

Luke 1:36-56 – The Gift – Part 2

Robertson, TSK, GreekLexicon, Trapp, JFB, Poole, Pulpit, Geneva, Reinecker, Gill, Henry, Calvin? 115,

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: The gift Mary was promised was given out of love – God’s love. It was the gift that met the greatest need of her life. And it was the gift whose effect would last forever. This gift was Jesus...Joshua...God is Salvation.

Now we will look at the **proof that Mary would get the gift**, and we will look at a **poem that Mary penned in expectation of the gift**.

Our headings are:

The Proof of the Gift

A Poem about the Gift

Our goals are: **That having seen the evidence in Scripture, you will have faith to receive the gift God offers to you, and that you will continually praise him for this eternal gift.**

The Proof of the Gift

36 "Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was **called barren**. 37 **"For with God nothing will be impossible."**

1. Mary and Joseph believed the angel that they would have a Son who would save his people from their sins. But the Lord didn’t just leave them with his testimony from the angels. **He wanted to strengthen their faith by confirming what he would do through them.** So he provided this confirmation – proof of his gift – proof in various ways.

2. First proof: Mary would find her barren old relative, Elizabeth, probably an aunt, miraculously 6 months pregnant. More, she would have son. All her life Elizabeth tried to have children but could not have any until God worked a miracle. **Surely Elizabeth was known as the Barren One – one under the curse of God.** So the fact that she was having a child **was proof that nothing was impossible with God.** **This proof would remind Mary and Joseph that having a child without living together was not impossible.** Hear how Job expressed this:

Job 42:2 "I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose *of Yours* can be withheld from You.

38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

3. Mary’s response to the angel was simple: “I trust the Lord. May your word be proven true!” This showed Mary’s faith. She was a sinner, but she had faith in Jehovah. No doubt she understood the OT Scripture and OT promises. No doubt she knew of the, “one crying out in the desert, ‘prepare the way of the Lord.’”

39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country **with haste**, to a city of Judah, 40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

4. Mary excitedly went to see her old relative, Elizabeth, in the hill country of Judah. She wanted to see God’s Word come true and have her faith strengthened. And surely she wanted to **help her**

older pregnant relative. We know this because she stayed there for 3 months, until John was born. It is common knowledge that pregnancy can be debilitating for older women, let alone old women. Bones and muscles don't always cooperate as we get older.

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

5. Second proof. As soon as Mary entered the room and greeted Elizabeth, the baby leaped in Elizabeth's womb. This was not the regular movement of a baby that might respond to the mother's or father's voice. The baby had never heard Mary's voice before. And he didn't make a gentle turn; he made a powerful movement forward – almost suggesting he was running to the Savior. This was a miracle from God. Imagine how this would have strengthened Mary's faith.

6. Third proof. Elizabeth was empowered by the Holy Spirit to prophesy things that only Mary would have known. (So much for those who say the Holy Spirit is a NT gift that came only after Pentecost (五旬节). They confuse special gifts with the ever-present gift. No one can be, no one has ever been, saved without the Holy Spirit.)

42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! 43 "But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? 45 "Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

7. What did Elizabeth say to Mary in order to prove that her gift would come?

a. Elizabeth assured Mary **that she was blessed by God.** This was the same language used to describe Jael when she killed Sisera and brought freedom to Israel. This was what Jesus would do also. She was "blessed" to be a blessing!

b. Elizabeth assured Mary that **her child was blessed by God.** How did she know Mary was pregnant? **God revealed this.** And there is symbolism here. **When Mary received the God's Words, Jesus was formed in her!** Even so, when you receive God's Word, Jesus works in you!

c. Elizabeth assured Mary that **she was undeserving of Mary coming to her house. This had to be from God as this was a statement that would normally be made by a younger relative to an older relative.** But what gave Mary the honor **was that she was the mother of Jesus.** She didn't have honor without him. Isn't this true for you too? You are nothing without Jesus. He alone gives value to your life. Your big job means nothing to him. Your special skill is unnecessary to his work! He is simply pleased to use you.

d. Elizabeth assured Mary that **Mary's faith was real – she knew Mary's heart.** And how remarkable was Mary's faith? It was stronger than Zechariah – the one who was the priest. Notice how age didn't matter. **Faith mattered.**

e. **Elizabeth assured Mary that the prophecy Mary received would come true.** How did she know that Mary had received a special prophecy (预言), especially considering that there were no prophets around Israel at the time...except that God revealed it to Elizabeth? That was proof in Mary's pocket.

8. How Mary's heart must have been lifted up! What courage she could have now, being an unwed (未婚的) mother and all!

The Poem about the Gift

46 And Mary said: "My soul magnifies the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.

1. Mary wrote a poem about the child – the gift to the world - that would come from her. A poem is a beautiful way of speaking. A poem shows a thought process regarding the thing about which you are speaking. One could easily say: "You are good." But if one describes the details of your goodness...describe the beauty of your words and actions that make you good, it takes that statement to a whole new level. And so it is here. Also, this poem is based on a large number of Scriptures. Mary had a rich knowledge and memory of Scripture. She was not simply honored because she was a virgin. **Are you able to articulate (清楚地表达) the work of Jesus Christ if asked? Do you know your Bible?**

2. Mary made a concerted effort not boast about herself in her poem, as would be expected. Instead, as her faith increased in the promises of God, she praised God. **Mary had a new heart and she loved the one who did the transplant.** And she wasn't going to take credit for what God did. And while Zechariah was mute until his son was born from his lack of faith, Mary could sing...sing aloud. Let us now look at what she sang.

48 For He has **regarded the lowly state** of His maidservant; For behold, henceforth all generations will **call me blessed.** 49 For He who is mighty has done great things for me, And **holy is His name.**

3. Mary wrote that God blessed her. Holy God blessed the lowly woman – condemned in Adam. She used passive tense, showing that she was the receiver of the work of God. She does not claim that she chose God. She claimed that God blessed her...in spite of her low condition. **She emphasized the transcendent work of a holy God reaching a low sinner.** This was a fulfillment of a promise. The blessing was what she produced, not who she was. Mary brought forth Christ.

Isaiah 29:23 But when he sees his children, The work of My hands, in his midst, They will hallow My name, **And hallow the Holy One of Jacob, And fear the God of Israel.**

50 And His mercy is on those who fear Him From **generation to generation.**

4. Mary wrote that God's mercy was continuous. It did not just come during her time and it would end after her time. God's mercy came to Adam and Eve when he killed an animal and gave them covering – picturing their future covering. He showed mercy when he gave them the promise of Messiah. Later, he showed mercy in his promises through Matthew and John to save the world – Jews and Gentiles.

Psalms 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting On those who fear Him,

51 He has shown **strength with His arm**; He has **scattered the proud** in the imagination of their hearts. 52 He **has put down** the mighty from their thrones, And exalted the lowly.

5. Mary wrote that God had the strength to do what he promised (justice and mercy)...strength in his arm...and he would use that strength to save his people and to destroy the arrogant. God resists the proud.

Exodus 15:16 Fear and dread will fall on them; By the greatness of Your arm They will be as still as a stone, Till Your people pass over, O LORD, Till the people pass over Whom You have purchased. (惊骇恐惧临到他们。耶和華啊，因你膀臂的大能，他們如大石寂然不動，等候你的百姓過去，等候你所贖的百姓過去。)

You can see how God brought down Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, and Pharaoh, but he raised up Moses, David, and Mary. It's all about God.

53 He has filled the hungry with good things, And the rich He has sent away empty.
6. Mary wrote that God nourished his people spiritually, but those who thought they were rich he sent away hungry. The implication is that some people were starving for righteousness, and the gift – Jesus – would fill them with righteousness. Look at an example of someone who longed for this spiritual food – Simeon, when he saw Jesus! He was a vessel waiting to be filled.

Luke 2:29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

The needy child comes to his mother to be nursed and she has milk. The wicked, on the other hand, doesn't care. He thinks he can buy his way. **So the Lord sends him away empty-handed.**

54 He has helped His servant Israel, In **remembrance of His mercy,**
7. Mary then came back at the end of the poem to where she started: Jesus did not come because of anything good in Mary or mankind. **Jesus came in remembrance of God's promise to show mercy.** And notice how she was singing about election. God helped **his** people, Israel. What a woman!

55 As He spoke to our fathers, To Abraham and to **his seed forever.**" 56 And Mary remained with her about three months, and returned to her house.

8. Mary then wrote that this gift – God's Son -would exist forever and bless all generations all over the world. She understood the promise of the Gospel spreading to all the nations. She knew her Bible well and believed the promises.

Genesis 22:18 "In your **seed all the nations of the earth** shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."

The Apostle Paul confirmed this.

Galatians 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, **but as of one, "And to your Seed,"** who is Christ. (所應許的原是向亞伯拉罕和他子孫說的；神並不是說眾子孫，指着許多人，乃是說：“你那一個子孫，”指着一個人，就是基督。)

9. Mary, with proof in her heart, and praise on her lips, returned home.

Conclusion:

The gift, Jesus, Savior of the world, came from Mary and Joseph. The gift came at the right time and the right place, as directed by God. The gift had great power to do what God intended. And then God provided **proof to Mary** that she would be a part of the giving of this gift to give joy to the world. In celebration of this, Mary then **praised God** by writing a poem.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There is no doubt God kept his promise to Mary. Today, you have more proof than she. You see how the Gospel (福音) is spreading to the end of the earth. How then are you living seeing this proof? Are you **announcing God's salvation to the world as she did**? Are **you praising God before the world**? If you truly grasped your gift, and you realize that it has met every real need in your life for eternity, live like it.

Finally: The only way to be saved in through the wonderful Savior who is Christ our Lord. Do you know him? I don't mean if you know he existed. I mean, do you have a close relationship with him? If you don't, you are still in your sins. May God move you today to ask him to make you his child.