



Elizabeth – not too old for God's miracle (Read [Luke 1:5-7](#), [24-25](#), [39-45](#), [57-61](#))

Reflection on the passage

"I'm afraid you had a bad dream. If the Lord had wanted you, He would have called you early in life," Mike Martin's pastor mistakenly told him (*By Faith*, p. 17). How wrong these words turned out to be! Thankfully, Mike Martin did not forget God's words to him, and despite his own insecurities and sense of being unqualified, he went on to follow God's call. In fact, it was Mike's humble, pure heart that allowed him to be used so greatly by God (see *By Faith*, p. 63). Similarly in Luke 1, Elizabeth, who hears from God through the angel Gabriel's appearance to her husband Zechariah, discovers that though advanced in years, she is not too old for God to work a mighty and joyous miracle through her.

We don't know a lot about Elizabeth, but we do know that she was a righteous woman of priestly decent, who lived her life in accordance with God's ways (1:5-6). In her quiet faithfulness over many years, I wonder if she ever felt forgotten by God because of the shame she experienced in her community as a childless woman. Though she had likely given up hope of having a child by this point in her life, she remained faithful. Perhaps it was partly because of her pure heart before God that He chose her to be the mother of the prophet who would pave the way for Jesus the Messiah. What a delight it would have been to witness her joy firsthand when the angel's words were fulfilled and to hear her proclaim, "The Lord has done this for me...In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people" (1:25).

Not only does the Lord make Elizabeth a mother, but also a Spirit-filled mentor and encourager to her young relative, the newly pregnant Mary, who comes to stay with her for three months (1:56). What a beautiful scene when Mary arrives at Elizabeth's home. John leaps in Elizabeth's womb and she is filled with the Holy Spirit loudly exclaiming God's blessing upon Mary. She displays a humility and faith in the Messiah who is not even born yet, knowing that He is much greater even than the special child in her own womb: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (1:42-43). What a gift of God Elizabeth must have been to Mary in all that she faced as the unwed mother of the Messiah.

Mother to John the Baptist and a godsend to Mary the mother of Jesus! What a miraculous calling for one advanced in years. But nothing is impossible with God! As we come humbly before Him, allowing Christ to purify our hearts, we too may become vessels of the unexpected and miraculous, no matter what age.

Focus verse for prayerful reflection:

"Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy." (Luke 1:58) What "great mercy" or miraculous work do you see in the lives of your friends and relatives that you can affirm and rejoice in with them? As you spend time with family and friends at the holiday, might there be someone you are called to bless and encourage?

Grace & peace,