

ELIZABETH'S SONG

Luke 1:39-45

INTRODUCTION

Illustration – One of the final blessings my beloved blessed me with in her final days was how grateful she was and blessed she was that she was able to focus her whole life after Zachary was born (and Rebekah and Jadon) on being a mother.

Motherhood has been under assault since Satan crept into the Garden of Eden. Feminists relegate motherhood to less importance than a career. Chauvinists relegate motherhood to less important than anything related to men.

G.K. Chesterton, great English writer, poet, philosopher, and thinker – *“How can it be an (important) career to tell other people’s children about mathematics, and a small career to tell one’s own children about the universe? A woman’s function is laborious...not because it is minute, but because it is gigantic. I will pity Mrs. Jones for the hugeness of her task; I will never pity her for its smallness.”*

Consider this: the Hebrew word for “compassion” comes from the root word, “womb.”

Or consider the Spanish proverb – *“An ounce of mother is worth a ton of priest.”* 😊

Beloved, from Genesis 3 to Luke, God declares that victory is gained over the enemy through motherhood

Please open you Bibles to **Luke 1:39-45**.

Our text today may seem like a Mother’s Day sermon. What we have here today describes the meeting of two mothers – at this most pivotal moment in human history, history of the

universe, and redemption, God brings about redemption through motherhood ☺

This is not just the meeting of two very important mothers. This is also the meeting of two very important unborn babies.

READ Luke 1:39-56

Proposition:

- I. The **Ordinary** Meeting of **2 Mothers**
- II. The **Extraordinary** Meeting of **2 Babies**
- III. The **Song of Elizabeth**

I. The Ordinary Meeting of 2 Mothers 1:39-40

Point – The meeting of two mothers. A glimpse of the intergenerational **fellowship** of Mary and Elizabeth.

Proof – “³⁹**Now at this time Mary arose and went with haste to the hill country, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.**”

Mary had just been told something humanly impossible and frankly unimaginable. → This has been called the Visitation.
The previous passage was the Annunciation.

God makes it very clear that **Mary** immediately went to **Elizabeth**

- 1) “**Now at this time**” – the time of the Annunciation
- 2) “**went with haste**” –
- 3) **36** – 6th month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy
56 – “about three months” before the birth of John

Young women at that time might go to the well for water alone, but they wouldn’t leave the village by themselves.

It was about 100 miles from Nazareth which was in Galilee in the north, to the hill country of Judah, south of Jerusalem.

Where did Mary stay en route? Did she sleep under the stars? Did she have money to buy food? God does not provide the details, but we know He took care of Mary.

J.C. Ryle – “First let us seek the face of God; then let us seek the face of God’s friends.” This is what godly Mary does.

There hasn’t been enough time for Mary to have any kind of discernible feeling or confirmation physically that she’s pregnant. This is a matter of days.

“**hill country**” – country folks

There is a similar situation for a similar birth and a similar man in the Old Testament. → Samuel! **1 Sam 1:1** – “Now there was a certain man from Ramathaim-zophim from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah.”

These were two very **extraordinary** women, two very **extraordinary** mothers. But their meeting was very **ordinary**.

→ This is what mothers do. This is what believers do.

Two mothers – **separated by generation**. In their time, **Elizabeth** easily could have been **Mary**’s great-grandmother. Two mothers **separated by geography**. They were at opposite ends of the country (North and South)

But two mothers **bonded** by their likeminded faith, bonded by their godliness and bonded by their truly unique selection by God.

Point – There is no generation gap in the Gospel. The Gospel unites the generations.

Illustration – **Mal 3:16** – “Then those (*the righteous remnant*) who feared the LORD spoke to one another, and the LORD gave attention and heard *it*”

Application— Beloved, you may pick and choose your friends. It is God who chooses who will be in the house of God with you.

Paul Washer – *“I don’t care if you are hearing the greatest preachers in the world every day on YouTube. I don’t care if you’re giving your body to be burned or giving everything you have to the poor. If you are not a viable, serving, dedicated, devoted member to a visible local church you are outside the will of God.”*

II. The Extraordinary Meeting of 2 Babies 1:41

Point – The ordinary is swallowed up by the extraordinary.

Now, **Elizabeth**’s husband **Zacharias** had surely written out for her what he was told by **Gabriel** in **1:14-17**.

She had been living in the quietness of that priestly home and town in **the hill country**, nurturing in her heart for 6 months this wonder of a son, conscious that she was living on the verge of the dawn of the day for which her people had sighed and suffered through centuries.

And then here comes **Mary** ... ☺

Proof – ^{“41a}**And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting, the baby leaped in her womb;”**

Much has been speculated about this **leaping in the womb**
→ I want to bring **2 Scriptural Truths** to your attention:

1) Clear fulfillment of **1:15** – “he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, while yet in his mother’s womb.”

This is the ministry of the Holy Spirit in Luke in general and in the Gospel of Infancy in particular.

Geoff Thomas –retired pastor of Alfred Baptist Church in Scotland - *“He is there in his sixth month. He already has well-defined facial features. He’s developed finger-prints and footprints. His skin is red and wrinkled and covered with fine, soft hair. He can hear loud noises and they startle him. John’s eyelids are beginning to part and his eyes to open. All the vital organs are being fine-tuned, heart and brain, and some of them are already functioning, while others are maturing. This tiny John leaps as his Lord comes near.”*

Application – Something Rebekah learned at Summit Ministries in Colorado (a two week Christian worldview conference) was what not to say and what to say when women become pregnant: Don’t say “I’m going to have a baby!” It is better to say, “I have a baby! He/she will be born in x months!” Life begins as conception.

2) Beginning fulfillment of **Mal 4:2** – “for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.”

(Interesting → this is the same word in the Septuagint! ☺)

There is continuity between the Old Testament expectation and the New Testament realization.

What is John’s ministry? He is the **Forerunner**.
The one who will prepare the way and announce the coming and arrival of the King. What does he do here???
→ He announces the arrival of the King!!!

John is crying in the wilderness of his mother’s womb
☺ Preaching from the pulpit of his mother’s womb ☺

“^{41b}**and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.**”

- 1) **6-month-old baby John** in the womb,
- 2) **Elizabeth**, being filled with the Holy Spirit

- 3) “**Zacharias** was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied” (1:67)
- 4) “**Peter**, filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 4:8)
- 5) “**Paul**, filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 13:9)

Elizabeth knows **Mary** is God’s Tabernacle. She knows the Lord of Glory and the Lord of Life is dwelling inside this young women.

Point – Being “**filled with the Holy Spirit**” means two things:

Illumination → The internal witness of the Spirit that produces a fullness of conviction about the certainty and reliability of Truth, the Word of God, in the mind and heart of the believer.

Saturation → If something is “**filled**,” there’s no room for anything else. This means the Holy Spirit has complete control.

Application → Uniquely uncommon experience for mother and unborn son and also universal common experience for all believers.

III. The Song of Elizabeth 1:42-45

Point – How many generations had been reading to their children and grandchildren and dying and then those children become parents reading and then grandparents reading and then dying again ... and again ... and again ... reading the prophecies of Ezekiel and Isaiah and Joel and Malachi ... waiting ...and waiting...

The Character of the Song

The prophetic voice had been silent for 400 years. Now, the return of the prophetic voice. The return of the poetic song.

God is still shattering the silence.

This time though ... prophecy not through an angel, but comes from a godly woman.

→ This is the first human prophecy since Malachi.

Point – This is **Elizabeth’s Song**. She has a **prophetic** voice. And she has a **poetic** voice.

Illustration – She is like **Abigail** of old in 1 Samuel 25. She was a woman of inner beauty – of how she professed the truth.

→ She has a **Prophetic** Voice.

Proof – “^{42a}**And she cried out with a loud voice.** This is literally translated as – “a mega shout”

Elizabeth is given the spirit of prophecy, and this gives her boldness to shout these words of truth loudly.

Beloved, when the silence becomes deafening and the darkness seems impenetrable, God brings the godly mother **Elizabeth**.

→ She has a **Poetic** Voice.

Poem or Song (metrical composition). There is an evident parallel structure, balanced form, and neatly arranged clauses.

This is the 1st of 5 “songs” in Luke 1-2

The Song of: **Elizabeth, Mary, Zacharias, Angels, Simeon**
1:42b-45, 46-55, 68-79; 2:14, 29-32

Luke is the only Gospel author who tells us about these songs. **Matthew** doesn’t. **Mark** doesn’t. **John** doesn’t.

Luke, the Greek, the doctor, the meticulous researcher, was also an artist. He was a poetic man as well as a scientific man.

Elizabeth who was a daughter of the Old Covenant, becomes the first singer of the New Covenant.

→ She has the honor of the **1st song** of the New Testament Gospel, the **1st song** of the new dawn that is breaking.

Beloved, when Jesus comes into the world, poetry expresses itself and music is reborn.

The Content of the Song

Point – In the content of Elizabeth’s song, we see **3 Blessings** with a **Testimony** inserted in the middle

A. A Blessed Woman and a Blessed Baby v. 42

Proof – “^{42b}and said, ‘**Blessed among women are you, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!**’”

5 Truths:

- 1) means **Mary** is the most blessed woman
- 2) perfect – established and continuing fact
- 3) passive – God has blessed and continues to bless Mary and baby Jesus

4) “**Blessed**” isn’t what a person feels; it is what a person is.

5) **Application** – **Luke 11:27-28** (**Mary** is also in this camp with you ☺)

B. A Testimony vv. 43-44

Point – **Elizabeth** is the **first disciple**. Until I studied this passage this week, I had thought **Mary** was the first disciple. I have to say, nope, it is **Elizabeth**.

Proof – “⁴³**And how has it *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?**”

“**Lord**” – 25 times in chapters 1-2

2:11 – “today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Lord is the title of honor. It brings out the Master/Slave relationship.

1 Cor 7:23 – “You were bought with a price”

1 Pet 1:18-19 – “you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, *the blood* of Christ.”

Gal 4:5 – “that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”

Application - The point here is **Elizabeth** makes this personal!
– “**my Lord**”

Psa 110:1 – “A *Psalm of David*. The LORD says to my Lord”

How did **Elizabeth** come to this conclusion? Did **Mary** tell her? I don’t think so. **Elizabeth** gives the answer ...

“⁴⁴**For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.**”

“**joy**” – exultation, extreme gladness, extreme joy – often with body movements such as jumping, smiling, and laughing

Turn to: John 3:26-30 → This is **John the Baptist!!** ☺

Recall in **Luke 1:14** – “You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.”

→ John is the first to have this joy!

Application – **Psa 30:5** – “Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy *comes* in the morning.”

This morning we sang the hymn “Joy to the World”.

*“Joy to the world the Lord is come
Let earth receive her King”*

This is Elizabeth, Mary, baby John...you and us today!

C. A Blessed Believer **v. 45**

Point – **Reason** why Mary is blessed and being blessed.

Proof – “⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”

➔ **Mary** believes ➔ **1:32-33**

And we have to ask ... was **Zacharias** here at this time (1:20)? He was mute. The Bible never says he was deaf. Did he hear this???

Application – Notice the utter absence of jealousy. There is not a trace of envy here.
This is huge contrast to all cultural norms. In most cultures at the time, the **younger** is lesser than the older. The **younger** honors the older. NOT the other way around.

Elizabeth is an old experienced godly woman who has been serving the Lord blamelessly for years through many trials with her husband ... but God passes her by for the greater honor.

It's one thing to bear a prophet.

It's another thing to bear the greatest man who ever lived.

It's an entirely different matter altogether to bear the Lord.

Elizabeth is not the one through whom Messiah will come. Rather it is this young unproven and untested woman, **Mary**. Yet ... the moment **Mary** knocks on the door and comes into her house, **Elizabeth** rejoices with total sincerity at the favor shown to her by the Lord.

This is a tremendous display of **Humility** – **1 Cor 13:4** – “Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant”

Andrew Murray, 19th and early 20th century South African pastor – “*Humility is perfect quietness of heart. It is for me to have no trouble; never to be fretted or vexed or irritated or sore or disappointed. It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at*

rest when nobody praises me and when I am blamed or despised. It is to have a blessed home in the Lord where I can go in and shut the door and kneel to my Father in secret and be at peace as in a deep sea of calmness when all around is trouble. It is the fruit of the Lord Jesus Christ's redemptive work on Calvary's cross, manifested in those of His own who are definitely subject to the Holy Spirit."

→ This is **Elizabeth** ☺

John was very much like his mother **Elizabeth**, you know.

John was the GOAT (according to Jesus). Because of his great humility → **John 3:30** – “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

Now, even though he was uniquely filled with the Spirit in the womb, I don't believe that **John's** humility was completely created *ex nihilo*. I think **John** also learned much of this from his mother **Elizabeth**.

CONCLUSION

Illustration – One of my first “go to” commentaries on Luke is by a man named **G. Campbell Morgan** ☺. Pastor Morgan had 4 sons. All were preachers. Someone once came into their house when all the family was there. He asked one of Morgan's sons this question: “Howard, who is the greatest preacher in your family?” Howard had a great admiration for his father and he looked straight across at him ... and then without a moment's hesitation he answered, “Mother.”