

Series: Perspectives on the Christ of Christmas – Part 3

Luke 1:39-45 NAS

## The Perspective of Elizabeth!

Services: Wednesday, December 14 at 11 AM & 7 PM

Church Year: Third Wednesday in Advent – 2016

Free Meals at 12 & 6 – On the Four Advent Wednesdays!

**Introduction**: Dear friends: During the season of Advent we remember *our great need for Jesus*; then we get ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus – *the One through whom we are saved by grace through faith!*

- Two weeks ago we considered the Father’s perspective on the Christ of Christmas: He knew we had brought condemnation upon ourselves; so, at the right time, *He sent His Son to open the way to heaven!*
- Last week we considered Mary’s perspective: *She was a humble young woman who believed in the promised Messiah. She knew her need, so she had faith in the One who would come!* But she must have been so surprised to hear the news that the Messiah would enter this world *through her body, and that she would be His mother!* Nevertheless, she trusted the LORD and was open to His will for her life!

Today, we focus on Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist; what was her perspective on the Christ of Christmas? Let’s learn about Elizabeth:

- Both Elizabeth and Zacharias *believed God’s Word and were longing for the promised Messiah*; such believing will always show, so the Bible records that they were **“walking blamelessly in all the commandments and requirements of the Lord”** (Luke 1:6 NAS).

- Prior to becoming pregnant with John, the Bible says that she was **στεῖρα** (Luke 1:7 BGT), which means sterile / barren / incapable of having children; the Bible also says that she was “**advanced in years**” (1:7 ESV). So, *short of a miracle*, she could not become pregnant!
- Since John would be *so important in preparing the way for Jesus*, God worked a miracle so that Elizabeth, *through her husband, Zacharias*, became pregnant with John the Baptist. Then, *when she was six months along in her pregnancy*, the very Son of God was conceived by the Holy Spirit in the womb of the Virgin Mary.

We now go to Luke chapter 1:39-45, which includes a remarkable conversation between Mary and Elizabeth.

1. **Elizabeth Was Visited by Mary:** <sup>39</sup> **Now at this time** *[lit., in those days]* **Mary arose and went with haste** *[speed, quickness]* **to the hill country, to a city of Judah,** <sup>40</sup> **and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.**
  - a. The reason to visit: You know the story; Gabriel said to Mary: “...**your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren**” (Luke 1:36 ESV). The news was amazing; Mary’s much older relative – *who had tried and tried to become pregnant* – was now pregnant! It’s not that Mary doubted, *but she wanted to see for herself and talk to Elizabeth about the Christ in her womb!*
  - b. The difficult trip: Elizabeth lived in the hill country, *probably in the city of Hebron – about 25 miles south of Jerusalem*, so the trip was

about a hundred miles uphill, since Hebron is about 1,700 feet higher than Nazareth.

2. **Elizabeth Was Filled with the Holy Spirit:** <sup>41</sup> **And it came about that when Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.** // Earlier Gabriel had told Zacharias about John, *even before he was conceived*: "...he will be great before the Lord. ...and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb. And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God... and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared" (Luke 1:15-17 ESV). Then, Zacharias – *in writing* – must have communicated those words to Elizabeth; therefore, *they knew the coming of the Christ was very near!* Then, Mary's greeting and Elizabeth being filled; *what an exciting time in history!*
3. **Elizabeth Spoke by the Holy Spirit:** <sup>42</sup> **And she [Elizabeth] cried out with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed among women are you, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!"** // Up to that point Elizabeth was *looking* for the Christ to come; but now, by the Holy Spirit, she *knew* the Christ was in Mary's womb! Therefore, she was **loud** and **excited** when she spoke! She declared that Mary was blessed *to be chosen among all women to bear the Christ*; furthermore, she declared the blessedness of the child in her womb – *since He would save His people from their sins!*
4. **Elizabeth Was Surprised by Mary's Visit:** <sup>43</sup> **"And how has it *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"** <sup>44</sup> **For behold, when the sound of**

**your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy.”**

- a. **Elizabeth**: Even though Elizabeth was also highly chosen among women to bear the forerunner of the Christ, *she was humble and felt unworthy of a visit from the very mother of the Messiah.* What about us; we have sinned and deserve nothing good, *yet the Spirit has visited us with the gifts of knowing Jesus and being forgiven.* **Let us be in awe of God’s choosing of us to be His very own children!**
  - b. **John**: As stated earlier, John would “**be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.**” Then it happened, and he leaped for joy! *Even babies can be blessed by the Spirit!*
5. **Elizabeth Acknowledged Mary’s Faith**: <sup>45</sup> **“And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord.”** // Mary heard, believed, and was blessed; *the same things were true for Elizabeth!* Even today people have the opportunity to hear—*some do, many don’t*; of those who hear—*some believe, some don’t*; **but for all who believe, they are blessed!**

**Conclusion**: Let us pray: Dear Father, to us Your ways are a mystery, *yet they are always best and motivated by love.* As Elizabeth trusted Your Word and the Christ, so keep us ever doing the same! In Jesus’ name we pray...