

This is Christmas
Mary's Song of Praise
Luke 1:43-55 (12/18/2022)

The Christmas season is now in full force. It is a time of singing and joy. The carol we sang "What Child is This" was written in 1865 in England by William Chatterton Dix. That year William suffered a near-fatal sickness. This experience changed him completely. He experienced a spiritual awakening. He became an avid reader of the Bible and began to write hymns. He set the lyrics to this carol to the tune of "Greensleeves" a popular English folk song. The carol urges people to accept Christ. The word "laud" means to praise. One of the ways we praise Jesus is through songs. Mary went to visit her relative Elizabeth who had also been blessed with a conception miracle though different from Mary's. God must have revealed the virgin conception to Elizabeth. (43-45) "But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord." Mary broke into praise as the realization of what was happening began to sink down into her soul. Mary did not actually sing as the Bible records that she "said" (46). The word means "to speak." Mary's praise became a canticle, a hymn or chant typically with a biblical text. This has been labeled as "The Magnificat" from the Latin word translated "exalts" (46). It is truly the expression of Mary's heart. Her praise is filled with allusions and quotations from the Old Testament. Mary is a model believer whose gives us an example of biblical worship.

Mary's subject is her Savior.

(46-47) "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." These verses give us insight into Mary's heart and soul. Mary received God's Word, believed God's Word and submitted to God's Word. Mary believed with her whole heart that the Lord would fulfill His Word. Her praise echoes the praise of Hannah in 1 Samuel 2:1, "My heart rejoices in the LORD...I rejoice in your salvation."

Only sinners need a Savior. Mary came to understand that her Son was actually her Savior. She was a young woman of faith, a saved individual. The only person who can truly worship is one who has experienced the saving power of God.

➤ **The Bible does not support the belief that Mary should be an object of worship.**

A woman attempted to exalt Mary during Jesus' ministry.

Luke 11:27-28, "And it happened, as He spoke these things, that a certain woman from the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You, and the breasts which nursed You!' But He said, 'More than that, blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it!'" Jesus intervened to show that His mother was not to be highly exalted. Mary was indeed blessed but other believers are blessed as well. Mary focused upon three figurative expressions in describing her Savior. Such descriptions are common in the Old Testament before the Incarnation of Jesus. John 4:24, "God is spirit." How can we who are finite understand He Who is infinite? God condescends to reveal Himself to us in figurative language we can understand.

The eyes of the Lord

(48) "For He has **regarded** the lowly state of His maidservant"

The word "regarded" means to gaze at or look upon. Psalms 34:15, "The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry." Mary's self expressed "lowly state" reveals her humility. She was a young Israelite maiden living in Nazareth yet God chose her to bear the God-man Jesus. As we move through Mary's song her knowledge of the Old Testament shines through. Psalm 136:23, "Who remembered us in our lowly state, for His mercy endures forever." Mary understood that she was a sinner to whom God had extended great mercy and now great honor. (48) "For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed." Mary never

expressed pride in being chosen as the mother of the Messiah and the Son of God. It is interesting that the early church never put Mary on a pedestal. The last we see of her is in the congregation of the church in Jerusalem, [Acts 1:14](#).

➤ **Mary is amazed that Almighty God has seen her.**

(49) “For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.”

[Psalm 126:3](#), “The Lord has done great things for us, and we are glad.” Young people at times you may wonder does God know me, does He care, and does God have a purpose for my life? God looks down from heaven and sees you. Look to Him by faith, call upon His name. Commit your life to Jesus and seek His will. Mary is amazed that God Who is “holy” would condescend to enter the womb of a sinner. [Psalm 111:9](#), “Holy and awesome is His name.” The good news is that our holy God is still coming together with sinners. [Isaiah 57:15, ESV](#) “For thus says the One who is high and lifted up, who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: ‘I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.’” [Colossians 1:27](#), “Christ in you the hope of glory”

➤ **God exalts the humble.**

Mary has an exalted view of the Lord and a humble view of herself. (50) “And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation.” To fear the Lord is to revere Him to hold Him in awe deserving of the utmost respect. [Erwin Lutzer](#), “God loves to bless the lowly. He loves to bless those who are marginalized, those who do not even feel worthy of a blessing.” Mary’s concept of mercy came from the Old Testament word *hesed*. This means God’s loyal love based upon His promises. The Greek word expresses God’s outward manifestation of pity and compassion. Mary saw mercy as connected to the fear of God. [Psalm 103:17](#), “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children.” At some point in her young life Mary had understood that she had violated God’s law. She went to God with a penitent heart and received His mercy.

The arm of the Lord

(51) “He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.”

If someone wanted to find the world changers, the movers and shakers in the first century they would have looked to Rome. The Caesars held up by the mighty Roman Legions. In Israel it would have been the Herods. They would have never expected that a simple Jewish maiden who loved her God and kept herself pure would be used to change the world.

[James 4:6](#), “God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.”

➤ **God exalts the humble and humbles the proud.**

(52) “He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly.” Mary was summarizing God’s revelation of Himself through scripture. The history of Israel as revealed in the Bible is filled with God doing these very things. Rulers come and go but all fulfill God’s purposes. Hitler’s Holocaust set the stage for Israel’s return to their land. Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon learned this personally and testified of it. [Daniel 4:34](#), “For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation.”

➤ **Mary understood that those who do not fear the Lord do not perceive their spiritual poverty.**

(53) “He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.”

Those who are full of themselves God sends away empty. The word “empty” means vain. [Matthew 5:6](#), “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.” So many people are so full of themselves they have no room for Jesus in their life. They keep seeking for satisfaction but it continually eludes them. Christmas can be the emptiest time of the year. Many people think that Christmas will satisfy their soul yet only Christ can satisfy their soul. When the gifts are opened and the parties are over life goes on. No amount of celebration can fulfill their inward longing. The answers to life’s questions are found in Jesus Christ.

The voice of the Lord

(54) “He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy. As He **spoke** to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever.” Mary contemplated how her Son would fit into God’s plan for Israel. Mary was a thinker; she meditated on what was happening to her and her coming Son. On the night of Jesus’ birth shepherds came to see Him in the manger. **Luke 2:19, “But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.”** The word “ponder” means to throw together as in putting one thing with another. Gabriel’s message was “the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

There was the angel’s message to Joseph “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” It is remarkable how Mary connected these to God’s promise to Abraham.

➤ **Our God is faithful.**

This is evidence that Mary knew her Bible.

Genesis 22:15-18, “Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son — blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.’” God will never break a covenant promise that He makes. A covenant is an agreement between two parties. God’s covenant with Abraham was unconditional. Even though some 2,000 years had passed and the kingdom of Judah had ceased to exist 600 years earlier and there was no prophetic word for 400 years. **Galatians 4:4, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.”** The phrase itself implies a sense of preparation and planning. The word “fullness” means to fill up; it also carries the idea of completion. The word “time” is *chronos* where we get our word chronological. God dwells in what we describe as the eternal present. We exist in time and experience all of our lives in time. The Bible presents time as a linear experience with a beginning and an ending.

▪ ***God providentially superintended over the moments of history to come to this very perfect point of time.***

Mary rejoiced in God her Savior. Can you sing Mary’s song? Do you know the one true God revealed in Jesus Christ as your Savior? God the Father punished His own perfect Son for my sin and your sin. **Romans 6:23, “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”**

Have you received the greatest gift that has ever been offered, salvation through Jesus?