

ELIZABETH: A MONOLOGUE

*A modern interpretation of the story of Elizabeth, Mary's cousin.
By Verna Kwiatkowski.*

Today was the second time in six months that someone has rushed into my house with life-changing news! I'm trying to calm down, but how can I, when life is so exciting?

I still can't get over my own situation. Oh, I don't mean that I don't *believe* it, because I most certainly do! My emotions have been running at full force ever since my husband returned from Jerusalem six months ago. I'm so in awe of God that I can't keep silent. My heart overflows with praise. What a miracle! And then today! But here I am rambling on when you don't even know who I am!

I am Elizabeth, wife of Zachariah the priest. It might not be too obvious to you, because I'm wearing loose clothing, but I'm expecting a baby! In only three more months our little boy will be born – our first child! Oh, I know what you're thinking. You can see my grey hair and my wrinkles and you're thinking I look too old to be having a baby. Want to know something? You're right! Zechariah and I were never able to have children and then one day we realized that we were too old to have children. Zechariah had often prayed to God for a child, but God is God and we kept on serving and loving him even when our prayers went unanswered.

And then one day, six months ago, Zechariah came bursting into the house with a look on his face that I had never seen before. He had been away serving at the temple in Jerusalem for weeks and now he was back home. I wanted to sit down with him and have a good long talk, but he kept rushing about looking for something. "What is it, Zechariah?" I asked. "What's wrong?" But he wouldn't say a word to me!

Finally he found a writing tablet and only then he sat. He motioned for me to sit next to him and he began to write a story so amazing it sounded like one of those stories that you read in the Bible, where supernatural things happen. It won't take me nearly as long to tell *you* what he wrote as it took for *me* to find out.

I was all eyes as letters began to appear on the tablet. "Elizabeth," he wrote, "we are going to have a baby son and we are going to name him John." It was astounding enough to hear that we were going to have a baby, but a *son*! Imagine knowing before the birth that it would be a boy! But that had happened to Abraham and Sarah, come to think of it.

"Zechariah, why are you writing? Why don't you just *tell* me the news?" I asked. "Wait and you will see," he wrote. He said he had been in the temple burning incense when the angel Gabriel appeared before him and told him that I would become pregnant with a son. Gabriel even gave my husband a description of our precious child. "He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth," he said, "for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth." – Isn't that great? – "Many of the people of Israel will he bring back to the Lord their God. He will get people prepared for the Lord." For the Messiah! I knew then that the Savior would surely come; I just didn't know *how*. We certainly need someone to get the people ready. How easily we forget God!

Zechariah needed a bit of prodding before he admitted why he couldn't talk. "I did not believe what the angel said at first," he wrote. "I told him I thought we were too old. Gabriel was angry with me and said that because I doubted his word I would not be able to talk until the baby is born. So I won't be talking to you for a long time, Elizabeth. I really can't get words out of my mouth, even if I try."

Well, as you can see, we do have a baby on the way. I'm looking forward to *two* things in three months – the birth of our son and being able to hear my husband talk again!

Now what about today? Well, there I was doing my housework when I suddenly heard the voice of my cousin Mary! "Elizabeth!" she called out. "Elizabeth!" I was glad to see her, but my baby was overjoyed! That baby started jumping around inside of me as soon as I heard Mary's voice! I knew this was no coincidence. This meant something! And then I knew. Why, the Messiah was going to come the same way my son John was coming – born of a woman! And his mother was to be my own cousin Mary!

"You, too, Mary!" I exclaimed. "Oh, you are so blessed and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored that the mother of my Lord should come to me? Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said will be accomplished!" And then Mary began worshipping and praising the Lord and so did I. After that she gave me all the details of what had happened to her and I told her our story. Who would have guessed? In just nine months our Savior will be born!

Now Mary's resting and I'm out taking a walk, trying to calm down and relax. You never know what will happen when you trust in the Lord and try to live like he wants you to live. You just never know! I wish you would think about my story. Do you remember my name? My husband's name? The name we are to give our child? You know, I think my story is just as exciting as those stories you find in the Bible! Thanks for letting me talk with you. It *has* helped me to relax. But now I must leave. Goodbye!

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