

Mary's visit to Elizabeth

Our theme for this meeting is “Rejoicing in the Lord” and to start our reflections we look at the account of the Mary’s visit to Elizabeth, celebrated in the Church calendar on 31st May, recorded in Scripture in Luke:

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE

[Luke 1:39-56](#) (... also please consider [Luke 1:5-25](#) and [Luke 1:26-38](#))

³⁹ And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;

⁴⁰ And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

⁴¹ And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:

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

⁴³ And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

⁴⁴ For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

⁴⁵ And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

⁴⁶ And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

⁴⁷ And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

⁴⁸ For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

⁴⁹ For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

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

⁵¹ He hath shewed strength with his arm; 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.

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 for ever.

⁵⁶ And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.

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DISCUSSION THOUGHTS:

1. Similarities in the accounts of Zacharias and Mary (Luke Chapter 1)
 - The appearance of the angel Gabriel (v19 and vs26-27)
 - They were troubled, disturbed (v12 and v29)
 - The promise of a son (v13 and v31)
 - An objection to child-bearing (v18 and v34)
 - A sign (v20 and v36)
2. If the revelation of the angel Gabriel to Mary that her cousin Elizabeth had conceived in her "old age" was a sign
 - Does this help us to understand why Mary visited Elizabeth?
 - and Mary's Magnificat (my spirit hath **rejoiced** in God my Saviour)?
3. What is the meaning of Rejoicing?
 - New Testament: Cheerfulness, Calmly happy, Delight (Greek word mainly: Chara and its derivatives)
4. Christians warrants to Rejoice
 - Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great [is] your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you. [Matthew 5:11-12](#)
 - Again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people [Romans 15:10](#)
 - Rejoice in the Lord alway: [and] again I say Rejoice [Philippians 4:4](#)
 - Rejoice evermore [1 Thessalonians 5:16](#)
5. Why should we Rejoice?
 - God's love [John 3:16](#)
 - Grace [Romans 3:24](#)
 - Redemption [Ephesians 1:7](#)
 - Reconciliation [2 Corinthians 5:19](#)
 - Peace [John 14:27](#)
 - Salvation [Romans 1:16](#)
 - Eternal Life [John 6:54](#)
6. What does this mean for us in our daily lives today?

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FOLLOW UP - for thoughtful reflection

During our discussion the issue of a virgin birth was debated, whether the conception of Jesus was a story with a theological message (what is that message?) or a literal event.

1. During the recitation of the creed during the Sung Eucharist and Holy Communion services we say:

“For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, he became incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man.”

Can we reconcile saying the creed if it is just a story and not a literal event?

2. For an interesting viewpoint click on the following link:

<http://christiananswers.net/q-aiia/virginbirth.html>