiting was over—not because you had what you longed for, but because the time for it had passed. You told yourself to let go of the dream. You tried to settle into the idea of life as it was. But the ache never really left, did it? The reminders glared in your face daily.

Then one day, something changed. Zechariah was chosen to serve in the temple. You knew it was an honor—it wasn't something that happened to every priest. Maybe you thought it was just another ordinary day, but it wasn't. While he was there, he had a vision—an angel of the Lord appeared to him. Can you even imagine? The angel told him that your prayers had been heard, and that you—yes, you—would bear a son. Not just any son, but one who would prepare the way for the Lord. More than we can ask or imagine.

When Zechariah came home, he couldn't even tell you what happened—his voice was gone. He stood there, wide-eyed, gesturing frantically, trying to explain something, but no words came out. Slowly, you figured it out. It sounded impossible, didn't it? You were too old for this. How could it even happen? And yet, deep down, you knew it was true. God had spoken.

And then, it happened. After all those years, all those prayers, you finally felt it—the changes in your body, the unmistakable evidence of life growing inside you despite the wrinkled skin that deemed it impossible. The impossible had become reality. The joy and disbelief must have hit you all at once. After decades of waiting, decades of hoping, decades of feeling forgotten, God had answered. He had seen you. He had not forgotten you.

For five months, you stayed quiet. You didn't tell anyone at first. Maybe you needed time to let the truth settle in, to reflect on God's timing. Maybe it felt too good to be true. You must have thought about all those years of waiting—how every unanswered prayer, every tear, every moment of aching had brought you here. Maybe you whispered prayers of thanks as you felt your son move inside you. You knew that God's plan was bigger than your waiting, but it didn't erase how hard the waiting had been.

And then Mary came. Sweet Mary, your young young cousin. The moment you heard her voice, the baby inside you leaped for joy. That's when you knew—she was carrying the Messiah. The one you'd been waiting for, that all of Israel had been waiting for. You looked at her, and you felt it in your soul—God was doing something far bigger than you could have imagined. And somehow, He had included you in this plan.

Now, as you feel your baby grow inside you, you reflect on all those years of waiting. The pain, the prayers, the wondering—it wasn't wasted. God hadn't been ignoring you. He was working, even when you couldn't see it. His timing, though mysterious, was perfect. This is your story, Elizabeth. A story of waiting. A story of hope. A story of a God who never forgets His promises.

Listen

Comfort, Comfort Now my People - Page CXVI

Reflect

What similarities do you see between Elizabeth and yourself?

What is God revealing to you through the story of Elizabeth?

How does it feel to hold the two faces in the second week of Advent?