

Our Bible Sisters:

Elizabeth – Singing the Songs of Salvation

Participant's Guide

This Bible study was written by Marilyn Miller, a staff minister at Abiding Word Lutheran Church in Houston, TX. The theological content was reviewed by Professor-emeritus David Valleskey.

Our Bible Sisters is a series of one-hour studies that may be used separately or in any combination. Each looks at a different woman of the Bible, highlighting God's faithfulness in her life, with applications to the lives of all Christian women today.

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Opening Prayer

Some days it's difficult to sing. Life is tough, circumstances seem overwhelming, and disappointments crowd our minds. As Luke first introduces us to Elizabeth, this might describe her life. Elizabeth and her husband, Zechariah, were living in Judah under the oppressive Roman rule of the infamous Herod. Elizabeth was about 70 years old and barren. But they remained faithful to their God and were filled with the hope of a Savior.

Read Luke 1:5-63.

1. What do we learn about Elizabeth and her husband?
2. It appears Elizabeth and Zechariah had prayed for a son for many years. At this age, they would have assumed God had said "No" but his answer had really been "Not yet." Now he was answering this deep-seated prayer. (vs. 8-13) Do you feel comfortable sharing a time when you waited patiently, or not so patiently, for God to answer your prayer? Are you still waiting? Have you lost hope?
3. Can you imagine Zechariah coming home, trying to tell Elizabeth what had happened using notes and hand gestures! What was Elizabeth's response? (vs. 14-25)
4. Has God ever answered your prayers with a WOW, far beyond anything you could ever have imagined?
5. In Elizabeth's sixth month, Gabriel comes again, this time to Mary. Mary didn't question in unbelief but rather in bewilderment – "How will this happen?" Why might the angel have mentioned Elizabeth at this time? (vs. 26-38)
6. Read vs 39-45. What do you think Elizabeth was thinking when she asked "Why am I so favored?" (vs. 39-45)
7. What do we learn about Elizabeth from vs 45?

8. How did Mary respond to Elizabeth's blessing? Think of how Elizabeth's words encouraged this response from Mary. (vs. 46-55)
9. What more do we learn about Elizabeth from her response to the people? (vs. 57-63)

Read Zechariah's song in vs 68-79.

10. Picture Elizabeth listening to her husband. What might she have been thinking?
11. Elizabeth was bitterly disappointed as she grew older without a child, and finally to a point where it seemed it would never happen. Yet she accepted her situation and continued to worship and praise God. How can we also be content with our lot in life?
12. What can hinder us? Read 1 John 1:5-9.
13. Do you have a song in your heart? Is there something or someone dampening that song, filling you with worry instead of peace, making you fearful instead of confident? Stop, confess your sins and talk to the Lord about these things – let him answer your prayers in his time and in his way.

For further meditation:

On your own, meditate on these passages that will help you keep a song in your heart:

- 1 John 1:9-10
- Colossians 3:16
- Ephesians 5:18-21
- Philipians 4:4-9

Closing Prayer/Meditation

I Will Sing My Maker's Praises CW 253 vs. 1

*I will sing my Maker's praises
And in him most joyful be,
For in all things I see traces
Of his tender love for me.
Nothing else than love could move him
With such deep and tender care
Evermore to raise and bear
All who try to serve and love him.
All things else have but their day;
God's great love abides for aye.*

References:

Barber, Wayne; Rasnake, Eddie; Shepherd, Richard. Life Principles from the Women of the Bible, Book 2

Lockyer, Herbert. All the Women of the Bible

Prange, Victor H. People's Bible Commentary – Luke