

and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed."

☞ *In all that Mary said, we find nothing that is boastful, selfish or fleshly. Instead, she gave God all the glory and praise for what He was doing within her. When God uses us in some special way, we must do as Mary and give Him all the praise and glory.*

4. Mary's Visit Ended (v.56)

a. She stayed three months

- 1) She arrived when Elizabeth was six months pregnant and stayed three months with her.
- 2) It seems likely that she remained with Elizabeth until John was born and then left.
- 3) During those three months Mary probably gained much encouragement and wisdom from her wise elderly cousin. She would need much courage to face the shame and ridicule of conceiving a child outside of marriage. Her story of the angel and the Holy Spirit placing the Messiah in her womb would be mocked and rejected by most everyone including her dearly beloved Joseph.

b. She returned home to Nazareth

- 1) She retraced her long journey of over 130 km back to Nazareth.
- 2) The thoughts and feelings in her heart would be tempted to discouragement, yet God had used the encouragement and godly fellowship of Elizabeth to fortify her for the months ahead.

Conclusion: This evening we have followed Mary on her long journey to visit Elizabeth and back. Along the way we have found several principles that we need to work on. Review *principles above*.

Song: More Like the Master - 325

Christmas Story (pt 3) Mary's Trip

4 December 2016 PM - Luke 1:39-56 - Christmas16 - Scott Childs

Introduction: These days we normally do not travel long distances by walking. Many people have never walked for hours at a time. I will never forget how tiring it was to hike for eight hours over the mountains in PNG to reach a remote village where a small group of Christians lived. Compared to travel in Bible days, my eight-hour hike did not vary much from a normal day's travel.

Transition: This evening we are going to learn about Mary's long trip and glean principles from it as we do.

1. Mary's Long Trip (v.39-41)

a. The trip details

- 1) She began shortly after the angel visited her.
 - a) All that Luke states is that Mary arose "*in those days*".
 - b) Historians speculate according to the custom of the day that Mary may have been about 16 years old. If she was that young, she was a very mature and godly example for teenage girls today.
 - c) Did she share the angel's news with her parents and her fiancé Joseph before she left? Pregnancy outside of marriage was a great shame.

☞ *We must keep ourselves pure. Though the world approves it, moral sin is shameful and displeasing to God.*

- 2) She went in haste. In other words, she hurried and wasted no time.
- 3) She travelled to the hill country south of Jerusalem to a city of Judah. That city may have been Hebron.
 - a) Hebron was in the hill country. (Josh 21:11) "*And they gave them the city of Arba the father of Anak, which city is Hebron, in the hill country of Judah, with the suburbs thereof round about it.*"
 - b) Hebron was a city of refuge that belonged to the priests. (Josh 21:13) "*Thus they gave to the children of Aaron the priest Hebron with her suburbs, to be a city of refuge for the slayer; and Libnah with her suburbs,*"
- 4) Her trip was at least 130 km long. It would have taken 3-5

days of walking to get there. It is unlikely that Mary as a young woman would have made the trip alone. The Bible does not give us any details about how she travelled. Perhaps she travelled in a caravan with other people.

☞ *We learn from this that Mary was a young woman of character. She was responsible. She was strong. She was diligent not lazy. She followed God's leading.*

b. Safe arrival

- 1) She arrived at the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth (v.40).
- 2) She saluted Elizabeth. This word "salute" means to draw to one's self or to hug. It was a type of greeting.
- 3) She shared her salutation with Elizabeth. The word "*salutation*" is a different word from "*salute*". This word describes the act of sharing a greeting. This godly teenage woman shared her news with her elderly god-fearing cousin Elizabeth. We can only imagine the joy and excitement as those two ladies, separated by decades in age yet united in heart, as they shared with each other how God was working in their lives.

☞ *Mary wisely spent time with this elderly mentor rather than spending time with her peers. Though she may have been a teenager, she was mature and sensitive to the Lord's leading in her life.*

2. Elizabeth's Reaction to Mary's News (v.41-45)

a. Baby John leaped in her womb

- 1) Now just six months since his conception, God caused baby John to leap in Elizabeth's womb. It was a leap of joy.
- 2) Baby John, though yet unborn, was very much a living human with emotions and feelings. *Though our world approves of abortion, we must remember that life begins at conception. Taking that life is murder.*

b. She was filled with the Holy Spirit

- 1) We must remember that the Holy Spirit did not yet permanently indwell believers. He came upon believers at times to enable them to do God's work. In this case, He enabled Elizabeth to give Mary a God-sent word of

encouragement.

- 2) Her speech was directed to Mary for encouragement.
 - a) She spoke loudly. Perhaps she was normally a soft spoken person.
 - b) She blessed Mary and baby Jesus who had only been conceived for a few days (v.42)
 - c) She praised Jesus' incarnation when she called Mary "*the mother of my Lord*" (v.43).
 - d) She reviewed the joy of the babe in her womb (v.44).
 - e) She blessed Mary's faith and assured her that God would fulfil all that was told her from the Lord (v.45).

☞ *Remember, this assurance was not just Elizabeth's excited talk. She was filled with the Holy Spirit and it was He who was putting these words in her mouth to encourage young Mary. If we will walk in the Spirit, He will enable us to encourage others*

3. Mary's Song (v.46-55)

a. She praised God for letting her bear the Messiah (v.46-49)

- 1) She magnified the Lord. "*Magnified*" means to make big. Her soul rejoiced in God's greatness (v.46)
- 2) Her spirit rejoiced in God her Saviour (v.47). By her own confession Mary needed a saviour. She was not perfect.
- 3) Though she was God's handmaid, she knew that all future generations would call her blessed because she was the mother of the Messiah (v.48).
- 4) She described her pregnancy as "great things" done by God (v.49).

b. She praised God sending the Messiah (v.50-56)

- 1) He had mercy on those who fear Him (v.50).
- 2) He showed strength and scattered the proud (v.51).
- 3) He put down the mighty and uplifted the lowly (v.52).
- 4) He filled the hungry and sent the rich away empty (v.53)
- 5) He helped his servant Israel by remembering His mercy (v.54)
- 6) He kept his promise to father Abraham and to his seed (v.55) (Gen 12:3) "*And I will bless them that bless thee,*