

Luke 1:39-56

Introduction: This passage contains what some people call the Magnificat (from the Latin of 1:46).

Mary's response to Gabriel—1:39-40 ³⁹ *Now Mary, having arisen in those days,*

- 1) *went with eagerness into the hill country, to a city of Judah,*
 - a) About a 3-4 day journey
- 2) ⁴⁰ *and entered into the house of Zachariah,*
- 3) *and greeted Elizabeth.*
 - a) Perhaps to assist the older woman
 - b) Perhaps to compare notes

Elizabeth's response to Mary—1:41-45 ⁴¹ *And it happened ...*

- 1) Elizabeth's initial response to John's movement in her womb—1:41-42a
 - a) John's activity—1:41a *the baby moved quickly in her womb* (cf. Genesis 25:22), *as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary,* (cf. 1:15)
 - b) The Spirit's activity—1:41b *and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,*
 - c) Elizabeth's activity—1:42 ⁴² *and called out with a loud voice and said,*
- 2) Blessing—1:42b-45 (she doesn't see Mary as a rival)
 - a) Blessing regarding uniqueness—1:42b
 - i) A privilege—*"You are (the most) blessed [εὐλογέω] among (all) women,*
 - ii) A Child—*and blessed [εὐλογέω] is the fruit of your womb!*
 - b) Humility and surprise—1:43-44 ⁴³ *And how has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord (the Messiah) should come to me?*
 - i) Interpretation—1:44 ⁴⁴ *For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb moved quickly in joy.* (cf. 1:14, 47)
 - ii) Correction—Mary is never called "the Mother of God" in the Bible
 - c) Reassurance—1:45 ⁴⁵ *And blessed [μακάριος] is she who trusted that (the content of Mary's faith) what was spoken to her by the Lord (through the angel Gabriel cf. 1:31-35) will be accomplished."*
 - i) Contrast with Zechariah in 1:20. Theophilus is being reminded he needs to trust God's Word. Mary heard, trusted, and obeyed what God said.

Mary's declaration about God—1:46-55 ⁴⁶ *And Mary said,*

- NB her acquaintance with Scripture, her humility, her gratitude, her understanding of God's works, and her grasp of God's promises (Ryle)
- 1) Praise regarding God's concern for her individually—1:46-50
 - a) God's greatness and concern—1:46-49a
 - i) She emphasizes His sovereignty
 - (1) *"My soul declares the greatness of the Lord,*
 - (2) ⁴⁷ *and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,*
 - ii) Why?—1:48-49a

- (1) Why? # 1—1:48 ⁴⁸ *because He has paid careful attention to the humble (social) state of His bondservant; (cf. 1:38; she viewed herself as one of the little people)*
 - (a) *for behold, from now on all generations will consider me favored,*
 - (i) Things will be different in her life because of God's gracious work
- (2) Why? # 2—1:49a ⁴⁹ *because He who is magnificently impressive has done great things for me,*
 - b) God's uniqueness and mercy—1:49b-50
 - i) God's uniqueness—1:49b *and holy is His name.*
 - ii) God's loyal mercy—1:50 ⁵⁰ *And His mercy is from generation to generation on those who are living in awe of Him.*
- 2) Praise regarding God's great works—1:51-55
 - a) Generally—1:51a ⁵¹ *He has done a mighty deed with His arm (power);*
 - b) Specifically—1:51b-55
 - i) He rejects the proud—*He has dispersed the proud in the imagination of their heart.*
 - ii) He levels the social playing field—⁵² *He has pulled down the mighty from their thrones, and has elevated the humble.*
 - iii) He levels the material playing field—⁵³ *He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.*
 - iv) He is faithful to His covenant with Abraham—⁵⁴ *He has helped His servant Israel,*
 - (1) Basis? *so as to remember His mercy, ⁵⁵ just as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His descendants forever."*
 - (2) God's actions is motivated by His loyal kindness, which in turn is rooted in His covenant with Abraham. We eagerly await the complete fulfillment of this covenant in the future.

Mary's extended time with Elizabeth—1:56 ⁵⁶ *And Mary ...*

- 1) *remained with her about three months,*
 - a) This assures that she will have no sexual contact with Joseph during the time she conceives the Messiah.
- 2) *and returned to her home (to Nazareth).*
 - a) She does not go to Joseph's home. They are betrothed but not living together.

Take-home truth: Whether a God-fearer from Israel or another nation, we know that God will vindicate His promise to His chosen nation and to those who live in awe of Him. His promise will be fulfilled.