

PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

LUKE 1:39-56

LESSON: THE PROMISE AFFIRMED — December 11, 2016

INTRODUCTION:

When Elisabeth was in her sixth month of pregnancy God sends His angel to a virgin by the name of Mary in the town of Nazareth. Mary had not yet had sexual contact with any man. She was engaged to be married to a man by the name of Joseph. In Jewish culture, at that time, a man and woman were pledged or engaged to each other for a period of time before the actual marriage. The engagement period was much more binding than an engagement period today, for the two were considered husband and wife except that they did not live together until after the wedding. The angel Gabriel is sent from God to Mary, a young virgin to let her know that she is highly favored by God, the Lord is with her, and blessed among women because she will conceive in her womb and bear a son and call his name Jesus (1:26-31).

He will be great; the Son of the Highest; He shall be given the throne of his father David; have reign over the house of Jacob, and His kingdom shall have no end for it will be an eternal kingdom. Mary asked How? - The angel answered that this would be accomplished by God's Holy Spirit's power of the Highest overshadowing her (not by man). The baby would be a holy thing and called the Son of God. Her cousin Elisabeth's had been barren, but conceived a son in her old age, and is now six week's pregnant. Then he tells her with God's great power nothing was impossible! Mary was humble and submissive unto the word of the angel, as she declared, as thou handmaiden, be it unto me. The angel departed from her (1:32-38).

LESSON: I. MARY'S VISIT Luke 1:39-40

1:39 And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda;— Mary didn't waste any time. She prepared and went with haste to visit her cousin Elizabeth some sixty or more miles south of Nazareth in Judean territory. She went with purpose. This was not a casual visit. Mary knew about Elizabeth's miraculous conception, but Elizabeth did not know about Mary's conception.

1:40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. She arrived at her destination, at the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. By this time Elizabeth was in her 6 months of pregnancy. Mary was bound to be tired and exhausted. She had just arrived from a long trip and had not even had time to sit down. As soon as she walked in the door, Elizabeth began her proclamation of praise under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

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II. ELIZABETH'S BLESSING Luke 1:41-45

1:41 And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:— As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby (John) leaped in Elizabeth's womb, and she was filled with the Holy Ghost! Three unusual things immediately happened:

1. Elizabeth heard by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit through Mary's salutation (1: 41a).
2. The babe leaped in Elizabeth's womb (1: 41b).
3. Elizabeth was instantly filled with the Holy Spirit (1: 41c).

1:42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. Elizabeth spoke in a loud joyful voice, and a very special spirit of prophecy was given her (1: 42). She pronounced upon Mary "Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!"

1:43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?— Elizabeth is so honored, happy and joyful that the mother of her Lord would come and visit her! All this came by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It did not come from man (or Mary). The promise was affirmed through Elizabeth by God Himself!

1:44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Even the baby was joyful when Mary's voice spoke, that he leaped in his mother's womb. Nobody by God could do this!

1:45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord. Elizabeth knew that Mary believed what was told unto her. She believed that God would do what He said!

III. MARY'S PRAISE Luke 1:46-55

MARY'S TESTIMONY

- **1:46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,** — Mary's great song of praise is known as the "*Magnificat*." This is the Latin translation of the first few words which Mary speaks and it literally means, "*My soul celebrates the Lord*." It has some similarity to the Song of Hannah (1Sam.2:1-10). However, there is a striking difference between the two songs. Hannah proclaimed a triumph over her enemies; Mary proclaimed God and His glorious mercy to man.

Hearing what Elizabeth had said, Mary, even though she is young, an unmarried virgin, and pregnant, begins to lift her voice in praise to the Lord— "*My soul doth magnify the Lord*." Mary forgot her tiredness, for her faith was being confirmed. She now knew that the angel who had come to her was not a figment of her imagination, not an illusion, not a false vision, not some dreamy state of mind. He was real and his message that she, as a virgin, would bear the Son of God was true! Her faith was reassured and confirmed.



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What did Mary have to sing about? ¹She reveals a heart that is in love with the Lord and also a mind that has been saturated with the Old Testament Scriptures. **She teaches us that we can praise the Lord in spite of our circumstances; and that God's grace is sufficient even in the most troubled of times.** *Her great desire was to magnify the Lord...NOT herself! *"Magnify"* mean glorify; exalt; make large; honor highly; to declare His greatness; to make Him great in the eyes of others! Even though she was a pregnant teen from Nazareth, engaged to marry a poor carpenter and people were talking, from Mary's vantage point Jesus surely wasn't *"planned"*...but wasn't He? Mary rose above her situation! **(Brian Bell Sermon Notes)*. She magnified the Lord, while the Catholic Church now erroneously magnifies her. She was the recipient of grace, not the source of grace! Mary glorified God in song for what he was going to do for the world through her!

- **1:47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.** Mary praises the Lord with her soul and she now has joy in her spirit. Body, soul, and spirit have come together. She made a personal confession: **"God is my Savior."** She was proclaiming that God saw her need and Grace was coming to save her. Salvation is a good reason to praise the Lord. When you're saved and you know it, it will put some rejoicing in your heart! You may not shout, but you want to! Its celebration time and she rejoiced!
- **1:48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:**— Mary specifies where she is and just how lowly a person she was. In the eyes of the world she was a nobody, poor, obscure, unknown, insignificant, of little purpose and meaning in life. According to the religious laws of her culture, Mary would face death by stoning, for being unwed and pregnant. However, God shows us that He chooses whom He will. It could be the least person, just to more clearly demonstrate His mercy and power. He chooses what man would never choose—a woman! He will reach far down to reach the lowly. He will take us by the hand, lift us up, and give us purpose, meaning, and significance. He regarded (turned his eyes upon) Mary. Mary was planning to be married to Joseph. She did not ever think this wonderful favor of the Lord would be extended to her. Yet, the Lord did! But, she knew enough to say **"be it unto me."**
- **1:48b ...for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.** God will make us somebody and use us, by giving us a full and meaningful life for all others to see, even for generations to come. Through her belief, she shall be called blessed! To be the means by which the God of eternity enters human history is very memorable and remarkable! God caused Mary to

¹ http://www.sermonnotebook.org/new%20testament/Luke%201_46-55.htm
<http://www.pitwm.net/pitwm-sunday-school.html>



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be remembered from that time forth to all generations. In fact her reward caused generations to also receive the blessing in their lives.

GOD'S POWER

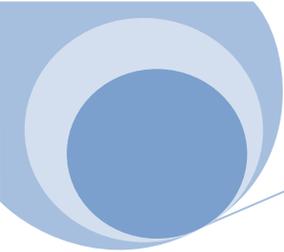
- **1:49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.** Mary proclaimed three of the glorious attributes of God: He is mighty! He's done great things! And He is holy!
 1. **Mary proclaimed God's power.** Two things in particular were in her mind, two phenomenal things:
 - i. The promised Messiah was now to be born. This would be a great reward to the world! The hope of the world was now to be fulfilled after so many generations of waiting. God's power was now to be demonstrated in a way never before witnessed. Mary's personal thanks to the Lord for her pregnancy and the privilege granted to her was all God's mighty power. She couldn't help but express His might.
 2. **Mary proclaimed that God had done great things.** The Lord God has all power and is able to do whatever is required for His work of salvation.
 - ii. The promised Messiah was to be born of a virgin. Mary was the incubator (the carrier) and it was not the seed of a man! It was to be an event and a method never before witnessed. A miracle was to be performed! As Mary had testified, "***He that is mighty had done to me great things.***"
 - a. A great thing indeed that a virgin should conceive.
 - b. A great thing indeed that the Messiah, who had been so long promised to the church, and so long expected by the church, should now at length be born.

GOD'S HOLINESS

3. **Mary proclaimed God's holiness:** that is, God is to be set apart as different from all others. His very nature, His very being is different. God is both pure being and pure in being, both perfect being and perfect in being. God is holy in name and holy in being, set apart and different from all others.

GOD'S MERCY

- **1:50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.** There were at least three thoughts in Mary's mind. 1) God has mercy; 2) He has mercy on those that fear Him; and 3) His mercy will be from generation to generation!
 1. God's glorious mercy to her meant that God had proven to be her personal Savior.
 2. God's glorious mercy is finally sending the Messiah (the Savior) to those who feared (reverenced) Him. They will never try to offend Him. They will always try to do what pleases Him. God will be kind to such people.
 3. God's glorious mercy is passing down from generation to generation because He is abundant in goodness, and He delighteth in mercy. Mary knows that she isn't the only one



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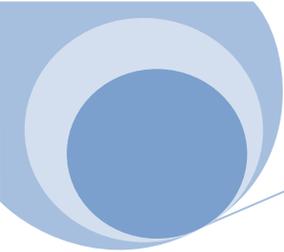
who has received mercy from God. His mercy is to be revealed to every generation, until the return of Christ to this earth. The mercy of God is solidified today and throughout eternity! Mary celebrated the mercy of God!

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

- **1:51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.** God acted and showed His mercy. There are six great statements about God's sovereignty:
 1. **God hath shewed strength with his arm.** Mary continued to praise God. She told of what He did by His great strength. He had reversed the order of things on earth. And note: He had done it with the strength of His arm.
 2. **God has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.** The proud are prideful in their thoughts; in the imagination of their hearts. In her day, these would be the Pharisees and other religious experts, the same people Jesus confronted in His ministry. The Lord had scattered the proud. They think themselves better...
 - by looks • by wealth • by achievement • by person • by ability
 - by position • by heritage • by possessions
- **1:52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.**
 3. **God has pulled the powerful down from their thrones.** Whilst those who think they have the intelligence to question God, they are scattered—those who think they have more power than God, are '*pulled down.*' The illusion of power continues to this day, as we can see in world affairs all around us. Those who think they know better will never trust God for their salvation.
 4. **God has exalted (lifted) up the lowly.** At this point in the Magnificat, we see God's sovereignty that turns the world's values upside down. Those with power are pulled down and the lowly are lifted up.

In Mary's song it predicts that at the end of time, the Lord will have dethroned the mighty and exalted them of low degree. The mighty are those who sit in positions of power, authority, and influence over others. The picture concerns those who take their power and...

- Seek their own ends • fail to serve • push others down • abuse others
 - misuse others • by-pass others • enslave others • deprive others
- **1:53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.**
 5. **God has filled the hungry with good things.** Filling the hungry has a two-fold meaning—spiritual and physical. God rewards those who find Him; feeding them spiritually, but He



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also feed the poor physically, thereby, empowering His people to do just that.

- 6. God has sent the rich away empty.** Those who retain their wealth, do so against the wishes of their Maker, who sees all things. Those who regard themselves as 'right' in all spiritual matters and claim riches in the things of God (and it is very easy for this to happen), have little before the throne of grace, as Jesus points out. It is amazing to think that the gap between the rich and the poor in this world continues to increase, but God will bring this to an end, and His Kingdom must demonstrate this Gospel truth.

The Lord filled the hungry and emptied the rich. Those who were rich only in this world's goods are seen stripped of all their earthly goods and sent away empty. And those who had nothing of this world, but trust God, are seen as having received all good things.

GOD'S FAITHFULNESS

- **1:54 He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;—**

- 1. God has given help to His servant Israel.** God is constantly giving His people help. He did this in Old Testament times, and He does this now—to the new Israel and people of God, His church. It is unwise for us to run the church as if everything depends on our efforts; it does not, and the future is in God's hands. God had helped His people.

- 2. God had remembered His mercy.** The people (Israel) desperately needed God's mercy and God's deliverance. They were enslaved by the Romans, therefore, they were frantic in their search for deliverance; so frantic that many were turning to false messiahs and other answers to escape their plight. Some were even finding their security in the Roman state and in humanistic answers instead of God. If a people ever needed God to remember His mercy, it was then. Mary proclaimed that the Lord had remembered His mercy.

- **1:55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.**

- 3. God had remembered His promise of the Messiah.** He had promised the Messiah to the fathers of Israel, to Abraham and to Abraham's seed. And note: the promise is now being fulfilled. God had sent the Messiah, the Savior of the world.

This is no casual ending to Mary's song of praise to God. This is Mary's prophecy of the completion of God's Covenant promise.

IV. MARY'S RETURN Luke 1:56

1:56 And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house. Mary had spent time with Elizabeth staying with her for about three months. She then returns home obviously pregnant

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with child to her own house. For this, her soul magnified the Lord, and her spirit had to rejoice in God her Savior for she had come to understand her purpose.

SUMMARY:

1:39-40 Mary immediately went with haste to visit her cousin Elizabeth. She was bound to be tired and exhausted. Mary visits Zacharias and Elizabeth's home while Elizabeth is in her 6 months of pregnancy. She had just arrived from a long trip and had not even had time to sit down. As soon as she walked in the door, Elizabeth began her salutation of praise under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

1:41-45 As soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby (John) leaped in Elizabeth's womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost! She began to speak with a loud voice saying *"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb!"* And then she called her *"the mother of my Lord."* God had revealed this to Elizabeth. And Elizabeth was so honored, happy and joyful that the mother of her Lord would come and visit her! Even Elizabeth's baby in the womb was joyful when Mary's voice spoke, that he leaped in his mother's womb. Elizabeth knew that Mary believed what was told unto her. Her faith was strengthened. She believed that God would do what He said! He would keep His promise.

1:46-55 This song of praise – typically called *"the Magnificat"* which Mary speaks and it literally means, *"My soul celebrates the Lord."* As her soul celebrates the Lord, her spirit rejoices in God her Savior. Thus, this establishes the praise of Mary. In her testimony of praise, Mary thanks God for six things:

1. She thanks God for He regarded her low estate (**1:46-48**); that He took notice of her.
2. She thanks God for His holiness (**1:49**): He has done great things for her.

She would be remembered from generation to generation forever, and they will call her blessed.

3. She thanks God for His mercy (**1:50**): His mercy goes on from generation to generation.
4. She thanks God for His power (**1:51**): He does tremendous things with His power.
5. She thanks God for His sovereignty (**1:52-53**): He humbles the proud and exalts the lowly.
6. She thanks God for His faithfulness (**1:54-55**): He has kept all His promises to Israel.

1:56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months before going back home to her house.