

**A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS**  
**V. God's Confirmation Of Messiah's Divine Conception**  
**(Luke 1:39-56)**

**I. Introduction**

- A. Following the announcement of Jesus Christ's forerunner in Luke 1:5-25 came the announcement of the conception and birth of the Jesus Christ Himself in Luke 1:26-38.
- B. However, there had never before been a virgin conception, so God gave ample confirmation of Christ's divine conception in Mary's meeting with Elisabeth in Luke 1:39-56. We view this passage for our edification:

**II. God's Confirmation Of Messiah's Divine Conception, Luke 1:39-56.**

- A. After the Angel Gabriel had informed Mary that she would supernaturally conceive the Messiah, Gabriel told her that Mary's relative Elisabeth had conceived a son in her old age, that Elisabeth was in the sixth month of gestation with her son as evidence of God's miraculous working in both women's conceptions, Luke 1:34-37.
- B. Mary's response was to go "in a hurry" (*spoude*, Arndt & Gingrich, *A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T.*, 1967, p. 771) to Judaea to meet Elisabeth, Luke 1:38-39. Mary's pregnancy came in the time of her betrothal when she was to prove to Joseph by not getting pregnant that she was chaste, so she was anxious to get a confirmation of her status as being pregnant by God through visiting Elisabeth before speaking to Joseph about her pregnancy.
- C. When Mary entered into the home of Zacharias and greeted Elisabeth, the unborn fetus John leaped in her womb, and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit to make an utterance, Luke 1:40-41. The leaping of the fetus not only confirmed the Angel Gabriel's prediction that John would be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb (Luke 1:15) but it also recalled Jewish tradition that held that "the yet unborn infants in their mothers' wombs responded by an Amen to the hymn of praise at the Red Sea." (Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 1972, vol. I, p. 152-153, fn. 3 with Exodus 15:1-21)
- D. Elisabeth then spoke with a loud voice, blessing Mary and her yet unborn infant Jesus as Elisabeth was favored to have the mother of Her Lord come to her, Luke 1:42-43. Elisabeth testified to Mary that as soon as she heard the voice of Mary's greeting, the unborn John in her leaped for joy, and Elisabeth added that Mary was blessed for believing the word of the Lord that the angel had spoken unto her, Luke 1:44-45.
- E. The confirmation of Mary's supernatural conception was thus overwhelming in Mary's mind: (1) The leap of the unborn John in Elisabeth's womb for joy in line with Jewish tradition, (2) the awareness on Elisabeth's part before Mary's telling her about it of Mary's bearing the Son of God, Elisabeth's "Lord," (3) the awareness on Elisabeth's part before Mary's telling her about it of Mary's believing God's Word announced to her by the angel of her bearing the Messiah and Son of God (4) coupled with the loud expression of joy and blessing from Elisabeth, (5) her relative who herself was miraculously with child in old age, left no room for doubt in Mary's mind about the reality of her supernatural conception of the Messiah and Son of God!
- F. Accordingly, Mary responded to Elisabeth's words in her own words of praise and worship of God in her "Magnificat," the word "Magnificat" being "the first word of the Latin translation of Mary's words, *Ryrie Study Bible, KJV*, 1978, fn. to Luke 1:46-56. "There are 15 discernible quotations from the O. T. in this poem, showing how much the O. T. was known and loved in the home in which Jesus was reared," Ibid.
- G. Mary's Magnificat stresses three major themes: (1) She thanked God for favoring her as a humble maid in unusual fashion, v. 46-50, (2) she praised God for resisting the proud, and the self-righteous, but then helping poor, lowly, humble sinners, v. 51-53 and (3) she exalted God's name because He fulfills the promises He made to Israel's fathers about Messiah, v. 54-55. (Ibid., Pentecost, p. 47, citing Wm. F. Arndt, *St. Luke*, p. 60)
- H. One of the great validating evidences of the Christian faith is the Magnificat itself: it contains "poetic grandeur and the Old Testament" akin to "the Song of Hannah" in 1 Samuel 2:1-10 and was likely spoken in Aramaic though Luke translated it into Greek, Luke 1:46-56. (Ibid., Edersheim, p. 153, fn. 1) The structure and style of the Magnificat argues strongly against claims by critics that Gentiles fabricated the life of Christ to create the Christian faith, for the very structure and style of Mary's Magnificat is obviously ancient Hebrew!

***Lesson:*** To validate the reality of the unprecedented miracle of the supernatural virgin conception of Jesus Christ, God provided several miraculous signs in Mary's meeting with Elisabeth that gave that needed confirmation.

***Application:*** (1) May we rejoice that multiple signs and witnesses validated the truth of Christ's virgin conception. (2) May we be assured that the ancient Hebrew characteristics of Mary's "Magnificat" argues for the validity of the origin of our Christian faith! (3) May we heed God's Biblical signals to us today of His guidance in our lives.