

How God Supernaturally Met This Woman's Deep Need

In my last article, we looked at Elisheva (Elizabeth) and the miraculous word from God that she received. After many years of barrenness, the angel Gabriel spoke a prophetic word that she would bear a child, and his name would be Yochanan (John). During the five months of pregnancy, Elisheva resided in seclusion, but as she approaches her sixth month, God intervenes.

God sends Gabriel again, and this time he is sent to "a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph." In Luke 1:30-33 (KJV) it says, "The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Miriam (Mary); for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Yeshua. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.'" Miriam was a very young woman, and a virgin. In fact, in those days, women as young as 12 years old were married. She must have been totally overwhelmed at the prophetic word that Gabriel was stating. How could she, just an average young girl bring forth the Messiah? She was nobody special! In verse 34, Miriam even questions the angel, stating that she is a virgin. So how can this physically happen? Gabriel then mentions something to Miriam that helps her to make the leap of faith. Gabriel says in verses 36-37, "And behold, even your relative Elisheva has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God." Miriam knew her cousin Elisheva. She knew of the many years that Elisheva had been barren and now she is pregnant?! When Miriam hears this statement, I think that she is filled with hope and faith. If God can do this for

Elisheva, then God can accomplish this feat for Miriam. She makes an important statement when she hears of Elisheva's pregnancy; verse 38 says, "Behold, the bondslave of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word."

Miriam leaves immediately for Nazareth to go straight to Elisheva's home. I love that God provided the way for Miriam to succeed in this very extraordinary situation. You see, God provided a friend. A friend who would believe her because she herself was going through a supernatural experience. Remember, Elisheva was much older, past childbearing years, yet, she was carrying a child. Elisheva knew what it was like to walk around with a miracle. Elisheva could and probably did encourage Miriam to believe and to trust God. As these women lived with each other, I can see Elisheva helping Miriam with her fears. The fears were many. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum in *Yeshua, The Life of the Messiah from a Messianic Jewish Perspective*, lists three penalties under the Mosaic Law that Miriam would have received:

- Stoning for being engaged and found pregnant.
- Expelled from the community forever.
- Divorce by Joseph, who had a right to divorce her.

The gift of friendship that God provided Miriam was immense. All of the fears listed above, Elisheva could speak to Miriam about. Her fear of being stoned and expelled from the community was probably diminished by the safety of Elisheva's home. After all, her husband was a priest and had experienced his own supernatural experience of not being able to speak after seeing the angel Gabriel. The community knew that something amazing was going on in this home, so Miriam felt safe in Elisheva's home. Miriam's fear of Joseph divorcing her was a very real fear, because he legitimately had the right to do so. But, I can see Elisheva encouraging Miriam that God would intervene in her life and that Joseph would listen to God. Elisheva became an instrument that God used to give Miriam wisdom, encouragement, safety, love and acceptance.

That home pulsed with love. I'm sure there were days where they felt discouraged and scared. But, the two of them were knit together in friendship by God. It is so delicious to have the experience of a friendship with God in the midst of it.

God's faithfulness provided the perfect friend for Miriam that she needed and that Elisheva needed. They both needed each other to be able to do what God had called them to do. We are no different today. We need each other in order to accomplish what God has called us to do. Don't be afraid to give the gift of friendship! {eoa}

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