

Luke 1:44

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

Analysis

John's leap in Elisabeth's womb 'for joy' at Mary's salutation demonstrates prenatal life and spiritual sensitivity. The Greek 'eskirtesen en agalliasen' indicates not random movement but joyful exultation—John's first prophetic act was recognizing and rejoicing at his Lord's presence. This affirms both the full humanity of the unborn and the unique role of John as forerunner who would prepare the way. From a Reformed perspective, this shows God's sovereign work in election and sanctification even before birth. The unborn John's response to the unborn Jesus foreshadows his future ministry pointing others to Christ.

Historical Context

At six months gestation, John's movement would be strong and recognizable. Elisabeth interprets this specific movement at Mary's greeting as joyful recognition, not mere physical response. This prenatal encounter prefigures John's later testimony: 'He must increase, but I must decrease' (John 3:30).

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. What does John's prenatal response teach about the personhood of the unborn?
2. How does this encounter foreshadow John's future ministry pointing to Jesus?
3. What does this teach about God's sovereign work before birth?

Interlinear Text

ἰδοῦ, γὰρ ὥς ἐγένετο ἡ φωνὴ τοῦ ἀσπασμοῦ
lo **For** **as soon as** **sounded** G3588 **the voice** G3588 **salutation**
G2400 G1063 G5613 G1096 G5456 G783

σου εἰς τὰ ὦτά μου ἐσκίρτησεν ἐν ἀγαλλιάσει τὸ
of thy **in** G3588 **ears** **mine** **leaped** **for** **joy** G3588
G4675 G1519 G3775 G3450 G4640 G1722 G20

βρέφος ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ μου
the babe **for** G3588 **womb** **mine**
G1025 G1722 G2836 G3450

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