

Luke 1:39-45 – Elizabeth’s Confidence and Claims

TSK, GreekLexicon, Alexander, Henry, JFB, Geneva, Trapp, Lightfoot, Handfuls, Calvin, Clarke, Barnes,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: God used old Abraham and barren Sarah to build and organize his church. God used a former prostitute, Rahab, to witness of his power to Israel. God used a poor foreign widow, Ruth, to give birth to the Savior. God used a slave girl to point Naaman to Christ. God used an ordinary shepherd, David, to expand Christ’s kingdom. God used an orphan, Joash, to become king and bring spiritual reforms to the church. God used a poor farmer, Amos, to call his people back to himself. God was never limited to rich and important persons – **as it was the message of Christ that was important not the man who brought it.**

So it is no surprise that God did it again...he brought his message about Christ’s birth, through Elizabeth...an old barren woman... living an ordinary life...in the mountains of Judah.

Our headings are:

Elizabeth’s Confidence In God
Elizabeth’s Claims about Christ

Our goals are: **That you will have even greater confidence (which is based on knowledge) in the Messiah and what he did for you, so you can live with hope.**

Elizabeth’s Confidence in God

39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the **hill country with haste**, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the **house of Zacharias** and **greeted Elizabeth**.

1. God sent the angel Gabriel to Zacharias to tell him that his wife – a barren old woman would have a child – a child who would do a great work – he would be the forerunner of the Lord’s Christ.

Luke 1:17 He will also 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, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.

The angel also told this great news concerning Elizabeth to Mary.

Luke 1:36 "Now indeed, **Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age**; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

So **Mary excitedly and with haste went to see her old relative, Elizabeth, in the hill country**. She wanted to see God’s Word come true and to have her faith strengthened. So this wasn’t mere curiosity.

But I am sure Mary wanted to help her older pregnant relative. We know this because she stayed there for 3 months, until John was born. Pregnancy can be debilitating 伤元气 for older women, let alone old women. Bones and muscles don’t always cooperate as we get older. So Mary was willing to serve. But let’s get back to Elizabeth.

41 And it happened, when **Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped** in her womb; and Elizabeth **was filled with the Holy Spirit**.

2. Elizabeth's confidence in God was strengthened because the Holy Spirit revealed to her that Mary would have a Son by a miracle – the Son for whom her son would be the forerunner. Mary had not revealed this to her. In fact, Mary might not even have been pregnant at that time. And Zacharias did not even know about Mary.

(By the way, so much for those who say the Holy Spirit is a NT gift who came only at Pentecost. They confuse special gifts with the ever-present gift. No one can be, no one has ever been, saved without the Holy Spirit.)

Here we see that Elizabeth became the mouthpiece of the Holy Spirit. She was a servant and played her part. She was filled with the Holy Spirit. She was close to God and the fruits of the Spirit were clearly present in her life. And God strengthened her faith by this revelation – a faith to serve... like God strengthened Gideon, Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah to serve... who thought they were incapable of doing the work God called them to do. She knew that it was not a tumor in her, but a child!

3. Elizabeth's confidence in God would have been strengthened because when Mary greeted her, the baby leaped in Elizabeth's womb. This was not the regular movement of a baby that might respond to the mother's or father's voice. The baby had never heard Mary's voice before. And he didn't make a gentle turn; he made a **powerful movement forward** – almost suggesting running to the Savior. This infant knew more than those who were born! This was a miracle from God.

Luke 1:15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

It is like he knew what he was commissioned to do. Dr. Luke added something more that pointed out that this was not just normal baby movement.

Luke 1:44 "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb **for joy**.

The word translated "leap" is the same work that is translated "skipped."

Psalms 114:4 The **mountains skipped like rams**, The little hills like lambs.

Psalms 98:8 Let the **rivers clap their hands**; Let the hills be joyful together 9 before the LORD, For He is coming to judge the earth. With righteousness He shall judge the world, And the peoples with equity.

In both cases, God was doing something extraordinary to save his people. But specifically, when Messiah would come the people would leap to freedom. "Go out" is the same work as "leap forward."

Malachi 4:2 But to you who fear My name The Sun of Righteousness shall arise With healing in His wings; And you shall go out And grow fat like stall-fed calves.

And with her knowledge of the Scriptures, imagine how this would have **strengthened Mary's faith**.

5. Lessons:

a. It is normal to want more assurances, as Mary. That is why you read the Bible and listen to preaching. Don't doubt God's promises. Say: Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief.

b. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit as Elizabeth you are enriched and equipped by him, and will think little of yourself. You will work to exalt God your Savior.

c. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit as Elizabeth you are enriched and equipped by him to sing and speak the truth of God's Word. Make sure you are bearing the fruits of the Holy Spirit. Feed yourself with the Word of God so the Holy Spirit has something to work with.

d. And then specifically to this text: The fact that Messiah has come, does it then brings you great joy like it did to Elizabeth? It should. Joy to the world...the Lord has come!

Elizabeth's Confession about Christ

42 Then she spoke out **with a loud voice** and said, "**Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!**"

1. With Elizabeth's faith strengthened by God, she could then speak. And she spoke loudly, as if she wanted to world to hear.

2. Elizabeth assured Mary that she was blessed by God. This was the same word Deborah used to describe Jael when she killed Sisera and freed Israel. Mary was "blessed" to be a blessing! Her Son would be the one who would destroy the Devil and bring him to his knees so his chosen people might be freed. **Notice that Elizabeth did not say that Mary would be happy.** That is neither a good translation nor was it true. **For Mary's life was hard.** Later, heavily pregnant, Mary had to travel on a donkey. She had to give birth by herself...even for a first child. She had no place to give birth. She was poor. Her husband, according to history, died young. Her Son was harassed constantly. She and her other sons were threatened with expulsion from the synagogue. She had to watch her firstborn suffer the painful and shameful death on the cross. So happiness did not characterize Mary's life, but blessedness did! Blessed is the state in which God puts you. Blessedness is how God sees you.

Notice also that Elizabeth did not say that Mary was perfect in and of herself. Blessedness comes from outside – from who whose nature is blessed.

3. Elizabeth assured Mary that the fruit of her womb, her Son, was blessed as well. (This confirmed the humanity of Jesus and debunks some of the errors of the past concerning his nature – that it was some kind of ghostlike figure. What a greater blessing this was! Wouldn't every parent want his child to do better than he...to be more blessed? So surely this would have brought joy to Mary's heart. (We should note that some translate this 2nd phrase this way: You are blessed because of the fruit of your womb. This puts the emphasis on Christ's work rather than on his nature.)

43 "But why is this granted to me, that the **mother of my Lord should come to me?**"

4. Elizabeth assured Mary that her Son was not only blessed, but spoke of his high position: He was Elizabeth's Lord. This was an incredible confession in a country where the elderly (Elizabeth and Zacharias) would normally have been the recipient of the honor. It is the young unborn child that is treated with this honor...even as you saw John's later confession (that Christ must become greater as he became lesser). And this "Lord" in Elizabeth's praise testified to **the dual nature of Jesus.** Yes, he was man, but yes, he was also God. This was sound doctrine. This was not a feeling.

1Corinthians 8:5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords), 6 yet for us *there is* one God, the Father, of whom *are* all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, **through whom are all things, and through whom we live.**

When Mary received the God's Words, some believe that Jesus was formed in her then! It certainly would have matched the timeline. Even so, when you receive God's Word, Jesus works in you!

5. Elizabeth assured Mary that she was undeserving of Mary coming to her house. (While Mary was not

perfect, Elizabeth testified that Mary was better than she. Mary was better because she had the honor of being the **mother of Jesus.** Mary didn't have honor without Jesus. Isn't this true for you too? **You are nothing without Jesus.** He alone gives value to your life. **Your big job means nothing to him.** Your special skill is unnecessary to him! He is simply pleased to use you.

45 "Blessed is **she who believed,** for **there will be a fulfillment** of those things which were told her from the Lord."

6. Elizabeth assured Mary that Mary's faith in the coming Savior was real – she knew Mary's heart – and that faith was the basis of her blessedness. And how remarkable was Mary's faith? It was stronger than Zechariah – the one who was the priest. Age didn't matter. **Faith mattered.** And it was the object of her faith that truly mattered. **She had faith in the coming Savior.**

7. Elizabeth assured Mary that what the angel had said to her about Jesus would come true. How Mary's heart must have been lifted up and strengthened after Elizabeth's assurance! How did she know that Mary had received a special prophecy, especially considering that there were no prophets around Israel at the time? The Holy Spirit had revealed it to Elizabeth. That was proof in Mary's pocket.

8. Lessons:

a. To be able to confess Christ to a world in darkness – his birth, his life and his death - you have to have strong faith. Faith gives boldness to speak. If you are unsure about something you might be nervous. But when you have confidence you will speak with boldness.

b. How do you get that faith? You get it just like Elizabeth. You get it by listening to regular faithful preaching. You get faith from reading, knowing, and believing God's Word...all of it...including the account of the birth of the Savior through a virgin.

c. And what you must confess to the world is that Jesus Christ has come to save sinners.

Conclusion:

Elizabeth's faith was strengthened by confirmation that came from the Holy Spirit and she boldly spoke the truth. Her proclamation strengthened Mary's faith...especially considering what was ahead for her. Surely she remembered this when Jesus was on the cross.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. When your faith is strong (and you believe God's Words are true) you can take on any fearful or intimidating situation. You will not be afraid to speak the message of salvation– of Christ's virgin birth, his life and his death, wherever you go and with whomever you meet. When you are faith is strong **you will not be indifferent or lazy.** You will act.

2. You must learn to encourage each other – mutually confirming each other's faith. You are working to build one kingdom – when you are a leader or a follower. So remind each other...remind your children of the cross...how they were gloriously redeemed while they were yet in sin. (So this is about Christ and his work!) Remind each other (including your deacon, elders, and ministers) of Jesus' promise to come again and take you to be with him forever.

Finally, did you hear the words of Elizabeth...that these things would be fulfilled...that Jesus would be born, live, die, and rise again? If you don't believe these words you will die in your sins. If you believe these words you are destined for heaven. It's your choice.