



The DAILY JESUS NEWS #010
Jesus’ 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
Jesus’ Birth and Growth into Maturity

Mary and Elizabeth Rejoice Together
Luke 1.39-45

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39 In those days, Mary rose up and went quickly down to a town in the hill country of Judea. 40 She went into Zechariah's home, where she greeted Elizabeth. 41 At the moment Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. 42 She cried out with a booming voice,

"You are blessed among women! The child you will have is also blessed! 43 Why is it that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 "Look! As soon as the sound of your greeting entered my ears, my baby was overjoyed and leaped within me. 45 And blessed are you who believed that the things that were firmly spoken by the Lord to you will actually be fulfilled."

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	Elizabeth's Home; The Hill Country of Judea
Time	9 Months Before the Birth of Jesus
Stage of Jesus' Life	Stage II: His 30 Years of Preparation for Ministry
Chapter 2	Faith, Prayer and Prophecy Prepared for Jesus' Incarnation
Section #010	Mary and Elizabeth Rejoice Together

In today's reading we see the glory of Jesus in a surprising way. He encouraged the faith of his surrogate mother while he was still in her womb! How did he do that?

Mary was a wise young woman. She knew that no one would understand her story of remaining a virgin, while becoming pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. However, Mary had heard about

Elizabeth's pregnancy. If anybody could relate to her situation it was Elizabeth, who first barren, and then many years past menopause when she conceived John the Immerser. So Mary rushed off to the south, to visit Elizabeth. This shows us the importance of fellowship and mutual encouragement in a our life of faith.

When Mary arrived at Elizabeth's house, John was filled with the Holy Spirit in Elizabeth's womb, and Elizabeth herself was filled with the Spirit and prophesied. John leaped for joy when Jesus drew near, in Mary's womb. Elizabeth did not know that Mary was pregnant yet, but the movement of her baby within her was so dramatic that she instantly knew by the Spirit that Mary was carrying the LORD that John was destined to serve, just as Gabriel had announced.

John served Jesus as his witness before both of them were born!

It was the presence of Jesus that allowed Elizabeth to recognize Mary's pregnancy. Jesus caused his mother to receive priceless encouragement and support, and helped to build up her faith through the fellowship of another godly woman with a similar experience of God's power and grace. There is no one like Jesus in his conception, and in the blessing he brought his mother--even in her womb.

Note also that the "wishing," mustard-seed faith of Mary was praised by Elizabeth as real faith. God was working in Mary to build up and develop her faith. Only Mary and Elizabeth could fully appreciate the boundless grace that was given to both of them. What precious fellowship they shared together during those days. What a difference it made for both of them.

APPLICATION:

God works to confirm, encourage, and build up our faith when it is firmly grounded on His unshakeable Word. We need to anticipate, and be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's faith-building ministry within us. As surely as it was given to Mary, it will be given to us.

God usually speaks to us about his will through his Word, then confirms it through the testimony or encouragement of other believers. Fellowship with those who have experienced the same power and grace from God is one of God's prime ways to strengthen us in obeying him.

How have you been blessed and encouraged by this kind of fellowship lately?

Is there some way the Spirit is seeking to encourage and confirm your struggling faith right now? Are you listening?

Is God seeking to use you to encourage someone else? How will you receive the inner working of the Holy Spirit to reach out in encouragement to them today?