

## Community Group Discussion Questions

“I Saw the Sign” Luke 1:6-23 June 8, 2019

### Getting Started

The belief of “unanswered prayer” is to assume that God is indifferent and uninterested and today’s message **REBELS** against that assumption!

We have often heard that there are 3 ways God answers our prayers: “Yes” “No” and “Later”. When we pray, what we really want to hear is “Yes”. We’re not too happy with “No” or “Later” but many times God’s unanswered or delayed answers are exactly what is best for us. In this bible episode, we see that God made this couple wait a very long time before they had a child, and that son, John the Baptist, would prepare the way for Jesus to come as Savior! Now that’s worth waiting for!

When has God told you “No” or delayed a prayer answer until just the right time?

### Going Deeper:

Unshaken Resolve: (Luke 1:6-7)

Fruitfulness of their Faith: *“And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord.”* (Vs. 6)

Fruitlessness of their Family: *“But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.”* (Vs.7)

If we are going to ask God for a specific thing or a blessing in our life, we need to be walking in obedience with Him, listening carefully for His voice, and submitting to His leadership over our decisions. Because Zechariah and Elizabeth were living righteously, they knew they could keep on praying for their heart’s desire.

As you live righteously, what is something you are asking God for in faith?

Unsuspecting Revelation: (Luke 1:9-17)

Chosen to Serve: *“according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the temple of the Lord and burn incense.”* (Vs.9)

Confirmed by the Side: *“And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.”* (Vs.11)

Called to have a Son: *“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.”* (Vs. 13)

Refrain from Alcohol: *“must not drink wine or strong drink”.* (Vs. 15)

Empowered by the Holy Spirit: *“filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb”* (Vs. 15)

Baptizes in Repentance: *“He will turn many of the children to Israel to the Lord their God.”* (Vs. 16)

Elijah is personified: *“and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just..”* (Vs. 17)

Levels all obstacles: *“to make ready for the Lord a people prepared.”* (Vs. 17)

Zechariah isn't just getting an answer to his prayer for a son, he is getting an answer that his son will be a major historical figure who will usher in the Messiah/Savior of the world! Once again, some things are worth waiting for! When has God given you something wonderful that you had to wait a long time for? When have you seen persistent and faithful prayer pay off?

**Unsure Response:** (Luke 1:18-23)

Need for Confirmation: *"And Zechariah said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years." (Vs. 18)*

Need for Clarification: *"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." (Vs. 19)*

Need for Correction: *"And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time." (Vs. 20)*

Sometimes, God makes us wait on answers. Other times, God overwhelms us with answers that are far beyond our meager ability to comprehend. Zechariah is an interesting case. He has been praying for a child (so he must think it's possible), but when God sends an angel to tell him his wife will have a child, Zechariah acts like it's not possible.

Gabriel has to rebuke him that it is in fact going to happen, and that it is good news, not the kind of news that you question and doubt! Zechariah's punishment drew lots of attention to the birth of his special son, which worked out just the way God wanted it to. John the Baptist would go on to be described by Jesus in these words from Luke 7:28, 'I tell you, among those born of women, none is greater than John.'

We can be sure that God's answers to our prayers will be perfectly in tune with His greater plan for our life. How have you seen God bless you even when your faith was weak or unbelieving?

**Take Away:** God's timing is perfect and precise all while being personal.

**Prayer:**