

ELIZABETH'S SUPERNATURAL PROCLAMATION: A VERY UNUSUAL TESTIMONY LUKE 01:39-45

Introduction

Whatever confession was borne about the Baby conceived in Mary was of critical importance. Why? Because the baby was...

- Jesus (v. 31).
- The Son of the Most High (v. 32).
- The Son of David (v. 32).
- The Ruler over the house of Jacob forever (v. 33).
- The Ruler whose kingdom will never end (v. 33).
- The One born of the Holy Spirit (v. 35).
- The Son of God Himself (v. 35).

In this passage God sees to it that a supernatural confession is proclaimed, a crucial confession that needs to be studied in depth. Note that this is the very first testimony ever given by human lips about Jesus.

- I. Mary visited Elizabeth (vv. 39-42).
- II. Elizabeth proclaimed a uniqueness about Mary and her child (v. 42).
- III. Elizabeth proclaimed the child to be her Lord (vv. 43-44).
- IV. Elizabeth proclaimed that Mary's faith would receive the promise (v. 45).

I. *Luke 01: 39-42 Memorable Visit of Mary*

Mary visited Elizabeth, and her visit was memorable. She *hurried* (spoudes). The word means speed, diligence, care, earnestness, zeal. The idea is that Mary went with purpose and earnestness. She was not going on a casual, friendly visit. She had a very specific reason for going, a meaningful purpose. She was going so that she and Elizabeth could encourage and share with each other. They both had similar situations. God had acted upon both their bodies, performing a miracle for both. Elizabeth's womb was made alive for the son of Zechariah to be conceived, and Mary's womb had conceived as a virgin. Mary in particular could be encouraged, for Elizabeth was already six months pregnant. The six months' pregnancy was visible evidence that God had already acted upon her miraculously. It should be noted that Mary knew about Elizabeth's miraculous conception, but Elizabeth did not know about Mary's conception. Zechariah and Elizabeth lived in

Judah. The town is unknown today, but most commentators think it was the same as Hebron. Hebron is said to be in the hill country of Judah and to belong to the priests (Josh. 21:10-11).

Mary entered Elizabeth's home and greeted her. It was at the *very moment* of Mary's greeting that Elizabeth's supernatural greeting began. Mary greeted Elizabeth, and three unusual things immediately happened.

1. The baby leaped in Elizabeth's womb. The baby had leaped or kicked before, but this leap was different from all the others. It was a sign to Elizabeth that the Baby within Mary was someone very, very special, someone who was about to be revealed to her under the filling (influence) of the Holy Spirit.
2. Elizabeth was instantly "filled with the Holy Spirit," and a very special spirit of prophecy was given her. The Holy Spirit seized her and led her to greet Mary as the mother of the Messiah, the coming Lord. Note: Elizabeth was living an obedient life before God. This was the reason God was able to use her and the Holy Spirit was able to infill her with His presence.
3. Elizabeth spoke in a loud voice. She was full of joy and exaltation for the Messiah, full of unusual emotions. She was under the influence and impulse of the Spirit of God. She was being guided to proclaim that the Baby of Mary was "the Lord" (v. 43, 45).

II. *Luke 01: 42 The Unique Proclamation of Elizabeth*

Elizabeth proclaimed a uniqueness about Mary and her child. Note three things.

1. The very first act toward Christ was a *proclamation of praise*. Elizabeth was the *first* person to know about the birth of Christ other than Mary, and God saw to it that her first act was to honour His Son. God would have His Son to be honoured on earth even as He is honoured in heaven.

Heb 13:15 Through Jesus, therefore, let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise – the fruit of lips that confess his name.

1 Pet 2:9 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

2. Mary was blessed, but she was blessed because of the child she was to bear: the child was blessed.
3. Elizabeth demonstrated a very sweet and humble spirit, a meekness and love that were so desperately needed by so many. She was older, and by being the wife of a priest, she was recognized by the world as being of a higher social class and more honourable.

Yet Mary, poor and unrecognized by the world, had been chosen by God to serve in a more special way. Elizabeth showed no envy or jealousy, no hurt or withdrawal. Contrariwise, she rejoiced over Mary's call.

Phil 2:3-4 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.

III. Luke 01:43–44 The Great Confession of Elizabeth

Elizabeth proclaimed the child to be her Lord.

1. Note the great confession of Elizabeth. Elizabeth called Mary's Baby, "my Lord." In a moment of quickening power, the Holy Spirit revealed that the Baby was not only the promised Messiah, but He was the Son of the Most High, of God Himself (Lk. 1:32, 35). There was no question that Elizabeth was using the term "Lord" in its highest sense. She was under the power of the Holy Spirit; therefore, she was confessing the truth under the influence of God. The truth was that the coming Child of Mary was the Messiah, the Son of the living God. She was also contrasting her son with the Son of Mary. Her own son was to be great, but the Son of Mary was greater. He was *her Lord*, the Lord God Himself, the Son of the Most High.
2. Note the clear sign given to Elizabeth. The sign was unmistakable. Upon hearing the greeting of Mary as she entered the door, Elizabeth's heart leaped for joy and the baby in her womb leaped much more than usual.

In Elizabeth's words, "The baby in my womb leaped *for joy* [exultation]." God caused the baby to leap (the word is strong, indicating a struggling leap) as a sign of great joy in the presence of One so great that Elizabeth would call Him "my Lord."

Thought 1. Elizabeth's confession of her Lord was a very personal thing. She apparently never shared it with John. John did not know Jesus was the Messiah until Jesus' baptism (Jn. 1:31-34). John had to discover and confess Christ for himself. So do we all. It is a *personal* decision.

Mat 10:32 "Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven."

Mat 16:15-17 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven."

1 John 4:15 If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God.

Thought 2. Elizabeth's confession was bound to encourage Mary.

- 1) *God sees to it that we are encouraged* when we need encouragement. Mary needed assurance, so God took her where she could be assured. But note: she obeyed God. She went where God led her. It was while she was obeying that God was able to encourage her.

Mat 10:30-31 "And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

Isa 41:13 For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you.

Isa 43:1 But now, this is what the LORD says - he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine."

- 2) Elizabeth willingly humbled herself to help Mary. She was older and held a higher position as the wife of a priest, yet she denied and surrendered herself to push Mary and her child forward.

Acts 20:35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Rom 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

Rom 15:1 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

Gal 6:2 Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

IV. Luke 01:45 Mary's Faith

Elizabeth proclaimed that Mary's faith would receive the promise. Note two significant points.

1. There are two reasons why Mary has been blessed by believers of every generation.
 - a. Mary believed the Word of God sent to her (Lk. 1:38). Contrast her belief with Zechariah's unbelief (Lk. 1:20).
 - b. Mary was related to Christ in a very, very special way.

Thought 1. The same two facts are essential for us if we wish to be blessed by God.

- 1) We must believe the Word of God sent to us.

Luke 11:28 He replied, "Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it."

John 14:23 *Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."*

John 15:7 *"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."*

1 Th 2:13 *And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*

Mark 8:38 *"If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."*

- 2) We must become related to Christ by adoption. We must become the adopted children of God.

Gal 4:4-6 *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."*

3. The result of Mary's believing the Word of God was that she was to see the performance of God's promises, the things told her from the Lord.

2 Pet 1:4 *Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.*

Deu 7:9 *Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*

Psa 105:8 *He remembers his covenant forever, the word he commanded, for a thousand generations. ■*