

Luke 1:39-80

Verses 39-45:

--Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. 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. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, **"Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."**

--Who could Mary talk to? Who in the world would believe her? Gabriel had already prepped her first friend, and he would speak with Joseph as well.

--Imagine the anticipation as she **entered the house** and greeted Elizabeth!

--John the baby, is the first to react.

*Davis (Luke 1-13, pg. 32): *"Pre-natal John got a kick out of Mary's arrival, and so did Elizabeth!"**

--Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and supernatural understanding. There is such a joyful, Spirit-led communion in this encounter. Interaction on a human level is different than fellowship on a spiritual level. *They relate to one another in the Spirit, where age, station, or outward looks don't matter. No envy or jealousy is present; only what God is and is doing matters.*

--**that the mother of my Lord.** . . Elizabeth is submitted to Jesus Christ before His birth. This is a Spirit-led declaration. She didn't learn this through flesh and blood.

*Ryle (Expository Thoughts On Luke, pg. 24): *"It is a confession worthy to be placed by the side of that of Peter, when he said to Jesus, 'Thou art the Christ.'"**

--God's assurance and encouragement are offered in Elizabeth's final word: **Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.**

--No doubt, that was exactly what Mary needed to hear, and God was gracious to have it said in the power of His Holy Spirit.

Verses 46-56:

--And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; for behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever." And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

--Mary's response is just as Spirit-filled. Her language is full of Scripture, from Hannah's prayer in **1 Sam. 2:1-10**, to the Psalms and more. What this tells us is that her heart and mind were soaked in the Word of God.

Colossians 3:16: *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

--Our advice, rebukes, prayers, and praise should be filled and instructed by the Word. Mary was, and we should follow her example.

--We do not worship her as an immaculate, sinless person, as a perpetual virgin, as a mediator to be prayed to, and certainly not as a co-redemptress! *She would be the first to rebuke such idolatrous ideas!*

--We do respect and honor her as an example of a truly sincere and faithful servant of the Lord.

--**(47) *God my Savior.*** . . the first thing Mary rejoices in is God's saving work in her life.

--She magnifies God's gracious, undeserving favor in her life. God's good work was so powerful and holy in her life (the two explanations Gabriel gave her in **1:35: *the power of the Highest will overshadow you. . . therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born. . .***) that all generations would call her blessed as God's lowly maidservant.

--**(48) *behold.*** . . gives us a sense of the shocking nature of God's grace.

--**(49-50)** Mary moves from praising God for His work in her individually, to His work in all those that fear Him! *Zacharias and Elizabeth, as well as others past and future!*

--**(51-53)** Is descriptive of God's work through history. Putting down the proud and while meeting and using the humble is what He has done, is doing, and will do! *Caesar, Herod, High Priest and the religious Leaders Vs. Mary and Joseph, Zacharias and Elizabeth, the disciples, etc.*

--Paul notices the same spiritual methods in God's work.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29: But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.

--(54-55) God will also be faithful to *His servant Israel* (Ex. 4:22; Isa. 41:8-16; 44:1-2, 21-23; 49:3).

--(56) No doubt, Mary remained until the birth of John.

Malachi 3:16: Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD listened and heard them; so a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name. "They shall be Mine," says the LORD of hosts, "on the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them as a man spares his own son who serves him."

--What joy did the Lord take in the chatting of these two mothers?! Their pregnancy stories were the continuation of God's promises from **Genesis 3**, to Abraham, to Moses, to David, and the prophets, all the way to this new and glad moment.

--These two mothers were the first in faith, in literal bodily service, and in vocal expression to Jehovah and His Messiah.

Verses 57-66:

--**Now Elizabeth's full time came for her to be delivered, and she brought forth a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard how the Lord had shown great mercy to her, they rejoiced with her.**

So it was on the eighth day, that they came to circumcise the child; and they would have called him by the name of his father, Zacharias. His mother answered and said, "No; he shall be called John."

But they said to her, "There is no one among your relatives who is called by this name." So they made signs to his father—what he would have him called.

And he asked for a writing tablet, and wrote, saying, "His name is John." So they all marveled. Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, praising God. Then fear came on all who dwelt around them; and all these sayings were discussed throughout all the hill country of Judea. And all those who heard them kept them in their hearts, saying, "What kind of child will this be?" And the hand of the Lord was with him.

--(58) Now the relatives and neighbors become important witnesses in the story.

--(59) Circumcision was in accordance with the covenant (**Gen. 17:12**) and law (**Lev. 12:3**).

--(60) Elizabeth's faith is evident again. She believed her husband's witness and the work of the Spirit in her own life. *We don't like saying *No!* to family or the crowd!*

--(63) ***His name is John. . .*** The boy was already named by heaven. John means *Jehovah is gracious*.

--The fact that all the relatives and neighbors marvel is supposed to cause us to ask, *Why else would they name their child John and so radically break from their cultural norms?* The answer? Because the witness of the miraculous is true!

--(64) Gabriel's word comes true ***(1:20: you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place. . .)***. The birth and naming of John have taken place, and now Zacharias speaks.

--Again, God has His own means of publicity. He doesn't require our help. In fact, any publicity that is not from God is personal publicity we don't need.

--***And the hand of the Lord was with him. . .*** Luke simply states that there was an evident reality of God's power and action in John's life. Man is God's instrument. A tool He uses effectively for His purposes because we are made in His own image and likeness. *By the grace of God, our lives will all have something of the divine-plus to them!*

Verses 67-80:

--***Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people, and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David, as He spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets, who have been since the world began, that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hates us, to perform the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember His holy covenant, the oath which He swore to our father Abraham; to grant us that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve Him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life.***

"And you child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his manifestation to Israel.

--Now we hear what should have come out of Zacharias' mouth when he first heard Gabriel's glad tidings! Even so, at least Zacharias was wise and humble enough to learn his lesson, and now, that wrong is made right.

--The divine visitation he first doubted, he now praises **(68+78)** the Visitor.

--(69) A horn was a symbol of power. Zacharias recognizes the divine royalty and throne.

Psalm 132:16-18: *I will also clothe her priests with salvation, and her saints shall shout aloud for joy. There I will make the horn of David grow; I will prepare a lamp for My Anointed. His enemies I will clothe with shame, but upon Himself His crown shall flourish.*

--(70) God spoke *through* the mouths of the prophets. Their words were the sounds He played through their strings. ***2 Peter 1:19-21***

--Not just one prophet. All the prophets collectively told God's full message. Jesus corroborated this as well. ***Lk. 24:27, 32, 44-47***

--(71-75) These are the literal promises made to the people of God. ***Gen. 22:15-18; Lev. 26:6; Jer. 30:10; Micah 4:4***

--God would have His people separated from sin (***holiness***) and to Him (***righteousness***).

--(76-77) You can just imagine Zacharias' eyes, now filled with faith, looking at baby John!

--Zacharias repeats in faith all that Gabriel said of John ***Isa. 40:3; Mal. 3:1; Mt. 3:3***

--Israel needed to be saved, not only from their enemies, but also from their sins! What was Israel's great need? Repentance and salvation from sin.

--All national Israel thought about was political deliverance Vs. Their personal sins. *We can make the same mistake when we care more about political wrongs than our personal responsibility to repent before God.*

--(78-79) The Greek word for *tender* (*splagchnon*) is really *the bowels, intestines*. It was used to describe the deepest sympathetic emotions.

--God's deepest compassionate mercies are most evident in the visitation of ***the Dayspring from on high*** (No doubt there is an allusion to **Mal. 4:2: *The Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings***).

--Zacharias is speaking of the Messiah, the Light of the world shining on us! ***John 8:12; 2 Peter 1:19; Rev. 22:16***

--God had been working through Israel to bring light to the world (**Isa. 9:1-2**), but now John the Baptist would be a light which would shine, catch attention, and then decrease and be outshone by Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God who came to take away the sin of the world.

John 1:6-9: *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not the Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.*

John 5:35: *He was the burning and shining lamp, and you were willing for a time to rejoice in his light.*

--His light, the Light of the world, would reach all those who sit in darkness and death.

Darkness in the Bible describes spiritual blindness, Satanic power, fear, hopelessness, delusion, and death.

--How many are in darkness in our culture right now?! *Depression, Drugs, Hopelessness, Suicide, etc.*

--Only Jesus Christ can guide a life from darkness *into the way of peace*.

John 12:35-36: Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

--Those who walk in darkness cannot see life clearly. Those who walk in the light have life.

--**(80)** John's strength was of will over body. It was spiritual power. The power to serve and surrender to God and His purposes against his own nation, tradition, culture, family, and friends!

--When did he go into the deserts? We don't know for sure, but as a priest, he would have officially entered into the priesthood at 20. It must have been before or at that point.

--Either way, this is a time of preparation in the Lord. God is working *in him* before he makes anything happen *through him*. *Do we have the time for this? Jesus was thirty years in the home circle! Ten times more than in the public eye! God is not in the rush we are.*