

“Shouting and Leaping for Joy!” Luke 1:39-45

I. A proper and beautiful response to something wonderful:

⁴² Then she spoke out with a **loud voice** and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! Luke 1:42 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, **the babe leaped in my womb for joy**. Luke 1:44 (NKJV)

1. *The greeting of Mary is an occasion of rejoicing for the still unborn John the Baptist in Elizabeth’s womb (at this point 6 months) (Jesus just conceived).*
2. *But I think it is not just Mary’s greeting that causes John’s joyous leap, but more so Christ’s presence.*

You may wonder how could a baby in one womb be aware of a baby in another? Or even recognizing the importance of Mary’s greeting?

God had filled John with the Holy Spirit-

¹⁵ For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. **He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother’s womb.** Luke 1:15 (NKJV)

3. *John seems to have some understanding even in the womb:*

A. *All real spiritual understanding, even for grown men, adults, studied in God’s Word, comes from God’s Spirit-*

³ Jesus answered and said to him, “**Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.**” John 3:3 (NKJV)

“Cannot see” means cannot understand, cannot comprehend, cannot have a proper appreciation for something-

¹⁴ But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14 (NKJV)

B. *John seems born-again before born; Nicodemus wonders about being born again when old-*

⁴ Nicodemus said to Him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” John 3:4 (NKJV)

He (John in Elizabeth’s womb) has a supernatural spiritual understanding of things denied even learned adults!

4. *We have another beautiful example of this later in Jesus’ life-*

¹⁴ Then *the blind and the lame* came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. ¹⁵ But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant ¹⁶ and said to Him, “Do You hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “**Yes. Have you never read, ‘Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have perfected praise?’**” Matthew 21:14–16 (NKJV)

Consider these examples:

- A. *John leaping in the womb for joy - Luke 1:44*
- B. *The children crying out in the temple “Hosanna to the Son of David!”*
- C. **chief priests and scribes ... were indignant**

Why were the chief priests and scribes indignant? Because “Hosanna” implied praise reserved for God, and Jesus was and is God’s Son!

The children KNEW something even religious leaders were missing, why? Because God’s Spirit revealed these things to them!

5. *But is it only children? No! Elizabeth a woman pregnant, though past child bearing years is also loud and excited!*

⁴¹ And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Luke 1:41–44 (NKJV)

- A. *Elizabeth was filled with God’s Spirit when the babe, John, leaped in her womb.*
- B. *Because she is filled with God’s Spirit, we can assume at least two things:*

(B1) Her reaction is right, speaking with a loud voice!

(B2) Her interpretation(s) of John’s leaping is correct

- *Yes, Mary will be the mother of her Lord, the Christ*
- *Yes, the leap is for joy, implying understanding on John’s part, and hers, she rightly interprets John’s leap!*

6. *Application, as Presbyterian, we too often have a wrong aversion to leaping and shouting, emotional responses, in this we have to be careful not to be like David’s wife-*

¹⁴ Then David danced before the LORD with all *his* might; and David was wearing a linen ephod.

¹⁵ So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the LORD with shouting and with the sound of the trumpet.

¹⁶ Now as the ark of the LORD came into the City of David, Michal, Saul’s daughter, looked through a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. ¹⁷ So they brought the ark of the LORD, and set it in its place in the midst of the tabernacle that David had erected for it. Then David offered burnt offerings and peace offerings before the LORD. ¹⁸ And when David had finished offering burnt offerings and peace offerings, he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹ Then he distributed among all the people, among the whole multitude of Israel, both the women and the men, to everyone a loaf of bread, a piece of *meat*, and a cake of raisins. So all the people departed, everyone to his house.

²⁰ Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, “How glorious was the king of Israel today, uncovering himself today in the eyes of the maids of his servants, as one of the base fellows shamelessly uncovers himself!”

²¹ So David said to Michal, “*It was before the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel. Therefore I will play music before the LORD.*” ²² And I will be even more undignified than this, and will be humble in my own sight. But as for the maidservants of whom you have spoken, by them I will be held in honor.” ²³ Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no children to the day of her death. 2 Samuel 6:14–23 (NKJV)

Now, how do we correct something like this, if it is just NOT US?

- A. Not by fake emotion, that would be worse than silence!
- B. By seeing despising energetic worship as sinful and possibly fruitless
- C. By praying for a vision, a knowledge, a sense of Jesus Christ’s presence that would make you excited like a child again, in reality!
- D. Christmas and other Hymns are a great help to this- Hymn 195 “Joy to the World”

¹ Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Psalm 66: 1 (NKJV)

II. Note, it is Jesus Himself Who is the Reason, the Central Purpose of our joy and celebration-

⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!” ⁴³ But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Luke 1:42–43 (NKJV)

1. Jesus is blessed - and blessed is the fruit of your womb!
2. We are blessed to be near Him - “Blessed are you among women,
3. We are blessed by His Lordship - my Lord
4. He brings us every spiritual blessing-

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, Ephesians 1:3 (NKJV)

Gifts, trees, parties, family time, football, basketball, Santa Claus, fairy tales, I am not saying all these things are equally good or bad, but if we are going to celebrate Jesus Christ’s birth we should celebrate and rejoice in His birth –

¹⁰ Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you **good tidings of great JOY** which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. Luke 2:10–11 (NKJV)

III. See the connection and necessity of FAITH to a beautiful response –

⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.” Luke 1:45 (NKJV)

These are the words of Elizabeth, they are about Mary, who believed the Angel’s word about her own Son Jesus, Who is also God’s Son!

She is blessed by the Words of Elizabeth who seems to know all about Jesus, without Mary telling her? How did she know? The only thing we are told is both she and her unborn son, John were filled with God's Spirit!

However, the blessing of believing is not for Mary alone! We are told throughout the Bible –

About Abram -

⁶ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness. Genesis 15:6 (NKJV)

To Habakkuk for himself and others -

⁴ “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith. Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)

By Jesus to the father who's child needed both healing and deliverance -

²³ Jesus said to him, “If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.” Mark 9:23 (NKJV)

By Paul, to everyone desiring salvation from sin-

²¹ But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, Romans 3:21–24 (NKJV)

Yet, the broader context of this passage includes a believer's unbelief in the person of Zacharias, his lack of faith did not destroy him but it stole some of his joy -

¹⁸ And Zacharias said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

¹⁹ And the angel answered and said to him, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings. ²⁰ But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time.” Luke 1:18–20 (NKJV)

In his advanced years, after not having children for many years, despite the Bible's witness about Abraham & Sarah, Zacharias does not believe God's angel, about his own son.

Application: Do you believe God can grow our little church? Do you believe He can work like He did for Abraham & Sarah? Like He did for Zacharias & Elizabeth?

⁴⁵ Blessed is she (or HE) who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.” Luke 1:45 (NKJV)

Believe, leap & shout, we have blessings to pray & party about!

¹⁰ Then he said to them, “Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this day is holy* to our Lord. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.” Nehemiah 8:10 (NKJV)

Arnold A. Brevick