

Elisabeth's Commitment

Key Verse: *"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 Spirit: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."
—Luke 1:41,42*

Selected Scripture:
Luke 1:5-24, 39-45

JUST AS IN THE CASE OF

Mary, as we have previously studied, Elisabeth, the wife of Zacharias and the soon to be mother of John the Baptist, also had a Divine influence concerning the birth of her son. Similarly, with regard to Sarah (Gen. 18:9-14), Hannah (I Sam. 1:5-27), and the Shunammite (II Kings 4:14-17), the miraculous intervention of the Divine power quickened the natural forces where they had been dormant, inoperative or entirely suspended.

Elisabeth "was of the daughters of Aaron." (Luke 1:5; I Chron. 24:1) She, along with her husband, "were both righteous before God, walking in all

the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." (Luke 1: 6) We know also that Elisabeth and her husband were advanced in years, and they were childless. It was the will of the Heavenly Father that the situation in their lives was about to change.

An angel of the Lord soon appeared to Zacharias as he performed the duties of his office as a priest in the Temple. God had once again sent Gabriel on another very important mission. He had come to answer their petitions, saying, "Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John." (vs. 13) Because of his lack of faith in God's power, Zacharias would be unable to speak until eight days after the birth of his son. At this time of the traditional naming of a newborn, he would write down that his name would be John, and his speech immediately returned to him.

While Zacharias was filled with doubt and fear at hearing this message, it was not so with regard to Elisabeth. After she conceived according to the promise, she remained in hiding for five months, saying, "Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the days wherein he looked on me, to take away my reproach among men." (vs. 25) She did this because of her attitude of trusting in God that his will would be done in her life, and that she would be accepting of his will, and committed to it.

As we know, she would give birth to one who would come to prepare the way of the Messiah. As our theme text tells us, upon meeting in her house with Mary, 'the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.' She recognized this to be a sign from God and a reminder that his will was being accomplished.

Elisabeth then boldly declared that Mary should be blessed, and her child also among men. She then showed her humility in stating, "Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (vs. 43) What a wonderful privilege and great blessing was granted to Elisabeth, and she willingly accepted it and carried it out in a loving, pleasing way whereby bringing glory to God. ■