

"The Little Kicker"

Luke 1: 26-39

"And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.



And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God

shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren. For with God nothing shall be impossible. And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her. And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Judah."

In these scriptures we find the account of a young woman visited by a messenger from God with a most incredible announcement. This young woman is told that she is going to become pregnant with the Son of God. Wow! Many people want God to send a prophet or messenger to tell them how special they are and the amazing ministry and giftings they will have. But here we find what moves the very heart of God, His Spirit, and the angel,... that someone is going to bring forth the Son! This is the message of the ages, Christ in you the hope of glory! At first Mary considered what manner of salutation this messenger was bringing, but she was told not to fear because, "You are going to become pregnant with the Son of God." She is young. She is poor. She is a virgin, but God's heart is gathering her into His deep desire which is to bring forth His Son in us. If these scriptures weren't so familiar to us we would be astounded at the radicalness of this situation. Also, the reality of this in our own story would cause us to more deeply realize what happened to us at New Birth!

The messenger continued to tell Mary that she will not just conceive of this Son, but bring Him forth and that He will be great, He will reign, and His Kingdom will have no end. Let us consider what has just happened in this account: Mary has just been told that she (a virgin) is going to become pregnant with the Son of God, she is going to literally birth this Son, and when He comes

forth He is going to reign forevermore. Mary's immediate response is not "amen, yes!" but... "how"? The messenger's response to her question is two-fold. First he shares with her that the Holy Spirit will come upon her and she will be overshadowed in the power of the Highest. This Son would not be born of blood, nor the of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:13). But the messenger brings in another element to comfort Mary's heart concerning her pregnancy, and that is Elizabeth. The messenger tells Mary that Elizabeth had also conceived a son in her old age and, although barren, was six months pregnant. And then he added a special word of encouragement, "With God nothing shall be impossible!" It is important to read this scripture in context, for what looks impossible with a barren woman and a virgin woman is that they will bring forth a son. This very scripture is addressing our need to bring forth Jesus amidst all our lack, as compared to other selfish ways of interpreting it. It is at this point that Mary bows her heart and offers herself as a vessel that God can use, His handmaid, and says "Be it unto me according to thy Word." After this the messenger departs. His part is over.

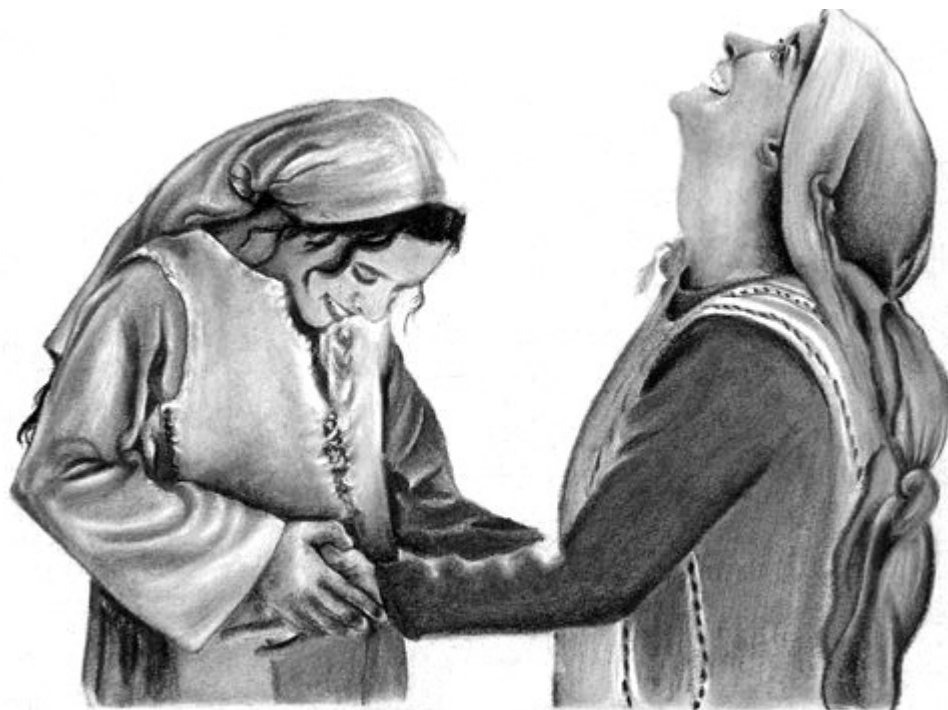
Now the story moves from messengers with messages from God, to two pregnant women! Mary was pregnant with the Son of God and Elizabeth was pregnant with John the Baptist! These two pregnancies were linked in a very special way! The scriptures tell us that soon after the messenger left Mary arose in haste and went to the hill country of Judah to visit Elizabeth. Can you imagine what she must have felt as she bore not just an amazing message from God but His Son inside of her? *(I believe every person who is born again should understand that!)* How alone she may have felt in the midst of dead religion and people who would surely think she was crazy and may even stone her to death, as that was the punishment for pregnancy out of wedlock. Her heart and feet must have raced to the one person/place on earth who might just understand what she was going through, and that person was Elizabeth.

Mary Visits Elizabeth Luke 1:40-45

"And Mary entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, that, when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spoke out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."

Let us take a moment and realistically consider what this gathering of pregnant women might have been like. One is a virgin who was told by an angel that she is going to bring forth the Son of God. The other is a barren lady in her old age that is almost at full term and full of the matter! God has prepared one vessel (Elizabeth) to be a most powerful source of encouragement to another vessel (Mary) so that the Son of God might come forth from within a human! One vessel is full of the Holy Spirit and John the witness-bearer, and the other vessel contains the Seed of Christ. God gave these women to one another for such a time as this, to strengthen each other in bringing forth Christ. Their relating to one another was based on what was in them of God, and not outward circumstances, blood relation, or soulish attachments. True edification came from their time together because it was based on affirming and blessing the life of Jesus that was growing in Mary

(the same life that is growing in you and me!). To these ladies it was all about bringing forth Life! In their condition, the time for idle chatter or religious discussion had passed. When they shared the Word it was directly in relation to what was growing inside of them! Mary's exact response to receive the Son within her was, "Be it unto me according to Thy Word." Can you even imagine how ALIVE the Word of God must have been to Mary and Elizabeth during those three months of fellow-



ship? Jesus Himself stated in John 5:39 that all the scriptures testify of Him, and these two ladies knew that in a way that none of the Pharisees of their time had ever experienced!

When Mary came to visit, Elizabeth was already six month's pregnant whereas Mary was only in the early stages, and probably not even showing yet. With no outward evidence, and only the inward Seed of Christ still growing and forming in her, Mary might have gone through some struggles. Yet God had Elizabeth, John, and the Holy Spirit ready to encourage her heart. These three were going to EDIFY Mary in a way that is Eternal. They are going to edify her by focusing on the Son that is within her rather than making the focus the earthen vessel.

As soon as Mary walked in the door and said "Hello," the baby in Elizabeth's womb leapt! Just upon hearing the voice of a vessel carrying the Son, little John started "kicking"! Elizabeth was six months pregnant with John when Mary came to visit her. That means that John was formed enough in Elizabeth's womb to be able to kick! God had it timed perfectly. Even before John was born and still in the womb, the very purpose of his existence was to bear witness to Jesus... the Jesus that is real and living. It is not recorded that little John kicked in the womb during the sermons at Temple, or when a great hymn was sung. John kicked for the SON. He bore witness of this Son again at the Jordan, He bore witness when this Son was walking that He was the Lamb of God. John was more than just a baptizer; he was one who bore witness of the Son.

The next thing to happen is that Elizabeth got filled with the Holy Spirit as soon as she heard Mary's voice. As the Spirit of God filled Elizabeth she started pouring out affirmations that Mary truly had the Son of God in her womb. The words the Spirit poured through Elizabeth's lips are very powerful to a heart pressing in to bring forth the Son. They were spoken and recorded in scripture not just for Mary but for all vessels that will bring forth Christ, to you and to me! Let's look closer at Elizabeth's words: *"Blessed are you among people who can have babies, because the baby in your womb is the blessed Son of God!"* The Spirit of God is bearing witness through

Elizabeth that Mary is pregnant with Jesus and that it is a blessed, wonderful thing. The Spirit is EXULTING within Elizabeth that a human being, an earthen vessel, has the SON growing within them! Can you imagine how greatly the Holy Spirit exults now when He sees Jesus growing in you and me?

Next Elizabeth bows her heart to the Son within Mary, saying, *“How is it that a vessel containing MY LORD would come to visit me?”* Elizabeth was not ashamed to bow to Jesus in an earthen vessel, even if that vessel was weak and foolish and earthen. Elizabeth was able to honor a person in whom Jesus truly dwelt, bearing witness to His Life within that vessel. You can see why Elizabeth would be a good momma for John the Baptist, for it was John who said he was not even worthy to unloose the latchet of one of Jesus’ shoes (Mark 1:7, Luke 3:16, John 1:27). Both John and Elizabeth were full of the Holy Spirit Who came to bear witness of Jesus. Elizabeth’s ministry was to Mary. She was filled with a Spirit that cried out, “Jesus is in you and He will grow.” Elizabeth is not heard of again, and John’s entire life is spent bearing witness of Jesus while crying out that Jesus must increase while John must decrease (John 3:30).

Through these scriptures in the first chapter of Luke we find that it was not just Elizabeth who encouraged Mary, but also the baby John in her womb, and most importantly the Holy Spirit. These three were part of Mary’s God given support system to help her birth the Son! God knew just where to send Mary in the early stages of her pregnancy to help her bring forth Christ.

Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. That means Mary stayed until Elizabeth came to full term. At that point Mary was ready to return home. She carried with her all that the Spirit, John, and Elizabeth had imparted to her. Mary would need all that, for she was about to be put into some very hard situations surrounding Christ’s birth, which would be in a barn after a long and difficult journey. There are many challenges that face every earthen vessel that has said “YES” to God and allowed Jesus to be born into them and wants Him to live through them. God does not leave us alone. He gives us the Holy Spirit, His Word, and other people who are full of God’s heart and Spirit that will support us in the process of bringing forth Christ.***

