

## “Mary Exalts the Lord Her God...”

### Luke 1:39-55

At our last time together we studied the awesome interaction of the angel Gabriel and a young virgin named Mary to whom he said (**Luke 1:31-32**), “You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David,” **35**, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God.”

Mary humbly and obediently believed all that Gabriel told her, saying (**Luke 1:38**), “may it be done to me according to your word,” and then we are told Gabriel left her.

Today we pick up the narrative in **Luke 1:39-40...** Mary immediately set off for the hill country of Judah; remember what Gabriel said to her (**Luke 1:36**), “behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month.”

Mary “went in a hurry” to see her aunt, no doubt to confirm that all this was really true. Mary herself would have been newly pregnant as she began the 3-4 four day journey south (80-90 miles) from Nazareth to the hill country of s (about 5-6 miles from Jerusalem). Note: archeologist believe Judah (where John the Baptizer was born) may very well be the same area as Bethlehem (where Christ would be born, six months later than John).

Mary made the journey to her aunt Elizabeth and uncle Zacharias’s house. Greeting Elizabeth, she no doubt told her all that had happened with Gabriel’s announcement to her; and Elizabeth no doubt told Mary of Gabriel’s announcement to Zacharias (at the temple), and all that had happened, i.e., Zacharias was stuck mute and still couldn’t speak (**Luke 1:20**).

To hear Elizabeth’s account of her miraculous conception, and now in her sixth month of pregnancy had to be affirming to Mary concerning her own pregnancy. Read **Luke 1:41-44...** As Mary told Elizabeth about what had happened to her, the baby in Elizabeth’s womb leaped, and at that moment she was filled with the Holy Spirit and began to declare that Mary was blessed above all women because of the child she carried in her womb.

The filling of the Holy Spirit is often followed by a proclamation of the Word of God. Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit at the birth of his son John (**Luke 1:67**), and he began to declare a marvelous prophecy (**Luke 1:68-79**), about what John would fulfill concerning the coming Messiah (Who happened to be John’s younger cousin).

As some of you will recall from our Wednesday night Study in the Book of Acts, on the day of Pentecost, the believers (**Acts 2:4**), “were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began

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to speak [in other languages, not their own, **verses 8-11**], “as the Spirit was giving them utterance.”

Here in **Luke 1:42-45**, Elizabeth is filled with the Holy Spirit and she cries out in a loud voice a hymn of praise for Mary who has been given this great honor, and a praise for the child in her womb, God’s Son, the Lord and Savior of all; Elizabeth praises Mary’s Son (**verse 43**), as “[her] Lord,” declaring Christ’s deity.

That Elizabeth should be so blessed is overwhelming to her, to be in the presence of God’s Son, her own Lord and Savior, in the womb of Mary, is overwhelming to her (**Luke 1:44**), “For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached her ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.”

Elizabeth now proclaims more blessing upon Mary, not just because Mary will give birth to God’s Son, but also because of Mary’s faith in believing what the angel told her, that God would fulfill His greatest gift to all of humanity. Mary no doubt believed in her heart what the writer of **Hebrews 11:6** declares, that “God exists and *God* is a rewarder of those who seek Him.”

Let me be clear about something: Although the Roman Catholic Church teaches and observes in its liturgy that Mary is the “Mother of God,” the “Queen of Heaven,” and that she is a co-redeemer, with Christ, of sinful humanity and an intercessor who hears and receives our prayers. No such teachings are found in God’s Word. Mary is not the mother of God, because God is eternal in nature, and God was never conceived or born, for He has always existed. Mary was the mother of the human Jesus, not the mother of His eternal nature. Mary was a sinner in need of salvation, just like you and me; but Mary’s humble faith and obedient submission to God’s will, is an example of greatness to all believers for all time.

Mary would be horrified that anyone would consider her to be equal with Christ in any way; the very idea that Mary can receive prayers or praise, the confession of someone’s sins, or the granting of forgiveness leading to salvation, is the worse kind of heresy and is antithetical to teaching of God’s Word.

Read **Luke 1:46-48**... Mary, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, expresses the proper attitude of true worship. This section in Luke is called **The Magnificat**, which translates as, to magnify, to celebrate, to highly esteem, to praise, to glorify.

Mary is experiencing and expressing her supreme joy in the Lord. Notice, she declares how her soul *exalts* the Lord and her spirit *rejoices* in God her Savior. The words *soul* and *spirit* are interchangeable, as they refer to the whole inner person, i.e., the fullness of worshipping God with all that you are in Christ. You can only worship God if you have received forgiveness for sins and eternal life. Notice in **Luke 1:47**, Mary’s

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renewed spirit praised the Lord, God her Savior, for she was a sinner like everyone else, in need of the Savior. God’s mercy and grace had been given to and received by Mary and her soul and spirit was rejoicing.

**Deuteronomy 6:5**, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.”

**Matthew 22:37**, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.”

**Mark 12:30**, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”

**Luke 10:27**, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind.”

When Jesus was talking with the Samaritan woman about worship that is acceptable to God, He told her (**John 4:23-24**), “true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for... God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Mary is worshipping with her *heart, soul, mind and strength, or might* (this is internal fortitude, spiritual strength of character, firmness of purpose, strength of mind, i.e., steadfast intent to bring praise, honor, and glory to God).

**Romans 12: 1-2**, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, *which is* your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

**Colossians 3:17**, “Whatever you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father. **23-24**, Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”

Look again at **Luke 1:48a...** Mary is so thankful for what God has done, that He would choose her, from all the women in the world, to have the blessing of carrying and giving birth to God’s Son.

Mary was just an ordinary girl, growing up in a nondescript village, far from the main travel routes that led to Jerusalem.

Mary calls herself “His [God’s] bondservant” [this is the feminine form of the Greek word for slave. Mary is the first one in the New Testament to call herself a slave of God. Even though she was the mother of the Messiah, she reached no special place of prominence among those first Christians.

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**Acts 1:13-15**, “When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. At this time Peter stood up in the midst of the brethren (a gathering of about one hundred and twenty persons was there together).”

Read **Luke 1:49-50**... Mary now begins to praise God for all He has done throughout the ages, **verse 50** is quoted from **Psalms 103:17**, telling how God’s salvation will be offered to all who fear Him, to all who revere His Name and seek to do His will, while giving glory to Him and Him alone.

Read **Luke 1:51-53**... Mary speaks of God’s mighty deeds in destroying the proud and wicked (e.g., the Philistines, Canaanites, Nebuchadnezzar, Pharaoh, etc.), while at the same time giving aid to the humble, to those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for God alone is sovereign and worthy of praise and worship.

**Isaiah 65:13**, “Therefore, thus says the Lord God, ‘Behold, My servants will eat, but you will be hungry. Behold, My servants will drink, but you will be thirsty. Behold, My servants will rejoice, but you will be put to shame.’”

Read **Luke 1:54-55**... God went out of His way to care for Israel (like a loving father cares for a wayward or prodigal son), time after time Israel turned away from God and did evil in His eyes, and yet God continued to love them.

**Jeremiah 29:11-14**, “‘For I know the plans that I have for you, ‘declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you, ‘declares the Lord, ‘and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you, ‘declares the Lord, ‘and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.’”

Mary closes this prophetic proclamation of praise to God in **Luke 1:54-55**, by speaking of the covenant God made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribe of Judah, through whom Jesus Christ would ultimately be born to a descendant of David, in the town of Bethlehem, to a virgin named Mary.

God’s covenant to Abraham would be made effectual through the death of the Child Mary was carrying in her womb; the Lamb of God who dies for our sins, so that everybody who believes in Him receives forgiveness for sin and eternal life.

November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022 – (full sermon notes)

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Notice. in **verse 55**, that God’s promises are “to Abraham and his descendants forever.” This is not talking about the nation of Israel or those who have descended from the blood line of Abraham; this is talking about eternal descendants, those who have been born again by the Spirit of God, through belief in Christ.

**Galatians 3:26-29**, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants, heirs according to promise.”

Read **Luke 1:56...** **Luke 1:26-39** tells us that when Gabriel visited Mary with the news of her conception by the Holy Spirit, it was during the sixth month of her aunt Elizabeth’s pregnancy, at which time Mary hurried off to Judah to see Elizabeth, where she stayed “for about three months,” and then she went home to Nazareth.

Next Sunday we will read through **Luke 2:1-20**, about the birth of Jesus, the Savior, who is Christ the Lord, born to Mary, in Bethlehem, just six months after Elizabeth gave birth to her son John. Was all this just a coincidence? No, it was the fulfillment of God’s sovereign plan, purpose, and provision to save us through the sacrifice of His own Son.

**Jesus is the Reason for the Season.** You cannot celebrate Christmas without Him.

*Pastor Mike*  
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