

THE GOSPEL OF LUKE

A Message of Hope and Fulfillment For Those Longing For God

Committed to God

Luke 1: 39-56

Introduction: Luke's narrative continues, laying the foundation for the birth of Jesus the Messiah and the advance of the Gospel. As soon as Mary hears Gabriel's announcement she goes to visit her relative Elizabeth. Both share the marvels of God's mysterious power and the personal miracles they have experienced.

I. The Visit to Elizabeth: vv. 39-45

- A. Unique circumstances of Mary's journey in the light of her culture and the implications of her family heritage. (Distance about 70 miles.)
- B. Faith expressed by Elizabeth at Mary's unknown greeting—Elizabeth believed her with confirming signs.
- C. The filling of the Holy Spirit and recognition of the Lordship of Jesus even from the womb.
- D. The affirmation of Mary's faith by Elizabeth (v.45)

II. Mary's Song (The Magnificat): vv. 46-54

The Song of Mary may be divided into four stanzas, each with a theme:

- A. Mary's astonished and humble response to God's amazing favor (vv46-48a)
 - 1. Psalm 138:6
 - 2. I Samuel 2:1
- B. The truth upon which her joy is based (vv48-50)
 - 1. Mary's humble awareness of the implications of her unique role
 - 2. Psalm 103:17 (v50) essentially a direct quotation
- C. The consequences of the coming of Messiah into the world (vv 51-53)
 - 1. Psalm 98:1; Psalm 118:15; Job 5:11 (v52); Psalm 107:9 (v53)
 - 2. This stanza, mainly quotations from the Scriptures, demonstrate Mary's rich personal knowledge of God's Word and her own personal hope and expectation of the coming of the Messiah.
- D. The consummation of God's promises to Israel [and the world] (vv 54-55)
 - 1. Genesis 17:1-19, Psalm 132:11
 - 2. Mary is aware that she bears the hope of Israel (and the hope of the world), But she does not yet know all that this hope means, that in the future of her Son lies a cross and that before she sees Him again face to face her heart will be pierced with many griefs; if He is a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, she also is our lady of sorrows.

Conclusion: Being prepared to heed the call of God begins before it comes. It begins in humble devotion to Him and to His ways in the small things, in learning His Word, in trusting His promises. It comes from cultivating a relationship with God so that we are ready to obey when the moment of opportunity arises. Are you ready to follow God?

Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And how has it *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

The Magnificat

⁴⁶ And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord,
⁴⁷ And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.
⁴⁸ "For He has had regard for the humble state of His bond-servant;
For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed.
⁴⁹ "For the Mighty One has done great things for me;
And holy is His name.
⁵⁰ "AND HIS MERCY IS UPON GENERATION AFTER GENERATION
TOWARD THOSE WHO FEAR HIM."
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Luke 1: 29-50 (NASB)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1.) What in this passage suggests that Mary was well acquainted with the Scriptures?
- 2.) How did she personally respond to having one of the (perhaps THE) most significant human roles of all time?
- 3.) What does it mean when the Scripture says Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit?
- 4.) In your own words, what do the circumstances of this narrative tell us about Elizabeth, Mary, and the family?
- 5.) In what way was Mary prepared for her special role?
- 6.) How can we be prepared to follow God when His call comes to us?

NOTES

⁵¹ "He has done mighty deeds with His arm;
He has scattered *those who* were proud in the thoughts of their heart.

⁵² "He has brought down rulers from *their* thrones,
And has exalted those who were humble.

⁵³ "HE HAS FILLED THE HUNGRY WITH GOOD THINGS;
And sent away the rich empty-handed.

⁵⁴ "He has given help to Israel His servant,

In remembrance of His mercy,
⁵⁵ As He spoke to our fathers,
To Abraham and his descendants forever."

⁵⁶ And Mary stayed with her about three months, and *then* returned to her home.

Luke 1: 51-56 (NASB)

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