



BIBLE STUDY

The Help of God

When God designed woman

A study on Ezer Kenegdo — creation, fall, restoration and mission.

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EZER KENEGDO

*Woman was not an improvisation.
She was designed as Ezer Kenegdo.
Sin distorted that design.
Jesus came to restore it.*

Priscila Abondanza

Scripture quotations follow the New International Version (NIV)

The path of this reading

- Before we begin — The text that opens the tension
- Introduction — A question asked in the valley
- 01** When it all began
- 02** The fall — when the design was distorted
- 03** Jesus and the restoration of the design
- 04** Moving forward as Ezer Kenegdo
- 05** The help that is not born of exhaustion
- 06** When Ezer Kenegdo exists again
- To reflect — Application questions
- Conclusion — Who are you today?
- Supporting verses
- Phrases to keep
- Closing prayer
- About the author

The text that opens the tension

GENESIS 3:16

"I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

This is the verse that opens the tension of our study. It is a difficult text. A text that speaks of pain — and that, for a long time, was also used to justify pain.

But it is very important to say from the start: **Genesis 3:16 does not reveal God's original design for woman. Genesis 3:16 reveals the consequence of the fall.**

That is why, before we understand the pain, we need to return to the design. Before we look at the distortion, we need to contemplate the intention. Before we ask what happened to woman after sin, we need to ask: who was woman before the fall? And perhaps the deeper question is: what was God revealing about Himself when He designed woman?

The central idea of this study

When God created woman, He was not creating a secondary figure in the human story. He was not merely solving a domestic need. He was not offering the man an assistant. He was revealing something of His own character.

Woman is born in the biblical text as Ezer Kenegdo: corresponding help, strength facing him, indispensable presence, help that is not inferior but essential. And that word, Ezer, is one of the words the Bible uses to speak of God Himself.

When God designed woman, He placed within creation a visible mark of a divine attribute: the God who helps.

A question asked in the valley

When I came face to face with Ezer Kenegdo

A study does not always begin with an answer. Sometimes, it begins with a question asked in the valley.

For many years, I lived an intense journey in the corporate world. Years of leadership, decision-making, responsibility, pressure, targets, often harsh environments and, at many points, predominantly male ones. I learned a lot. I grew a lot. I was shaped in difficult places.

But I also reached a point where I began to realize that journey had left its marks. They were not only achievements. There was tiredness. There was wear. There was the feeling of having carried many roles for a very long time.

Woman. Professional. Leader. Mother. Wife. Person of faith.

Someone who had to deliver, decide, care, produce, welcome, lead and, so often, keep going even when there was not much strength left inside.

After many years in that environment came a career transition. I was leaving a corporate structure to begin an entrepreneurial journey. And every external transition ends up revealing an internal one as well. I began asking myself: What have I learned? What have I lived? What do I want to take with me? What do I no longer want to repeat? Who am I now?

But along with that transition came one of the greatest personal challenges I have ever faced as a woman. Perimenopause. Symptoms that, at first, I could not even name. And I am not speaking of it in theory. I am speaking of body. Of mind. Of the ground shifting. Of waking up and no longer recognizing my own energy. Of feeling that something was wrong without being able to name it. Extreme fatigue. Swings. Lack of strength. A foggy mind. A body that would not respond.

And, in the beginning, I did not have the medical support I needed. It was easier to look at my story and say: "It's stress." "It's burnout." "You lived under pressure for years." And yes, there was tiredness. Yes, there was overload. But there were also hormonal issues. There was low iron. There was a body crying out for help in a language few people around me seemed to speak.

It was in that place — tired, in transition, not fully understanding what was happening in my body, my mind and my soul — that I prayed. It was not an elaborate prayer. It was almost a lament:

"Lord, why is the woman, once again, in this struggle?"

"Why does being a woman seem to carry so many battles?"

"Why do so many women cross entire seasons of life without being understood?"

And then came the question that changed everything:

"Who did You have in mind, Lord, when You created woman?"

That question took me back to the beginning. Not to the beginning of culture. Not to the beginning of human traditions. Not to the beginning of hasty interpretations. But to the beginning of God.

And it was there that I came face to face with a Hebrew expression that transformed my vision: Ezer Kenegdo. From that point on, I did not merely begin to understand woman better. I began to see God Himself more clearly. Because, when God designed woman, He left a revelation about His heart.

When it all began

God never improvised woman

To understand woman, we need to begin where God began. Not in Genesis 3, but in Genesis 1 and 2. The fall explains the rupture; creation reveals the project. The fall shows what sin did; creation shows what God intended.

That is why, before we ask what "he will rule over you" means in Genesis 3:16, we need to ask what God said before that.

Created in the image of God

GENESIS 1:26-27

"Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness. [...] Male and female he created them."

Here, "mankind" must be understood as humanity. The text is not saying that only the male carries the image of God – the verse itself explains: "male and female he created them". The image of God is given to all of humanity.

This means that, before any function, before any role, before any family structure, woman already appears as a bearer of the image of God. A woman's dignity does not begin in marriage. It does not begin in motherhood. It does not begin in productivity. It does not begin in service. It does not begin in a man's approval. It does not begin in culture. A woman's dignity begins in God.

She is image. She is intention. She is deliberate creation. She is an essential part of the revelation of the divine image in humanity. Man and woman, together, carry something of the image of God that neither of them carries alone in fullness.



Man and woman: the same image, the same dignity of origin.

The first "not good"

GENESIS 2:18

"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

This is one of the most important moments in the creation narrative. Up to this point, Genesis has a rhythm: God creates, God contemplates, God declares that it is good. The light is good. The land is good. The seas, the plants, the stars, the animals — everything follows the rhythm of the goodness of creation.

But in Genesis 2:18, before sin enters the world, God says for the first time: "Not good." And what was not good? It was not sin. It was not rebellion. It was not disobedience. It was not yet the fall. What was not good was human loneliness.

The first "not good" was loneliness.

The man was in a perfect garden, in a world without sin, surrounded by creation, with work, with purpose, with the presence of God — and even so God declares: "It is not good for the man to be alone."

This teaches us something very profound. The presence of God does not cancel the human need for connection. God could have said: "Adam has Me, so he needs no one else." But God did not say that. God looked at the man and saw that there was something in the human experience that needed correspondence, relationship, presence, face to face. Loneliness was not part of the complete design. And God decides to answer that absence by creating woman.

But the way God describes this woman is the key to the whole study.



The first "not good" was loneliness.

Ezer Kenegdo: an expression we need to recover

In Genesis 2:18, God says He will make for the man an Ezer Kenegdo. Many translations render this expression as "a helper suitable for him", "a helper fit for him" or "a helper corresponding to him".

The problem is that the word "helper" can sound small. It can suggest someone who stands below. Someone who merely assists. Someone who serves as secondary support. But that is not the force of the expression in biblical Hebrew.

עֶזֶר

EZER

Help, rescue, indispensable aid. A word the Bible uses many times to speak of God Himself — the God who rescues His people, who comes when human strength has run out.

כְּנֻגְדּוֹ

KENEGDO

Facing him, face to face, corresponding, equal to, able to respond. Not a word of inferiority — a word of correspondence, communion and dialogue.

The meaning of Ezer

The word Ezer means help, aid, rescue. But not just any help. In the Bible, this word appears many times in connection with God Himself. God is called Ezer. God is the help of His people. God is the aid of Israel. God is the one who comes when human strength has run out. Consider some examples:

Exodus 18:4 — Moses names one of his sons Eliezer, because he recognizes that God was his help: "My father's God was my helper; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh." Here, Ezer is tied to deliverance. It is not decorative help; it is rescue in a context of threat.

Deuteronomy 33:26 — Moses declares that there is no one like the God of Jeshurun, "who rides across the heavens to help you". Here, Ezer is divine intervention — God coming on behalf of His people.

Deuteronomy 33:29 — Israel is called a people saved by the LORD, who is "your shield and helper". Ezer appears in the language of protection and deliverance.

Psalms 33:20 — "We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield." Again, Ezer is not an inferior help. It is protection. It is strength. It is rescue.

Psalms 70:5 — David cries out: "You are my help and my deliverer." Here, Ezer appears in the cry of someone vulnerable — the help that saves those who cannot save themselves.

Psalm 121:1-2 — The psalmist asks: "Where does my help come from?" And answers: "My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth." When the Bible asks where the Ezer comes from, it answers: from the LORD.

So when Genesis calls woman Ezer, it cannot be read as inferiority. The word carries strength. It carries rescue. It carries intervention. It carries indispensable presence. Woman is not named with a weak word — she is named with a word that, so often, belongs to the vocabulary used for God.

This does not mean that woman is God. But it means that God chose to use for woman a word that reveals something of His own way of acting. Woman carries, in the original design, a vocation of help. Not submissive help in the sense of erasure. Not help as voiceless servitude. Not help as self-annulment. But help as present strength. Help as essential companionship. Help as the presence that answers the "not good" of loneliness.

"Ezer is not an inferior assistant. Ezer is indispensable help."

The meaning of Kenegdo

The second word is Kenegdo. It comes from the idea of something that stands before, in front, corresponding. It is not a word that communicates inferiority. It is a word of correspondence: "facing him", "face to face", "corresponding to him", "suitable for him", "equal to him", "able to respond to him".

Woman is not created from the man's feet, to be trampled. Nor is she created from his head, to dominate. The classic image of Christian interpreters says she is formed from the side, from the rib, as one who stands beside. But the Hebrew goes deeper still: she stands facing him. Face to face. Corresponding. Capable of communion. Capable of response. Capable of dialogue. Capable of presence.

Woman is not an echo — she is a voice. Not a shadow — she is a presence. Not an accessory — she is a correspondence.

"Woman was not created to be a shadow. She was created to be a presence."



Ezer is not inferiority. It is help.

Woman as God's answer to human loneliness

When God says "it is not good for the man to be alone", He does not solve it by creating more work. He does not solve it by creating more animals. He does not solve it by creating more tasks. He does not solve it by creating an institution. He solves it by creating a person.

This is very important. God's answer to loneliness was not productivity — it was relationship. It was not performance — it was presence. It was not function — it was communion. Woman appears as the answer to the first "not good" God ever declared. She is introduced into the narrative as the corresponding help that turns loneliness into communion.

And when Adam sees her, his response is poetic.

"Bone of my bones"

GENESIS 2:23

"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."

This is the first recorded human speech in the Bible. And it is a declaration of recognition. Adam does not say: "This is my property." He does not say: "This is my servant." He does not say: "This one is beneath me." He says: "This one is of my very substance." "This one corresponds to me." "This one is like me."

There is wonder. There is recognition. There is covenant. There is poetry. The first recorded human word in the Bible is a word about encounter. The man recognizes the woman as someone alike and corresponding.

The first human word in the Bible is a word about encounter.

Before the fall: nakedness without shame

GENESIS 2:25

"Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame."

Before the fall, there was transparency without fear. Difference without domination. Vulnerability without shame. Intimacy without manipulation. Body without exploitation. Relationship without rivalry.

That is the beauty of Eden. Man and woman stand before God and before each other without fear. That is creation before the rupture.



Transparency without fear. Difference without domination. That is the design.

TO REFLECT

If Ezer is a word used for God Himself, what changes in the way you see the strength, the voice and the presence of the women God has placed in your life?

The fall

When sin distorted the design

Now we arrive at Genesis 3. And here we need to read with care. Too often Genesis 3:16 has been used as if it were an ideal model for relationships. But it is not.

Genesis 3:16 is not a prescription of what God desires. It is a description of what sin would produce. It is not the design — it is the distortion. It is not the original order — it is the consequence of the rupture.

The serpent and the distortion of God's voice

GENESIS 3:1

"Did God really say...?"

The serpent's first strategy is to cast doubt on the word of God. The fall begins when the voice of God is questioned, distorted and replaced. And that is still happening.

Every time a woman receives an identity smaller than the one God gave her, the serpent keeps asking: "Did God really say that?" Is that really what God said about you? Is that really what God designed for woman? Is that really what God intended when He created Ezer Kenegdo?

That is why we need to return to the text. Because many of women's wounds did not begin in God. They began in the distortions of what was said in His name.

Shame enters the story

GENESIS 3:7

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves."

Before the fall, there was nakedness without shame. After the fall, there is exposure with fear. They hide from God. They cover themselves from each other. They lose the innocence of communion.

Here begins the rupture of transparency. The body becomes a place of shame. Difference becomes a place of threat. The relationship becomes marked by defensiveness.



After the fall, there is exposure with fear.

Accusation enters the bond

GENESIS 3:12

"The woman you put here with me – she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."

Notice the rupture. The same woman who was once received as "bone of my bones" is now blamed. Before, poetry; after, accusation. Before, recognition; after, the shifting of guilt. Before, communion; after, defensiveness.

Sin breaks not only the relationship with God, but also the relationship between man and woman. And more: Adam does not accuse only the woman. He indirectly accuses God – "the woman You put here with me". God's gift begins to be seen as a problem.

This is one of the saddest marks of the fall: the one God gave as help begins to be treated as a threat.



The one God gave as help begins to be treated as a threat.

Genesis 3:16: pain, desire and rule

Now we return to the key text. We read of multiplied pains, desire for the husband and his rule over her: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."

This text has been interpreted in different ways throughout history. But there is one essential point: it stands within the context of the fall. God is describing the consequences of sin in human life. For woman, the fall reaches deep dimensions: the body, motherhood, desire, the relationship, the bond, the dynamic with the man.

The word "rule" does not appear as a blessing. It appears as a tragedy. Before the fall, the man recognizes the woman as flesh of his flesh. After the fall, a dynamic of domination emerges. Before the fall, there was face to face. After the fall, there is rule over. Before the fall, there was Ezer Kenegdo. After the fall, there is rivalry, control, accusation and pain.

"Genesis 3:16 is not a prescription. It is a consequence."

That is why it is so dangerous to turn Genesis 3:16 into a model. When someone uses rule as if it were God's original will, they are confusing the consequence of the fall with the design of creation. Jesus did not come to reinforce the fall. Jesus came to redeem.

Sin attacked precisely the woman's place

Follow the line. In Genesis 2, woman is Ezer Kenegdo: corresponding help, facing him, face to face. In Genesis 3, after sin, rule appears: "he will rule over you".

What was distorted? The correspondence. The face to face. The bond. The partnership. The voice. The dignity. Sin did not merely introduce pain into the world — it distorted the way men and women see each other. Woman, created as corresponding help, becomes silenced, blamed, dominated or diminished. Man, created to recognize and cultivate life beside her, begins to accuse, dominate or fear her strength.

That is the tragedy of the fall. But the Bible does not end in Genesis 3. God does not abandon His design. The rest of the Scriptures begins to point toward restoration.

"Jesus did not come to reinforce the fall. Jesus came to restore the design."

Jesus and the restoration of the design

What Christ does with women

When Jesus enters the story, He does not merely heal women. He restores dignity. He gives back voice. He legitimizes discipleship. He reveals profound truths. He entrusts mission.

Jesus does not treat women as social accidents. He treats them as persons before God. And this is deeply consistent with Genesis 2. Jesus does not invent a new worth for woman. He reveals the worth that had been in the Father's heart from the beginning.

The woman with the issue of blood: Jesus gives back voice and belonging

MARK 5:25-34 • LUKE 8:43-48

This woman had been suffering for twelve years. Twelve years of bleeding. Twelve years of physical exhaustion. Twelve years of financial loss. Twelve years of isolation.

Under the ceremonial law, a woman with an issue of blood was considered unclean for as long as the bleeding lasted. This affected her religious, social, emotional and relational life. She was not carrying only an illness. She was carrying exclusion.

She touches the edge of Jesus' garment. And she is healed. But Jesus stops. That pause is essential. He asks: "Who touched me?" The disciples are puzzled — the crowd is pressing in on Jesus. But Jesus perceives one touch of faith in the midst of so much religious jostling.

The woman comes forward trembling. And then something extraordinary happens. Jesus does not expose her to humiliate her. He calls her forward to restore her publicly. The healing had already happened in her body. But Jesus wanted to heal her story as well.

LUKE 8:48

"Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace."

Notice the word: daughter. It is one of the most tender ways Jesus addresses anyone in the Gospels. She is not called unclean. She is not called inconvenient. She is not called a problem. She is not called the woman with the issue of blood. She is called daughter. Jesus gives her back her belonging.

And more: He allows her to tell "the whole truth". She speaks. A woman silenced for years now has a voice before the crowd. Here Jesus restores three things: her body, her voice, her dignity. Jesus does not merely heal the woman — He reintegrates her. Her body lives again. Her voice is heard again. Her identity is recognized again.

"She came hidden. She left recognized."



The woman who came hidden leaves in peace.

The Samaritan woman: Jesus reveals Himself to an unlikely woman

JOHN 4:1-42

The Samaritan woman carries many layers of exclusion. She is a woman. She is a Samaritan. She has a complex marital history. She goes to the well at an unusual hour, possibly to avoid other people. And Jesus — a Jew, a man, a teacher — begins a conversation with her. That alone is surprising.

But the conversation deepens. Jesus speaks of thirst. Living water. Worship. Spirit and truth. Messiah. This is not a superficial conversation. It is one of the most profound theological conversations in the Gospel of John. And Jesus has this conversation with a woman.

JOHN 4:26

"I, the one speaking to you — I am he."

This moment is astonishing. Jesus reveals Himself directly as the Messiah to a Samaritan woman. He does not first choose a respected rabbi. He does not choose a priest. He does not choose a ruler. He does not choose a man of impeccable reputation. He reveals Himself to a woman marked by social rejection.

And what does she do? She leaves her water jar. She goes back to the town. She announces Jesus: "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did" (John 4:29). She does not produce a theological treatise. She gives a testimony. But her testimony moves a town — many Samaritans believe "because of the woman's testimony" (John 4:39).

Here we see a woman becoming a bridge to a town. The one who was perhaps avoided becomes the one who is sent. The one who went to the well alone returns carrying news. The one who had a complicated story becomes an instrument of revelation.

Jesus did not deny her story. But He did not reduce her to her story either. He saw in her a person capable of receiving revelation, sustaining a deep spiritual conversation and bearing witness. That is the restoration of the design.

"Jesus knows your story, but He does not reduce you to your story."



The one who was avoided becomes the one who is sent.

Mary of Bethany: Jesus legitimizes woman as disciple

LUKE 10:38-42

Mary is sitting at Jesus' feet. Today we may read that quickly, as a beautiful image of devotion. But in the Jewish context of the first century, "sitting at the feet" of a teacher was the language of discipleship. Paul, for example, says in Acts 22:3 that he was instructed "at the feet of Gamaliel". To sit at a teacher's feet was to occupy the place of a learner. Mary is in the place of a disciple.

And Martha is bothered. Not because serving is bad — service matters, hospitality matters. But Jesus perceives that something greater is at stake. Mary is not merely resting. She is receiving the Word. She is being formed.

LUKE 10:42

"Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

Jesus does not send Mary back to the socially expected space. He does not say: "Mary, go help in the kitchen." He does not say: "This place is not for you." He does not say: "Women do not sit as disciples." He defends her. Jesus legitimizes Mary as someone capable of learning from Him.

This text does not diminish Martha. But it reveals that woman cannot be reduced to service alone. Before doing things for Jesus, Mary is invited to be with Jesus. Before function comes formation. Before serving comes listening. Before activism comes discipleship. Jesus restores woman's place as a disciple.

"Before doing things for Jesus, Mary is called to be with Jesus."



Before function comes formation.

Martha at the tomb of Lazarus: Jesus entrusts deep theology to a woman

JOHN 11:17-27

Martha is often remembered only as the anxious woman in the kitchen. But John 11 shows us another Martha. A theological Martha. A Martha who dialogues with Jesus about death, resurrection and faith.

Her brother Lazarus has died. Jesus arrives four days later. Martha goes out to meet Him. She says that if Jesus had been there, her brother would not have died. But she also declares that she knows God will give Jesus whatever He asks. Jesus answers: "Your brother will rise again." Martha affirms her belief in the resurrection at the last day. And then Jesus makes one of the most profound declarations in the entire Gospel.

JOHN 11:25

"I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even though they die."

This revelation is not delivered in a hall of scholars. It is not delivered in a formal debate at the temple. It is delivered in a conversation with Martha. A grieving woman. A believing woman. A questioning woman. A woman who can bear a christological declaration of the very highest depth.

And Jesus asks: "Do you believe this?" Martha answers with a powerful confession: "You are the Messiah, the Son of God, who is to come into the world" (John 11:27). Martha's confession is one of the great declarations of faith in the New Testament.

Jesus does not treat Martha as incapable of theology. He does not simplify the truth because He is speaking with a woman. He reveals to her one of the deepest truths about His identity. That is restoration. Jesus gives back to woman the place of spiritual interlocutor. Woman can listen. She can learn. She can ask. She can confess. She can understand. She can carry revelation.

"Jesus does not simplify revelation because He is speaking with a woman."



Woman can carry revelation.

Moving forward as Ezer Kenegdo

From restoration to mission

So far, we have seen three movements. In creation, woman is designed as Ezer Kenegdo. In the fall, that identity is distorted by pain, rule, accusation and shame. In Jesus, we see the restoration of body, voice, dignity, discipleship and revelation.

But the Gospel does not stop at restoration. It moves forward into mission. And one of the most powerful scenes of that mission happens after the resurrection.

Mary Magdalene: the first witness of the resurrection

JOHN 20:1-18

Mary Magdalene goes to the tomb. She is weeping. She is looking for the body of Jesus. She has not yet fully understood what has happened. Then Jesus reveals Himself to her.

But there is a deeply significant detail. Jesus could have appeared first to Peter. He could have appeared first to John. He could have appeared first to a priest. He could have appeared first to a crowd. But He appears first to Mary Magdalene. A woman.

In a cultural context where a woman's testimony was not always received with the same weight as a man's, Jesus entrusts to a woman the first news of the resurrection.

"The greatest news in history was first announced by a woman."

JOHN 20:16

"Jesus said to her, 'Mary.'"

The Risen One calls a woman by name. She is not merely part of a crowd. She is seen. She is known. She is called. And then she is sent: "Go instead to my brothers and tell them..." (John 20:17). That is the language of sending. Mary Magdalene receives a message to carry to the disciples. She becomes a witness of the resurrection.

That is why, throughout Christian history, Mary Magdalene has been called by some the "apostle to the apostles" — in the sense of having been sent to announce to the apostles themselves that Christ was alive. That is not a small thing. It is profoundly theological. Sin tried to silence woman. The risen Jesus entrusts to a woman the first proclamation of the new creation.



The greatest news in history was entrusted first to a woman.

The garden of creation and the garden of the resurrection

Here there is a very beautiful connection. The story begins in a garden. Genesis shows us a garden where the woman takes part in the drama of the fall. But John 20 also places us in a garden. Mary thinks Jesus is the gardener. And, in a way, John is inviting us to see something profound: Jesus is the gardener of the new creation.

In the first garden, there is fall, fear, shame and death. In the garden of the resurrection, there is a name, an encounter, a sending and life. In the first garden, the relationship between man, woman and God is wounded. In the garden of the resurrection, Christ begins to restore all things. In the first garden, the woman is caught up in a story of rupture. In the garden of the resurrection, a woman is sent to announce the victory over death.

This is no narrative coincidence. It is redemption. The Gospel is showing us that Jesus does not merely forgive individual sins. He inaugurates a new creation. And in that new creation, woman is not erased. She is called by name and sent.

"In the first garden, death enters. In the garden of the resurrection, death is defeated."



Two gardens, one story: what the fall wounded, the resurrection restores.

The help that is not born of exhaustion

What the whole Bible shows us about the help of God

Ezer Kenegdo is not merely a concept about women. It is a window into the character of God. The whole Bible reveals a God who helps.

God rescues Israel in Egypt. He rescues David in danger. He helps the poor. He helps the orphan. He helps the widow. He helps the downcast. He helps those who have no strength left. And when God calls woman Ezer, He is placing in her a vocation that echoes this dimension of His own heart.

But we need to be careful. This does not mean a woman must carry the world on her shoulders. It does not mean woman was created to be exploited. It does not mean woman exists to save everyone around her while losing herself.

This is an essential point. Being Ezer does not mean being exhausted. Being Ezer does not mean living without limits. Being Ezer does not mean being invisible. Being Ezer does not mean being reduced to a function. Being Ezer means carrying a strength that comes from God — not an obligation to replace God.

"Being Ezer does not mean taking God's place in everyone's life."

Many women have become ill because they confused calling with overload. Many were taught that to love was to disappear. That to serve was to erase themselves. That to be strong was to never need help. But that is not God's design.

Even the God who helps also calls people to rest in Him. Jesus, the Son of God, slept in the boat. He withdrew to pray. He wept. He received care. He accepted being served. The woman created as Ezer was not called to be an infinite source. She was called to be a reflection of God, while remaining dependent on God. The help she offers should not be born of exhaustion, but of communion.

What happens when Ezer Kenegdo is distorted?

When woman is seen through distortion, everyone loses. The woman loses the awareness of her dignity. The man loses the corresponding help God placed before him. The family loses balance. The church loses gifts. Society loses wisdom. Creation groans.

When Ezer is reduced to an inferior assistant, the biblical text is impoverished. When Kenegdo is erased, the relationship loses the face to face. When Genesis 3:16 is treated as a model, the fall is perpetuated. When woman is silenced, voices God intended to use go unheard. When woman is overloaded, help turns into exhaustion. When woman is idolized, she is placed somewhere she cannot bear. When woman is despised, the image of God in her is wounded.

That is why restoring the biblical vision of woman is not a cultural agenda. It is faithfulness to the text. It is returning to the beginning. It is recognizing the Creator's design.

TO REFLECT

Have you been living as Ezer out of communion with God — or out of exhaustion?

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again

What restoration changes in each of us

In the life of a man

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again in the life of a man, he stops seeing woman as a threat and begins to recognize her as a gift. He stops confusing leadership with control. He stops reading feminine strength as an affront. He stops seeking submission as erasure and begins to value correspondence, wisdom and covenant.

"When a man recognizes Ezer Kenegdo, he does not lose authority. He recovers covenant."

In the life of a woman

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again in the life of a woman, she stops apologizing for existing with strength. She stops believing her voice is a nuisance. She stops confusing humility with invisibility. She stops accepting as destiny what was a consequence of the fall. She begins to see herself through God's design.

In a family

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again in a family, daughters grow up knowing they are the image of God. Sons grow up learning to honor women. Marriages stop being a battleground and become a place of covenant. The home stops being a place where one person carries everything alone.



Correspondence, wisdom and covenant.

In a church

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again in a church, women are not seen merely as a workforce. They are seen as disciples. As witnesses. As intercessors. As teachers. As leaders according to the gifts God has distributed. As a living part of the body of Christ.

"When the church recognizes Ezer Kenegdo, it draws closer to the heart of Jesus."

In a society

When Ezer Kenegdo exists again in a society, there is more justice, more care, more relational wisdom, more protection of life, more sensitivity to suffering and more awareness that progress without communion is just another form of loneliness.



Disciples, witnesses, a living part of the body of Christ.

Application questions

Do not answer quickly. Let each question find its place — and write down what God says to you.

Who told you that being a woman meant being less? Who taught you to be silent when God had given you a voice?

*At what moment did you confuse strength with the obligation to endure everything alone?
Have you been living as Ezer out of communion with God or out of exhaustion?*

Can you receive from Jesus the same things He gave the women of the Gospels: voice, dignity, discipleship, revelation and mission? What part of your identity needs to return to the original design?

Application questions

Do you recognize the help of God in the woman He has placed before you? Can you listen to feminine wisdom without feeling threatened?

Have you been confusing leadership with domination? Have you used Genesis 3:16 as an excuse to perpetuate the fall — or have you allowed Jesus to restore the original design?

Who are the women God has used to help, teach, confront, strengthen or broaden your vision?

Application questions

Are we forming women disciples or merely useful women? Are we making room for the voice Jesus legitimized?

Are we treating women as bearers of the image of God or merely as task executors? Are we teaching Genesis 2 before applying Genesis 3?

What happens when a society wearies its women until they can no longer flourish? What do we lose when we fail to recognize the help God has placed in them?

Who are you today?

What have we done with what God designed?

Perhaps today the question is not only: who is woman? Perhaps the question is: what have we done with what God designed?

Because the Bible begins by showing us a woman created as Ezer Kenegdo. Corresponding help. Facing him. Image of God. Essential presence.

But the fall brought pain. Shame. Accusation. Rule. Silencing. And many women are still living under names God never gave:

*Weak. Too much. Difficult. Secondary. Invisible.
Just a helper. Just support. Just a function.*

But then Jesus enters the story. And when Jesus meets women, He does not diminish them. He calls them. He listens to them. He heals them. He teaches them. He converses deeply with them. He reveals Himself to them. He sends them.

He calls a sick woman daughter. He reveals Himself as Messiah to a Samaritan woman. He defends Mary at His feet as a disciple. He entrusts to Martha one of the greatest declarations about resurrection. He calls Mary Magdalene by name and sends her to announce that He lives.

This shows us that Jesus did not come to reinforce the fall. Jesus came to restore the design. And perhaps today this is an invitation to all of us. Men and women. Families and churches. Fathers and mothers. Leaders and disciples. To return to the beginning. Not to the beginning of culture. Not to the beginning of distorted traditions. Not to the beginning of inherited pain. But to the beginning of the Creator.

Woman was not an improvisation. She was not a lesser idea. She was not created to be erased. When God designed woman, He revealed something of His own heart: the God who helps. The God who sees. The God who comes to meet us. The God who remains facing us. The God who does not abandon human beings to loneliness.

So today, the final question is: Who are you? Who are the women in your life? Have you recognized God's Ezer in them? And, woman, have you allowed Jesus to restore in you what the fall, culture, pain, overload or distorted religion tried to erase?

Because, in Christ, Ezer Kenegdo is not a lost memory of Eden. It is a restored identity. It is a redeemed vocation. It is a strength that exists again. Not to dominate. Not to compete. Not to carry everything alone. But to reflect the God who helps.

Back to the valley — and back to the beginning

At that moment in my life, when I was tired, crossing a transition, not fully understanding what was happening in my body, my mind and my soul, I asked God a question: "Lord, why is the woman, once again, in this struggle?"

"I thought God would answer me by speaking only about me. But He took me to Genesis."

And there I discovered that, in order to understand a woman's pain, I first needed to understand a woman's design. And in order to understand a woman's design, I needed to see the heart of God.

And when Jesus came, He did not treat woman as a footnote of redemption. He called women by name. He healed their stories. He gave back their voices. He opened space for their discipleship. He entrusted revelation to them. And He gave a woman the first news of the resurrection.

So perhaps today God is calling us to look again. To look again at Genesis. To look again at Jesus. To look again at the women in our lives. To look again at ourselves. And to hear what God said before sin distorted everything: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make for him Ezer Kenegdo."

The Help of God.

When God designed woman.



The story does not end in the fall. It ends in a garden filled with light.

Supporting verses for study and teaching

Creation and the image of God

Genesis 1:26-27 — God creates humanity in His image — "male and female he created them". Both are bearers of the image of God.

Genesis 2:18 — "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Genesis 2:23 — "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" — the first recorded human speech in the Bible.

Genesis 2:25 — Nakedness without shame — transparency and communion before the fall.

Ezer as the help of God

Exodus 18:4 — God is recognized as Moses' helper — He saved him from the sword of Pharaoh.

Deuteronomy 33:26 — God rides across the heavens to help — He comes "to help you".

Deuteronomy 33:29 — God is shield and helper — "your shield and helper".

Psalms 33:20 — "He is our help and our shield."

Psalms 70:5 — "You are my help and my deliverer."

Psalms 121:1-2 — "My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Fall and distortion

Genesis 3:1 — "Did God really say...?" — doubt cast on the word of God.

Genesis 3:7 — Their eyes are opened; shame enters the story.

Genesis 3:12 — "The woman you put here with me" — accusation enters the bond.

Genesis 3:16 — Pain, desire and rule — "he will rule over you" — as a consequence of the fall, not as the design.

Jesus restoring women

Mark 5:25-34 · Luke 8:43-48 — The woman with the issue of blood. "Daughter, your faith has healed you."

John 4:1-42 — The Samaritan woman. "I, the one speaking to you — I am he."

Luke 10:38-42 — Mary at Jesus' feet. "Mary has chosen what is better."

John 11:17-27 — Martha facing the death of Lazarus. "I am the resurrection and the life."

Resurrection and mission

John 20:1-18 — Mary Magdalene meets the risen Christ.

John 20:16 — Jesus calls her by name: "Mary!"

John 20:17 — "Go instead to my brothers and tell them..." — the language of sending.

Key phrases from this study

"Genesis 3:16 is not the design. It is the distortion."

"Before the fall, there was face to face. After the fall, rule."

"Woman is not born as a problem. She is born as an answer."

"The first thing God calls 'not good' is not sin. It is loneliness."

"God did not answer loneliness with productivity. He answered with presence."

"Ezer is not an inferior assistant. Ezer is indispensable help."

"Woman carries a word the Bible so often uses for God Himself."

"Being Ezer is not carrying everything alone. It is reflecting the God who helps."

"Jesus did not come to reinforce the fall. Jesus came to restore the design."

"The woman with the issue of blood did not receive only healing. She received voice, name and belonging."

"The Samaritan woman was not reduced to her story. She was sent in spite of it."

"Mary of Bethany shows us that woman is also a disciple."

"Martha shows us that woman is also capable of theological depth."

"Mary Magdalene shows us that woman is also a witness of the new creation."

"The Gospel does not silence Ezer Kenegdo. The Gospel restores her."

"When woman returns to God's design, she does not compete with man. She answers the Creator's call."

"When a man recognizes Ezer Kenegdo, he does not lose authority. He recovers covenant."

"When the church recognizes Ezer Kenegdo, it draws closer to the heart of Jesus."

Take us back to the beginning

Lord, take us back to the beginning. Not to the beginning of distorted interpretations. Not to the beginning of the pain we inherited. Not to the beginning of the cultures that diminished what You created. Take us to the beginning of Your design.

Show us who woman was before the fall. Show us what sin distorted. Show us what Jesus came to restore.

Heal the women who were silenced. Raise up the women who were overloaded. Restore the women who forgot their dignity. Teach men to recognize the help that comes from You. Teach the church to form disciples, witnesses and mature daughters before You.

May no woman live under names You never gave. May no daughter of Yours confuse humility with erasure. May no family turn domination into a model. May no church call order what was born of the fall.

May Christ restore Your design in us. And may we see, honor and live the beauty of Ezer Kenegdo: corresponding help, strength face to face, the presence that answers loneliness, a reflection of the God who helps.

In the name of Jesus, amen.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Priscila Abondanza is a senior executive, founder of Mentisup and a writer. She spent 30 years in the corporate world, leading teams, digital transformation and customer experience — many of them in challenging, predominantly male environments.

With postgraduate studies in Neuroscience and Applied Psychology, she dedicates this new season of her life to bringing together what she learned in those three worlds: the science that explains the mind, the faith that sustains the soul and the practice that transforms the day. She is the author of *The Garden of Abundance* (O Jardim de Abundância), on positive emotions, a full life and well-being grounded in neuroscience and Christian spirituality.

Married for more than 25 years, mother of three, she writes from real life — including its valleys. This study was born in one of them.

Science, faith and real life — in practice.

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The Help of God

When God designed woman

*Woman was not an improvisation. She was designed as Ezer
Kenegdo. Sin distorted that design. Jesus came to restore it.*

PRISCILA ABONDANZA