

Songs Of Joy!

Our Text: Luke 1:39-56 *Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*

And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever."

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

There is one word that seems to capture the essence of this passage . . .
Blessed . . . which filled them with "Joy and rejoicing":

Blessed = εὐλογέω *eulogeō* = *Spoken well of and praised.*

Rejoice = ἀγαλλιάω *agalliaō*; = *To be exceedingly glad and jump for joy.*

Of all the people who should be blessed joyful, it should be those who have been found in Christ, Jesus!

"A bitter world cannot be sweetened by sour Christians." Author Unknown

It has been appropriately stated the "joy" come with a proper perspective:

- Jesus
- Others
- Yourself

Now that Mary knew she was to become a mother, and that her cousin Elizabeth would give birth in three months, she wanted to see Elizabeth so they could rejoice together.

In this passage, we will take a look at three people who joyful. Let's dive in . . .

The Joy Of Elizabeth!

Luke 1:39-45 *Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*

Once Mary heard the good news, she rushed to go to the "hill country" which was probably the hill region around Jerusalem. As Mary entered the house, Elizabeth heard her greeting, was filled with the Spirit, and was told by the Lord why Mary was there.

The one word that filled her lips was "blessed":

Blessed = εὐλογέω *eulogeō* = *Spoken well of and praised.*

Notice two things:

- 1) **Elizabeth was stoked for Mary!** She could have complained, "Why can't she have the prophet and I have the Son of God?" But that didn't happen . . . True joy rejoices in the blessings of others, even if it may be more than the blessings we ourselves have!
- 2) **Elizabeth did not say that Mary was blessed "above" women but "among" women:**

Among = ἐν *en* = *A compound used to describe a part of the whole.*

Mary was not beyond other women, but was spoken of well **while she was one of them.**

While we don't want to ascribe to Mary that which only belongs to God, neither do we want to minimize her place in the plan of God. The thing that made Mary stand out was her faith:

Luke 1:45 *Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."*

Believed = πιστεύω *pisteuō* = *To have faith in or give credit to.*

The Scripture is full of people who have believed what God has said and this made them "blessed" or stand out while in the crowd.

Hebrews 11:1-2 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. For by it the elders obtained a good testimony.*

People like: Able, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, etc. There is power in living a faithful life for the Lord!

Hebrews 11:32-12:2 *And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. Women received their dead raised to life again.*

Others were tortured, not accepting deliverance, that they might obtain a better resurrection. Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented— of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth.

And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, *did not receive the promise, God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us. Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

The idea is, because Mary believed the Word of God, she experienced the power of God.

• **Are we living in the same power? All we have to do is believe . . . and then live our belief!**

The Joy Of John The Baptist!

Luke 1:41 *And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.*

And

Luke 1:44 *For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.*

This was probably the time in which John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit as the angel had promised:

Luke 1:15 *For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.*

Even before his birth, John rejoiced in Jesus Christ. Even John's co-laborers were going to get jealous . . . "Hey this Jesus guys ministry is really taking off and ours is deminishing . . . what are you going to do about it?" Let's look at this account so we can see the heart of John:

John 3:22-36 *After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized. Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized. For John had not yet been thrown into prison.*

Then there arose a dispute between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purification. And they came to John and said to him, "**Rabbi, He who was with you beyond the Jordan, to whom you have testified—behold, He is baptizing, and all are coming to Him!**"

John answered and said, "**A man can receive nothing unless it has been given to him from heaven. You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent before Him.' He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He who comes from above is above all; he who is of the earth is earthly and speaks of the earth. He who comes from heaven is above all. And what He has seen and heard, that He testifies; and no one receives His testimony. He who has received His testimony has certified that God is true. For He whom God has sent speaks the words of God, for God does not give the Spirit by measure. The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into His hand. He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.**"

As John the Baptist, he would have the great privilege of introducing the Messiah to the Jewish nation . . . But he was not the Messiah as was content with that!

Once again, are we content with where God has us? If not, we will never be content with where He is going to take us!

The Joy Of Mary!

Luke 1:46-56 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name. And His mercy is on those who fear Him From generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He has put down the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly. He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, In remembrance of His mercy, As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to his seed forever."

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

"Joy is the enjoyment of God and the good things that come from the hand of God. If our new freedom in Christ is a piece of angel food cake, joy is the frosting. If the Bible gives us the wonderful words of life, joy supplies the music. If the way to heaven turns out to be an arduous steep climb, joy sets up the chair lift and carries us to the top." C. S. Lewis

Mary was so joyful that she decided to lift her voice in a hymn of praise! This should be the case for those who are filled with the same joy:

Ephesians 5:18-20 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; **but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**

Colossians 3:14-17 But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. **And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**

Mary's song contains quotations from and references to the Old Testament Scriptures, especially the Psalms and the song of Hannah in **1 Samuel 2:1–10**. Mary hid God's Word in her heart and turned it into a song.

This song was later called "The Magnificat" because the Latin version of Luke 1:46 is *Magnificat anima mea Dominum*. Her great desire was to magnify the Lord, **not herself**. She used the phrase "He hath" eight times as she recounted what God had done for three recipients of His blessing.

The following is an outline presented by Warren Wiersbe:

• **What God did for Mary (vv. 46–49)**

To begin with, God had saved her:

Luke 1:47 *And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*

This indicates that Mary was a sinner like all of us and needed to trust the Lord for her eternal salvation.

Not only had He saved her, but He had also chosen her to be the mother of the Messiah:

Luke 1:48 *For He has regarded the lowly state of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed.*

God had also "regarded" her, which means He was mindful of her and looked with favor on her. No doubt there were others who could have been chosen, but God chose her! The Lord had indeed showered His grace on her:

1 Corinthians 1:26-29 *For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. **But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty; and the base things of the world and the things which are despised God has chosen, and the things which are not, to bring to nothing the things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence.***

Not only was God mindful of her, but He was also mighty for her, working on her behalf:

Luke 1:49 *For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And holy is His name.*

Mary would have no problem singing "great things he hath done" because she believed God and yielded to His will, He performed a miracle in her life and used her to bring the Savior into the world.

• **What God did for us (vv. 50–53)**

In the second stanza of her song, Mary included all of God’s people who fear Him from generation to generation. We have all received His mercy and experienced His help. Mary named three specific groups to whom God had been merciful:

1) The Helpless

Luke 1:51 *He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

2) The Humble

Luke 1:52 *He has put down the mighty from their thrones, **And exalted the lowly.***

3) The Hungry

Luke 1:53 *He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.*

The common people of that day were almost helpless when it came to justice and civil rights. They were often hungry, downtrodden, and discouraged (Luke 4:16–19), and there was no way for them to “fight the system.” Jesus was going to be their Advocate and Deliverer!

Luke 4:16-19 *So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written:*

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

Everything was going to be turned upside down from the worlds perspective: the weak dethrone the mighty, the humble scatter the proud, the nobodies are exalted, the hungry are filled, and the rich end up poor!

The grace of God is contrary to the thoughts and ways of this world system!

• **What God did for Israel (vv. 54–56)**

Matthew 1:21 *And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins.”*

In spite of Israel’s destitute condition, the nation was still God’s servant, and He would help the people fulfill His purposes. God was on Israel’s side! He would remember His mercy and keep His promises:

Psalms 98:1-3 *Oh, sing to the LORD a new song! For He has done marvelous things; His right hand and His holy arm have gained Him the victory. The LORD has made known His salvation; His righteousness He has revealed in the sight of the nations. He has remembered His mercy and His faithfulness to the house of Israel; All the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.*

“Joy is the flag that flies over the castle of our hearts announcing that the King is in residence today.” Walter B. Knight