

# The Worship of Mary's Song

Luke 1:46-55

December 28, 1997

## Introduction

In the midst of another Christmas celebration, let me take you back not to the moments surrounding the birth, but to just several days or weeks after Mary has heard the announcement from the angel. She may have told no one at this point – it is possible that Joseph does not even know yet – and she has decided to leave home and travel to see Elizabeth who is also miraculously expecting a child. Mary is a ponderer, treasuring and meditating over what the Lord has shared with her.

## Two General Observations:

1. The focus of this Psalm is on the Lord. It is not primarily a testimony (story) of Mary.
2. Mary knows how to use the Scripture as the light upon her circumstances.

## God's Magnificent Grace Is Without Merit vv.46-49

*46 And Mary said: My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. 49 For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.*

Mary had a healthy view of her low state as a servant of God. She admits her sinfulness, and humbly worships the Lord for having exalted her.

**My Soul Magnifies** – This doesn't mean to literally make great, but to make great in our estimation. We don't lift God up or make Him greater. Our honor puts us closer to reality, it does not change God.

**My Savior** – Mary is a sinner and needs a Savior, and so she cannot save others. She met with an angel, received a blessing and the promise that she will be remembered, but this does not remove her from the race of Adam.

**His Maidservant** – that is, His slave. Note Mary's own recognition of her relationship to God. She is not equal to Him in any sense. She is His slave, His servant. She submits to His authority. There is not a hint of her being divine in any way.

**The Lowly State** – it could be a state of humiliation (Acts 8:33) or a low place in life (James 1:9-11) or universally of our position in this fallen world (Phil 3:21). In any case, we see here another example of Mary not exalting herself, not thinking too much of herself. She would be embarrassed at the false teachings surrounding her person today.

**Call Me Blessed** – remember that Abraham was blessed to be the father of the faithful, Paul is blessed to be the apostle to the Gentiles, Peter is blessed in first preaching to the Gentiles, but no one would pray to them. Neither do we pray to Mary, who was blessed to be the mother of our Lord.

**Holy Is His Name** - Do you see how God-honoring this song is? The emphasis is on God – not on Mary. The reason God did not employ the assistance of others was to make His power more illustrious - - Hence: Holy is HIS name.

## God's Magnificent Grace Is Not Without Conditions vv.50-53

*50 And His mercy is on those who fear Him from generation to generation. 51 He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted the lowly. 53 He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.*

While it is true that His mercy is poured out upon men without merit, it is also true that it is only poured out within certain conditions.

**Holy Fear For The Redeemed** - We do not fear as though we will be cast from the Lord's presence forever, but we do fear knowing instead that we will be in His presence forever. The angels have been worshipping in heaven for a long time, and they still do so in great fear. They fold their wings over their face, covering themselves in fear. We will never be bored in our fearful praise – we will be riveted. "Fear fastens the eye".

**Repenting Of Sentimentalism** - The sentimentalism of Christmas (even among Christians) must be repented of and replaced with holy

fear and reverence. Instead of "Silver Bells", we should be pondering the words of the Hymn:

"Let all mortal flesh keep silence  
And with fear and trembling stand  
Ponder nothing earthly minded  
For with blessing in his hand  
Christ our God to earth descended  
Our full homage to demand"

**From Generation To Generation** – literally "unto generations of generations". The spilling over of His mercy is immense – see Deut 7:9, Psalm 103:17-18. The promise is to Israel, but as we learn in Romans, not all Israel is Israel, and Mary echoes this in her song. The promise is confined to the true worshippers of God, to them that fear His name.

**He Has Done** - He Has Done these things. Mary understands that from the point of conception it is a 'Done Deal'. God will be victorious; so much so that He *is* victorious now.

**To Scatter** - The word is a metaphor derived from putting to flight a defeated enemy. Like the Tower of Babel (or in Psalm 2) he looks, for a time, in mockery, and then unexpectedly scatters the whole mass.

**The Proud, The Powerful, The Rich** – Consider these types in light of individuals, the church, and the world. Arrogance comes in all kinds of shapes and colors, but God guarantees that He will not be thwarted.

**God's Magnificent Grace has an optimistic future founded on promises from the past** vv. 54-55

*54 He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, 55 As He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."*

**Sovereign Activity** – There are no techniques for whistling up the Holy Spirit and planning a Revival. And yet our prayers and our proclamation of God's truths do accomplish real work, because He remembers His mercy, and because of His promises.

**God Must Lift Up Israel** – What is the state of religion in America? Of the Civil Government? Of our Families? Reformation will only come when God first lifts up and helps Israel.

## **Some Conclusions**

We lose the joy, the satisfaction, the pleasure, the awe, the fear and the desire for God whenever....

1. We don't rejoice in the Word made flesh, but rather worry over our circumstances. And we don't rejoice with the Word, seeing our circumstances in light of Scripture and pondering God's good provisions and awesome sovereign control and purposes.
2. We reject a healthy humility for a feel-good self-image game. We try to think that we are important and that God in some way needs us or is impressed with us. Without humbling ourselves under the mighty hand of God, we will never experience the exaltation.
3. We refuse to fear God and miss the glory of being exalted with Him. We keep a tame, imitation of the God of the Bible in our minds, one who stirs sentimentalism and even generosity from time to time, but not one who causes us to fall upon our face and cry Holy, Holy, Holy.
4. We deny His strong and sovereign actions.

**Turning This Around...**

**Singing the Song....**