

Luke 1:46-56 – Mary’s Chorus, Claims, and Confidence

TSK, GreekLexicon, Henry, JFB, Geneva, Trapp, Barnes, Calvin, Pulpit, Handfuls, Robertson, Lightfoot, Poole, Eclectic, Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: There is a beautiful melody that you hear this time every year with lyrics(歌词) that go something like this: “Mary did you know that the child you are holding is the great I am?” I could answer that question with dead accuracy: She did. She knew. So stop asking that question. Look today at what Mary knew and what she did about it.

Our headings are:

Mary’s Chorus

Mary’s Claims

Mary’s Confidence

Our goals are: That you will sing of God’s wondrous grace that came to you through Jesus, that you will humble yourself before him, and that you will rest in confidence that he will keep you till heaven.

Mary’s Chorus

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

1. It was a long journey on foot to the mountains of Judah, facing dangers from wild animals and wild men, but after Mary heard good news from Elizabeth, which strengthened her faith, Mary became overwhelmed with joy. Her joy caused her to write a poem about the child – the gift to the world - that would come through her.

2. But why write a poem? A poem is a beautiful way of speaking. A poem shows a thought process regarding the thing about which the poet is speaking. A poet could say: “You are good.” But if the poet describes the details of your goodness...describe the beauty of your words and the care and comfort of your character...it takes that statement to a whole new level. And so it is here. Something more: This poem is based on a large number of Scriptures. Mary had a rich knowledge and memory of Scripture. She was godly. She was not simply honored because she was a virgin.

3. Mary made a concerted effort 努力 to not boast about herself in her poem but to rejoice in God, her Savior. Mary had a new heart and she loved the one who did the transplant. And she wasn’t going to take credit for (居功, 抢功劳) what God did. Zechariah was mute until his son was born from his lack of faith. Mary, because of her faith, could sing...sing aloud. She did not doubt the promise of God’s salvation. He followed other saints in Israel and Judah.

Psalms 35:9 And my soul shall be joyful in the LORD; It shall rejoice in His salvation.

Habakkuk 3:18 Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.

Psalms 115:1 Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, But to Your name give glory...

In acknowledging that God was her Savior, she was pointing to her sinfulness, which refutes the heresy of Romanism (天主教的异端邪说) that she was immaculately (纯洁地, 毫无过失地) conceived.

4. Lessons:

a. Are you able to articulate the work of Jesus if asked...how he was promised and how it was fulfilled? Do you know your Bible well enough? Or would you have to fumble 结结巴巴地说? Do you study the confessions 信条?

b. If you do have a good knowledge, don’t boast –but let it make you love Jesus more! Show that love by work.

c. Do songs about Jesus and his salvation fill your tongue, or is your tongue filled with watered-down works? Do you sing filth 下流话? Even if they are neutral words, do you spend more time singing them than about Christ?

Psalms 34:3 Oh, magnify the LORD with me, And let us exalt His name together.

If the work of Jesus is rich in your heart, sing. If you have faith, sing. If it brings you joy, sing!

Mary’s Claims

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.

1. Mary acknowledged she was a lowly woman. She was poor and engaged to a poor carpenter. But she was poorer yet!

a. She was totally dependent on God, in a lowly state, a beggar. She used passive tense 被动语态, showing that she was the receiver of the God’s work.

b. Mary acknowledged that God regarded her. This is a nice way of saying “elected 被拣选.” God paid her mind. (Mary was borrowing from Gideon in Judges 6, where he wondered why God chose him from the lowest tribe and clan and used him to save Israel – with pitchers, trumpets, and torches!) So Mary was emphasizing the transcendent 卓越的, 超然的 work of a holy God reaching a lowly sinner. This was a fulfillment of a promise that focused on the work of Christ.

c. Mary acknowledged that God blessed her. She was passive, God was active!

d. Mary acknowledged that others will always remember what God did for her (not what she did)...throughout history. She was fully conscious of her sins...

Psalms 136:23 Who **remembered us in our lowly state**, For His mercy *endures* forever;

Isa 57:15 For thus says the High and Lofty One Who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: "I dwell in the high and holy place, With him who has a contrite and humble spirit, **To revive the spirit of the humble**, And to revive the heart of the contrite ones. (因为那至高至上、永远长存，名为圣者的如此说：“我住在至高至圣的所在，也与心灵痛悔、谦卑的人同居；要使谦卑人的灵苏醒，也使痛悔人的心苏醒。)

Mary is not the Queen of Heaven, Star of Salvation, Gate of Life, Sweetness, Hope, and Salvation. Mary was a sinner.

e. Mary acknowledged that God was holy...implying that she wasn't. She was totally depraved, but God helped her.

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.**

2. Mary acknowledged that God's mercy was not only to her herself, but to all people –continuously...even from the beginning of time.

God's mercy came to Adam and Eve when he killed an animal and gave them covering – picturing their future covering. God's mercy was displayed through OT sacrifices. Later, he showed mercy fully on the cross and he promised to save the world – Jews and Gentiles.

Psalms 103:17 But the mercy of the LORD *is* from everlasting to everlasting...

And regarding that fear, it is not fear of falling off a cliff. It is an honoring of God – having deep respect.

Job 28:28 And to man He said, **Behold, the fear of the Lord, that *is* wisdom...**

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.

3. Mary acknowledged that God removed mercy from those who rejected it...

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.

Isaiah 51:5... And My arms will judge the peoples...

God resists the proud because they resist him. Water falling on rocks doesn't make them soft. You can see how God brought down Nebuchadnezzar, Sennacherib, and Pharaoh, but how he raised up Joseph, Moses, David, and Mary. Men are easily intoxicated with (沉醉于) power and prosperity. God humbles them.

Daniel 2:21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.

Some have the desire to destroy the enemy but not the ability. God has both.

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

4. Mary wrote that God nourished his people spiritually, but those who thought they were rich he sent away hungry. (Mt 5:6)

The implication is some people were starving for righteousness, and the gift – Jesus - would fill them with righteousness.

Example: Simon longed for this spiritual food – a vessel waiting to be filled - and when he saw Jesus he was 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 (外邦人), And the glory of Your people Israel."

Psalms 107:33 He turns rivers into a wilderness, And the watersprings into dry ground; 34 A fruitful land into barrenness, For the wickedness of those who dwell in it. 35 He turns a wilderness into pools of water, And dry land into watersprings. 36 There He makes the hungry dwell, That they may establish a city for a dwelling place, **38** He also blesses them, and they multiply greatly; And He does not let their cattle decrease...40 He pours contempt on princes, And causes them to wander in the wilderness *where there is no way*; 41 **Yet He sets the poor on high, far from affliction...**

This applies to material possessions. But more...

Psalms 113:7 **He raises the poor out of the dust, And lifts the needy out of the ash heap**, 8 That He may seat *him* with princes--With the princes of His people. 9 He grants the barren woman a home...

1Corinthians 1:26 For you see your calling, brethren, that not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, *are called*. 27 **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; (26 弟兄们哪！可见你们蒙召的，按着肉体有智慧的不多，有能力的也不多，有尊贵的也不多；27 神却拣选了世上愚拙的，叫有智慧的羞愧，又拣选了世上软弱的，叫那强壮的羞愧；)

This particularly applies to spiritual things, like the needy infant comes to his mother so that she can nurse and nourish him. The wicked thinks he knows what is best and so starves to death. They think they need nothing. They are self-righteous 自以为义—like the Pharisees 法利赛人.

5. Lessons:

a. The Lord is not limited by anyone, regardless of their state, gender, nationality. Let this bring you joy and hope!

Romans 10:11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

b. God raises and razes rulers. This is the doctrine of God's sovereignty (上帝的主权) ...a comfort to the Christian. Don't lose this in the warm fuzzy feeling of Christmas. So don't ignore that arrogant family member who is not a Christian. Don't let him go to hell.

Mary's Confidence

54 He has helped **His servant Israel**, In **remembrance of His mercy**, 55 (As He spoke to our fathers), To Abraham and to **his seed forever**."

1. Mary then acknowledged the basis of God's promise to save: Jesus came in remembrance of God's promise to show mercy. This is the doctrine of election. God helped **his** people, Israel because of his mercy. What a woman! She knew doctrine!

Psalm 98:3 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.

How did she have this great confidence – this faith – that God would do what he promised? She knew the Word. She knew that God made this promise from Adam onward. She said that God spoke to "the fathers," to Abraham and to and to Abraham's children. (See also Job 8:20)

2. Mary then acknowledged that this gift of mercy through Jesus -would exist forever and bless all generations. She understood the promise of the Gospel spreading to all the nations for eternity. She knew her Bible well and believed the promises. This was preservation of the saints.

Genesis 22:18 "In your **seed all the nations of the earth** shall be blessed...

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

3. After singing, Mary stayed about 3 months with Elizabeth, probably until John was born to help her. She was a servant. Her excitement did not wane! God's Word, deep in her soul, kept her going. Then **Mary, with confidence in her heart, and praise on her lips, returned home.**

4. Lessons:

a. God initiated salvation. He chose those he would redeem. He promised mercy. Man did not seek it.

b. Only by grace through faith (信心) –a gift– can you become God's child. As God's child you will sing to him and serve him. The depraved become devoted.

c. Faith to come to Christ and grow in Christ is contingent on reading and believing the Bible. There are no shortcuts to faith...no pills to get it...or inheritance of it!

Conclusion:

Mary wrote and sang beautifully a song of God's glorious deliverance. It was song based on sound doctrine. It was marked by the doctrines of totally depravity, election (拣选), justice (公义), salvation (救赎), and eternal security (永恒的平安). And she was confident in everything she sang because it was based on the Word of God.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. What are you singing about today: "Momma kissing Santa Clause," "Grandma getting run over by a reindeer," "Rudolph and his red nose," or "Baby, it's cold outside"?

2. But what should you be singing about? You should be singing of the humiliating incarnation (道成肉身) of the Savior, of his redemption (救赎) of the dregs of society on the cross, and of his preservation of his church for eternity. In addition to singing, **you should be serving the Lord like the shepherds**, telling the world about him. They couldn't remain silent. And neither must you.

Finally: You might think you don't need religion because you have science and smarts. But God will bring you, the arrogant (骄傲的人), low, and you will have to confess him when you are condemned (被定罪之人) for ignoring the work of Jesus on the cross for sinners. Yet you have the opportunity today to ask the Savior today to help you see your wretchedness (可怜、悲惨) and scream out for rescue.