

## Mary's Magnificat

Mary heard God's Word and believed and because Mary believed the Word of God, she experienced the power of God and now sought to share in the joy and understanding of Elizabeth. Joy stands out in this passage, Elizabeth and Mary experience joy and it lead to Worship.

### Luke 1:39-56 (ESV)

In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, <sup>40</sup>and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. <sup>41</sup>And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>42</sup>and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! <sup>43</sup>And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? <sup>44</sup>For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. <sup>45</sup>And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord." <sup>46</sup>And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup> for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. <sup>51</sup>He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; <sup>52</sup>he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; <sup>53</sup>he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty. <sup>54</sup>He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup>as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever." <sup>56</sup>And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Mary identified 3 groups of people in her song: Helpless (51), Humble (52), Hungry (53). If we are honest that's us.

Mary is the type of woman who puts her faith into action. She not only says, "Lord, your will be done" (1:38), but she also "hurries" to see God at work in the life of her relative Elizabeth.

### 1 Samuel 2:1-10 (ESV)

And Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exults in the LORD; my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation. <sup>2</sup>"There is none holy like the LORD: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God. <sup>3</sup>Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed. <sup>4</sup>The bows of the mighty are

broken, but the feeble bind on strength. <sup>5</sup>Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. <sup>6</sup>The LORD kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. <sup>7</sup>The LORD makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. <sup>8</sup>He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and on them he has set the world. <sup>9</sup>"He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. <sup>10</sup>The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The LORD will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed."

We can join Mary in singing God's praises by reciting God's mercy.

It is just like the Lord to assign Elizabeth to Mary for confirmation and encouragement from someone of spiritual maturity and experience and at the same time send Mary to Elizabeth for encouragement and support.

**Commentary** - That Mary "believed" is really quite remarkable. Her pregnancy was unprecedented. Her pregnancy was controversial, not established by a long tradition in a particular supportive community. Her pregnancy needed to be a secret, if she told everyone all that had actually occurred they would have put her away as being crazy. The facts that she was asked to believe required admirable trust, discernment, and patience. But as Gabriel told Mary, "The Lord is with you". Mary believed that, and it made all the difference.

### **Luke 1:46-50 (ESV)**

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, <sup>47</sup>and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, <sup>48</sup>for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; <sup>49</sup>for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. <sup>50</sup>And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

Some have wondered how this young woman managed to speak these insightful words.

As Mary journeyed from Nazareth to visit her relative, she had much time to think about what she had heard from the angel and what she understood about God's plan for the Jewish people. When she arrived and Elizabeth spoke to her, Mary's joy overflowed and she could say with her whole heart, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior." Mary focused on God's power, holiness, and mercy.

### **Luke 1:51-53 (ESV)**

He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; <sup>52</sup> he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; <sup>53</sup> he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

**Commentary** - Mary pictured God's strength being revealed to the sinful world as He scatters the proud, brings down the powerful, and sends the rich away empty. By contrast, God's power shows in His mercy to His own—lifting up the lowly and filling the hungry with good things. Mary was speaking prophetically of these events so certain to occur that they could be spoken of as having already happened.

**Pride** is refusing to accept God's gifts or taking credit for what God has done.

**Humility** is accepting the gifts and using them to praise and serve God.

God Himself would come to earth and face rejection by the proud, the powerful, and the rich. He would lift the lowly and fill the hungry. And God continues to do that today. God is mighty and merciful, ruthless against pride and injustice but sensitive to individual needs.

**Commentary** - God knows humanity's sinful, stubborn nature, and He sent His Son to redeem sinful human beings. Mary's song breaks all the stereotypes of her as a young, self-absorbed mother, too naive to know about the political climate around her and too centered on her pregnancy to care.

**Commentary** - Here Mary speaks in the highest Old Testament prophetic voice, echoing all the great Old Testament themes of redemption, freedom, and justice. She was revolutionary for her time, probably for our time too. She exhibited a large vision of God, a sense of God's grand purpose, and the heart of God for oppressed people. This is a very strong message of resolute faith in a God who wills to act in a sinful world, to save it, and to redeem it.

### **Luke 1:54-55 (ESV)**

He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, <sup>55</sup> as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

God kept his promise to Abraham to be merciful to God's people forever. Jesus' birth fulfilled the promise.

### **Micah 7:18-20 (ESV)**

Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. <sup>19</sup> He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities

underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. <sup>20</sup>You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.

**Luke 1:56 (ESV)**

And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

**Closing Prayer**