



God  
gives



**WEEK 4**  
**GOD GIVES STRENGTH**

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

To maintain a healthy group, focus on four key components: Word, prayer, relationships, and outreach. This guide will help you study a biblical passage through observation, interpretation, and application. As you explore Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38, keep in mind this week's big idea: **God's love for sinners makes the weak strong.**

## CONNECT

Share about a time when you felt weak or unqualified for a task, but found unexpected strength to see it through. What helped you persevere?

# INTRODUCTION

In Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 1:26-38, we see the angel announcing Jesus' birth to Joseph and Mary—ordinary, weak people facing fear and scandal. Joseph, a just man, plans a quiet divorce to avoid shame, but obeys God's call to take Mary as his wife. Mary, a young virgin, questions but surrenders: "Let it be to me according to your word." Mary and Joseph find strength in the love of God and his promises, pointing to Christ who chose weakness to make us strong.



# OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

**Read:** Matthew 1:18-25

**Discuss:**

- Joseph is "a just man" unwilling to shame Mary (v. 19). What does this reveal about his character, and why might his plan to divorce quietly still fall short of God's will
- The angel says, "Do not fear to take Mary as your wife" (v. 20). How does God deal with Joseph's fear, and what does God's intervention teach about true strength?

# OBSERVATIONS & INTERPRETATION

**Read:** Luke 1:26-38

## **Discuss:**

- Mary is "greatly troubled" and asks, "How will this be?" (vv. 29, 34). What does this show you about how to ask God questions faithfully?
- The angel declares, "Nothing will be impossible with God" (v. 37). How does this promise address Mary's weakness, and what does her surrender ("Behold, I am the servant of the Lord," v. 38) model for us?

## APPLICATION

- Identify a "good" plan in your life that might not be God's best. How can you say "no" to it in order to say "yes" to His call, trusting His strength?
- Where are you facing fear or weakness? Reflect on false responses like pride or denial—how can God's love cast out fear and empower obedience?
- Christ chose weakness to become our strength. How does receiving His grace change how you approach hard callings this week?



# PRAYER

- Take a moment to pray for each other. Thank God for His love that makes the weak strong, as seen in Mary and Joseph.
- Pray for grace to surrender fears, embrace His call, and find strength in Christ for those feeling unqualified or overwhelmed.





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