

Luke 1:39~56

Since I have been here, I have preached verse by verse through 19 books of the bible. Having said that, I readily admit, that these first two chapters of Luke are quiet possibly the most difficult to preach, given that they are written in the narrative form. By that, I'm referring to the fact that it is written as though telling a story. Most of the scripture deals with a particular truth that is being taught, truths that should shape and mold our lives. But narrative writing, such as the case here, is different in the sense that is more like simply telling a story. As with any story, you don't usually stop and analyze the different parts, seeking to understand it better, given the fact the writer usually includes all the attributes and details that are needed to understand everything. In other words, I won't be able to tell you much more (if any) than what you can read for your self.

Tonight, we come to an interaction between Mary and Elisabeth that took place in Elisabeth's home. After being told by the angel Gabriel, that her cousin Elisabeth was pregnant, and was in her 6th month term, Mary packed up and went to see her. The mere fact that the angel even mentioned that Elisabeth was pregnant, was significant. If this was all that the angel said to Mary, it was enough for Mary to understand that the child that Elisabeth was carrying was a major part of what God was doing.

Upon entering the house and greeting Elisabeth, we are told that the baby Elisabeth was carrying leaped in her womb, and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. This seems to be in fulfillment of what the angel had said to Zacharias back in verse 15...¹⁵*For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb.*

The emphasis of this passage, from 39~45, is that it serves as sort of a "Confirmation" between these two ladies concerning the things going on. I say that because of the way it happens. Luke is careful that say that all this took place *upon the initial greeting* of Mary.

⁴⁰*Upon entering the house of Zacharias, Mary saluted Elisabeth. ⁴¹And when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:*

Luke is careful to point out that this event took place, immediately following the initial greeting from Mary. That's what salutation means, greeting. It's like Mary walks into the house, "Hello, it's me Mary," and immediately, the baby in Elisabeth's womb jumps, and she is filled with the Holy Ghost. And as a result of being "*filled with the Holy Ghost,*" she is filled with the knowledge of the fact that God had chosen Mary, and that Mary was going to bring forth the promised Messiah of Israel.

By what is written, it appears that rather than Elisabeth speaking, it is as though the Spirit that is speaking through her...

(Vs 42) ⁴²*And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*

Given that all of this happened upon the initial greeting of these two, Elisabeth could not have known anything about Mary's encounter with the angel and what the Lord was preparing to do through her. Other than it be revealed to her by the Spirit of God, that had just filled her.

(Vs 43) By what she says, Elisabeth is fully aware that Mary is not only pregnant, but that she is carrying the Lord in her womb...

⁴²*And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. ⁴³And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*

(Vs 43) She asks, what brings her this honor that the “*mother of her Lord*” had come to see her?

(Vs 44) She continues by pronouncing “*blessing upon Mary*” for her faith, and “*Affirms Mary*” that what the angel had told her would surely be performed!

The point of this passage seems to be that of a “*Supernatural Confirmation*” between these two ladies concerning the things the Lord was doing among them.

This seems to be supported given Mary’s response upon hearing Elisabeth’s words...

(Vs 46~55) Upon hearing Elisabeth’s words, *Mary erupts in PRAISE!* Most literature scholars allude to this section as Mary’s song, sort of a Psalm. I’m convinced, that upon the “*spiritual affirmation*” given through Elisabeth, Mary’s heart was filled with praise. It’s as if “*Joy*” just swells up in her heart, a joy she could not contain, and she just burst out “*Singing His praises!*”

(Vs 46) ⁴⁶*And Mary said, my soul doth magnify the Lord...*

Mary begins by praising the Lord for His goodness... “*My soul*” is a Hebrew expression for “*T*”... It expresses greater intensity. Rather than saying, “*I praise the Lord for His goodness to me*”...the expression takes on deeper meaning by saying... “*My soul, (or All that is within me) from the very depths of my soul... I praise the Lord...*”

⁴⁷*And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior...*

The goodness of God had caused her spirit to be filled with Joy! The fact that God had chosen to do such a wondrous thing, to think that God would choose to bring about the fulfillment of the promised Messiah *through such a lowly servant such as her*...overwhelmed her. She was so grateful to have been given such an honor...

There’s two stanzas’ to Mary’s song...

(Vs 48~49) She praises God for what He has done for her...specifically...

(Vs 50~55), she praises God for His goodness to the nation Israel...

(Vs 48~49, **paraphrase**) “*God is so Good... What a privilege that has been bestowed upon me, to think that the Lord would choose to bless me, his lowly servant, and me this honor, of carrying in my womb the blessed Messiah.*”... “*Blessed be His name...*”

(Vs 50~55) She recalls the goodness of God He has shown throughout the generations!

⁵⁰*And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.*

It’s like... “*Time and time again...He has come through for His people...*”

- ⁵¹*He hath showed strength with his arm; (**Time and time again, we have seen the mighty power**)*

- *He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

- ⁵²*He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.*

- ⁵³*He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.*

“*He has...He has...He has...He has*”...Time and time again, God has been so good and so faithful to His Servant, Israel! Just as He promised He would be!

(Vs 54~55) ⁵⁴*He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;* ⁵⁵*As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.*

True to His word...His mercy has been upon Israel, His servant...*just as He promised*...

In verse 56, Luke closes this section by declaring that Mary stayed with Elisabeth for about three months before returning home to Nazareth. Three months from the time she arrived would have put Elizabeth at full term, ready to give birth. Reading this, I first assumed that Mary stayed until the baby was born, but by what Luke says in the very next verse, it hints that Mary had already returned home. Either way, God seems to have used this time together to prepare the both of them for what He was about to do through them, and their two children.