



Sunday, December 6, 2020

Key Text: Luke 1:46-56

Music has always been a part of the Christmas story. In many ways, I think you could say that music is our best response to the mystery of Christmas.

God values the heart, not what we possess, but often we make Christmas about material things. What if we would focus on giving worship to Jesus during this season? I believe a song of praise can help us focus on what matters the most and would bring us true joy.

<sup>26</sup>In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee. Luke 1:26

- Nazareth, small-town insignificant, 10 Acres, life expectancy, was in the thirty's.

<sup>27</sup>to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. <sup>28</sup>Gabriel appeared to her and said, "**Greetings, favored woman!** The Lord is with you!" Luke 1:27-28

- Mary is called "highly favored," but she doesn't fit the same criteria most people do, who we would call "favored." Favor in this context means a recipient of God's Grace: The World would have said wholly overlooked, insignificant. However, God uses the overlooked people.

<sup>6</sup>So we **praise God** for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. Ephesians 1:6

<sup>45</sup>You are **blessed** because **you believed** that the Lord would do what he said." Luke 1:45

- Her song is all about God's greatness. Nine times she uses the word "He," and six times, she uses the word "His." The focus of her song is to magnify God. All about praising God.

## **Mary's Song of Praise (Magnificat, The Greatness of God)**

### **1. Reflect and Praise God in What He Has Done in Your Life (vs. 46-50)**

- Mary could have responded, "Why me?" However, she responds in a song of praise. This song takes the focus off herself, problems and fears. This song puts the focus on God and his greatness and his power.
- Do you see yourself as a "lowly servant?"

Mary's "humble state" refers not to her modesty but to her lowly social status and background. She is far removed from the leading people of Israel and is merely a "servant" of the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

- God moves in the humble than in the powerful to mighty work.
- Her joy was based on God being mindful of her. A song of praise moves you from a spirit of anxiety to a spirit of joy. It takes you from being negative to positive, from feeling hopeless to full of Hope.
- A song of praise moves you from pride to humility as you take the focus off yourself and put it on God.

<sup>17</sup>For the LORD, your God is living among you. He is a mighty savior. He will take delight in you with gladness. With his love, he will calm all your fears. He will rejoice over you with joyful songs." Zephaniah 3:17

### **2. Reflect and Praise God in What He Done in this World (vs. 50-53)**

- This song should change what we value. (Social Conditions in the time of Mary)

**1:51–53** brought down rulers ... lifted up the humble. The direct reversal of earthly status and privilege in 1:51–53 is the most striking echo in the Magnificat of Hannah's song (1 Sam. 2:4–8). The past tenses indicate that this is

<sup>1</sup> Osborne, G. R. (2018). [Luke: Verse by Verse](#). (J. Reimer, E. Ritzema, & D. Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Eds.) (p. 46). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

no new pattern but that God has always worked like this, even though in this song, the focus is on what is still to come through the ministry of the as yet unborn Messiah. It is not so much that God's people will be given actual political power and material prosperity, but rather that under God's new regime, there will be a new scale of values, and the old social divisions will cease to matter. The first will be last, and the last first.<sup>2</sup>

- A song of praise moves you from insecurity to a spirit of confidence.
- God is the rescuer of the poor and afflicted and responds generously to those who acknowledge their powerlessness.

### 3. Reflect and Praise God in What He is Doing in His Chosen People (vs. 54-55)

Israel was the lowliest of the nations, and Mary was the lowliest among Israel's daughters, so the parallels are exact. God once more elevates the least favored to the highest place to demonstrate his mercy and glory, and he has done so once more.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>5</sup> And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, you offer spiritual sacrifices that please God. <sup>6</sup> As the Scriptures say, "I am placing a cornerstone in Jerusalem, chosen for great honor, and anyone who trusts in him will never be disgraced."<sup>7</sup> Yes, you who trust him recognize the honor God has given him. But for those who reject him, "The stone that the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone."<sup>8</sup> And, "He is the stone that makes people stumble, the rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they do not obey God's word, and so they meet the fate that was planned for them.<sup>9</sup> But you are not like that, **for you are a chosen people.** You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light.<sup>10</sup> **Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy.** 1 Peter 2:5-10

He has "helped" his people throughout their history, and his covenant mercies will continue to do so in the time to come. The verb *antilambanō* means to "come to the aid, support the needs" of others, and this is a promise that what characterized God's dealings with Israel will continue to be felt with new Israel.<sup>4</sup>

- A song of praise moves you from fear to a spirit of faith and anticipation.

*I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. It is not out of compliment that lovers keep on telling one another how beautiful they are; the delight is incomplete till it is expressed. – CS Lewis*

**One Last Thought:** During this Christmas season, get a song of praise in your heart.

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<sup>2</sup> France, R. T. (2013). [Luke](#). (M. L. Strauss & J. H. Walton, Eds.) (pp. 22–23). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

<sup>3</sup> Osborne, G. R. (2018). [Luke: Verse by Verse](#). (J. Reimer, E. Ritzema, & D. Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Eds.) (p. 46). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>4</sup> Osborne, G. R. (2018). [Luke: Verse by Verse](#). (J. Reimer, E. Ritzema, & D. Thevenaz, Awa Sarah, Eds.) (pp. 49–50). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.