

December 14, 2025
The King is Coming: Mary's Song
Luke 1:46-55
Vernon Advent Christian Church

Introduction...Today, we're going to continue on into Luke 1 as we enter into the third week of advent in anticipation of the arrival of our Messiah. As I said last week, when we read through the pages of the Christmas Story, as found in the Gospel of Luke, it reads like the script of a real life musical. As these ordinary people who were just go about living their ordinary lives, when they heard the good news that their long awaited King was coming, they couldn't help but burst out in song.

We looked at Zechariah's song last week. Zechariah was the father of John the Baptist, John being the prophetic forerunner God's Messiah, and when his son was born, Zechariah praised God for remembering his promises and providing salvation for this people.

This morning, we are going to consider the second song found in ch. 1 of the Gospel of Luke, verses which are often referred to as "Mary's Song." Now, this is not to be confused with the song we heard during Andi's special, "Mary did you know?" This song has been around for a few decades and has become quite popular this time year. The lyrics reflect upon the various works of Jesus from the gospel accounts and then form them into questions directed at Mary. For example, "Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day walk on water?" Or, "Mary, did you know that your baby boy would give sight to a blind man?"

Much like the song, "I can only Imagine" by Mercy Me, which asks similar questions about what God's eternal kingdom of heaven will be like, this song attempts so enter into the mind of Mary and wonder what all she knew about the son that was born to her. Now, the specifics of his miracles, walking on water or restoring sight to the blind, is left to our imagination and speculation. However, there was a lot that Mary did know about her son and it was the fact that what she knew about him was now coming to pass, that led her into the joyous words that we find in our passage this morning. If you are able, please stand with me in honor of God's word as I read Luke 1:46-55. [Read Passage]

A lot has already happened before we arrive at this text. An angel from the Lord has already foretold about the birth of Messiah's forerunner who will come in the power and spirit of Elijah (1:5-25). The angel Gabriel has already visited Mary and told her that God has shown His grace to her and that she will be the mother of Messiah. (1:26-38)

And we see in the previous paragraph in our Bibles, that Mary had gone to visit her cousin Elizabeth, the mother of John the Baptist. And there, we read that both the unborn John and his mother Elizabeth hear the good news that Mary shares with them and they rejoice that they are in the presence of their Lord and Savior (1:39-45). And the verses that we read this morning are Mary's response to all of this.

This text is so deep and nearly every word that Mary speaks is taken from the Old Testament as she sings her song of praise. These verses have come to be known as "The Magnificat." That title comes from the Latin, and is the translation of the first word that Mary

says which means “to magnify” or “to exalt.” The word means to lift up or to make something great. It means to esteem through praise and that is exactly what these verses do. This is Mary’s song of praise and exaltation of God. This is the outpouring of Mary’s soul as she worships the Lord. And these words of Mary reveals what she knew, believed, and trusted about God’s person, work, and promise concerning her son.

First, Mary knew who and what she was before a holy God in vs. 46-48. Mary knew she was a sinner in need of salvation. Unlike those who believe that Mary was sinless, that idea is easily laid to rest here with her own words. Her soul magnifies, exalts, lifts up and rejoices in God “my savior.” She does not call God a savior or the savior, even though both are true statements. She makes it personal. God is her savior. So much is wrapped up in that simple phrase. If a person refers to someone else as their savior, then what logically flows from there is that person recognizes their need of salvation. Mary recognized her need of a savior.

Mary’s words mimic the prophet Habakkuk when he said, “Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation.” (Hab. 3:18). Habakkuk’s prophecy is primarily a prophecy of pending judgment upon Judah at the hand of the Babylonian Empire. Yet this prophecy ends with hope. “Though the fig tree should not blossom and there be no fruit on the vines, though the yield of the olive should fail and the fields produce no food, though the flock should be cut off from the fold and there be no cattle in the stalls, Yet I will exult in the Lord, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength.”

The prophet was sent to announce judgment for sin, yet ends his prophecy with hope of salvation; salvation from death, destruction, and judgment that is a result of sin and disobedience. Mary includes herself with those who are in need of such salvation and uses the words of the prophet to express her own praise to God who has provided salvation for her through her yet to be born son.

Mary makes no claim to be sinless. On the contrary, she admits that she is a sinner in need of salvation and is nothing special even when compared to other people. In fact in these verses she states the obvious fact that she is humble and of low estate (vs.48). Yet God has regarded her, literally looked upon her, and from this point forward all generations will consider her as blessed.

Again, Mary borrows from Old Testament revelation here, this time from Genesis 29:32 and 30:13 as she uses the words of the unloved Leah. (story of Jacob) Neither Leah nor Mary are saying that people will consider them as something special and worthy of adoration. Both of these women anticipate others recognizing that God has blessed them on account of the children they bear. Mary knew that God is holy and she is not. Mary knew that she was a sinner in need of salvation. And Mary knew that she was carrying her savior.

The second thing we learn from these verses that Mary knew how to approach a holy God in vs. 49-50. Mary reveals a view of God that is nothing less than profound. She refers to Him by His attribute of might. The Mighty One is a reference to His power, strength, and ability. His omnipotence. But she marvels at the ability to have a personal relationship with Him. He has done great things for me. This statement flows from the previous verses where Mary acknowledged her need and thanksgiving for a savior. God has provided for her a savior and her praise continues with the phrase, “holy is His name!”

Mary is referring to God by His character, His person, His very identity. He is holy. To be holy is to be separate and set apart. The sum total of who God is is so impossibly separate from sin, stain, and reproach. He is holy and we are not. But how is this a good thing? What does that mean for sinful humanity? How can we, who are sinful, approach a holy God?

Vs. 50, “And His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.” This verse is almost an exact quote from Psalm 103:17: “But the lovingkindness of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children’s children, to those who keep His covenant and remember His precepts to do them.” (Psalm 103:17-18).

The word translated “mercy” here in Luke 1:50 is the Greek word closest to capturing the meaning of the Hebrew word “*hesed*” found in Psalm 103 which is translated as “lovingkindness.” God’s “*hesed*” is His “covenantal” or “loyal love.” The word lovingkindness was invented by the English reformer William Tyndale as he was struggling to translate the Bible into English. He was trying to bring out the depth of this beautiful word. It conveys a binding, loyal love. A love that cannot be broken.

God Himself uses this word to describe Himself to Moses, “Then the Lord passed by in front of him and proclaimed, ‘The Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth.’” (Exodus 34:6). God is a God of promise and pledge. He will never withdraw His covenantal love from those whom He has chosen to show it. How does the Bible describe those who receive God’s loyal love?

Again, “...those who fear Him.” To fear the Lord is to know who He is, what He has done, what He has promised to do, and respond appropriately. To fear Him is to submit to His rule, respect and honor His majesty, praise His works and being, and obey His commands. Mary knew what it meant to fear the Lord and she knew how to approach a holy God.

Something else Mary knew which we find in this passage, is that she knew who God was and what He had done in vs. 51-53. These verses reflect upon the mighty works of God. The Bible is full of references that refer to God’s actions through His finger, His hand, and His arm. And any and every man who boasts in his own might has been brought low before the throne of God. And yet the humble, those know they are but dust, have always been filled with good things.

Once again, we’re clued in to a quote from the Old Testament. This line comes from Psalm 107:9 which praises the God who provides for His people. “For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.” This is the very nature of our faith. We are completely incapable of providing for ourselves. The one who is humble is one who understands and recognizes this fact. The humble man seeks for and anticipates God’s providence. The humble will never be disappointed as God has filled them with good things. On the other hand, those who are rich, not just speaking financially speaking, but those who in their own minds are fully capable of doing everything in their own strength and do not recognize their need for God, and they, we’re told, will be sent away empty-handed.

Mary knew who God was and what He had done. God is a God who has laid low those who exalt themselves. God is a God who has shown grace to the humble. Mary’s praise is informed by what God has done and as she joyfully anticipates what God will do.

Which brings us to the final point that Mary knew about her son. Mary knew the son she was carrying was Israel's redeemer in vs. 54-55. In these final two verses, Mary reveals to the fullest extent of what she truly knows. Israel has been anticipating and waiting for a savior ever since the fall in Genesis 3. God promised that the seed of woman would crush the head of Satan and reverse the curse of sin and death as He promised to Adam and Eve. (Gen. 3:15)

And this savior would come from the line of Abraham and this reversal of the curse would be a blessing to all the families of the earth as promised in Gen. 12:1-3. This sovereign seed would rule forever as king over Israel on David's throne as David's heir as promised in 2 Sam. 7. This righteous seed would teach justice and righteousness to all the people and be the means of untold blessings which we read about in Psalm 72. And this redeeming seed would take the sin of his people upon himself and die in their place as we see prophesied in the "suffering servant" found in Isaiah 53.

Mary connects God's promise of a "seed of the woman" (Eve) to the promise of blessing to Abraham, to His promise to David, and His promise to Israel to her son because she knows, and has been told, that the child she is carrying is "the Son of the Most High and he will reign forever and his kingdom will have no end." (Luke 133) Mary knows that her son is the redeemer who will atone for the sins of His people. Mary knows that He will reign over Israel on the throne of His father David. Mary knows that He is Israel's help and that through Him all the families of the earth will be blessed. In essence, Mary knew the gospel and that knowledge propelled her to praise and worship her God.

So, let's go back and think about the song Mary did you know? If you're asking whether or not Mary was omniscient and knew every detail of her son's earthly ministry beforehand, then the answer is of course no. Mary was a normal and ordinary teenage girl who was shown grace by a merciful God.

But if you're asking whether or not Mary knew that her son was indeed God incarnate, as the song puts it, "The Great I Am," and that He would redeem God's creation through His substitutionary and atoning death and that He would rule and reign as king forever, then the answer is a resounding YES!

So then, question before us is not so much "What did Mary know?" as it is "What do you know?" Do you know that Mary's son, Jesus, is indeed God with us? Do you know that He is the promised seed of Abraham and seed of David the one who came to bless the families of the earth? Do you know that He came to die in the place of sinners, just like you and me? Do you know that He is King and, that as such, you owe Him your allegiance? Do you know that there is untold blessing for those who fear Him? Do you know that you will face His wrath unless you confess your sin, proclaim Him as King, and submit to His rule?

Mary knew all of these things and she treasured them in her heart and rejoiced in the fact that God had sent his redeemer to rescue and restore that which was lost. Church, your King has come and is coming again. Let this truth propel you, as it did Mary, to worship and praise the One who is mighty and has done great things. Let's pray.

Benediction: "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." – Romans 15:13