

When it is Time to Celebrate

Luke 1:39-55

Christmas is a time to celebrate. It is a season of great joy. We rejoice that God loves us and is with us. The story begins when the angel Gabriel announces to Zechariah that he will have a son who will be the forerunner of the Messiah (Luke 1:5-25). Gabriel then announces to Mary that she will bear the Messiah, the Christ child (Luke 1:26-38). Her cousin, Elizabeth, joins her in celebrating, and Elizabeth's unborn son, John, leaps for joy in her womb (39-45). Mary sings a song of joy (46-55) which exemplifies a life of praise and faith in God's Word. Mary's theme is ***Magnify the Lord for his mercy. Celebrate the Son!***

☐ **Mary is ...**

- Young (probably 12-14 years old)
- Jewish
- A descendent of David (Luke 1:27)
- Virgin (Luke 1:27)
- Engaged to Joseph (Luke 1:27)
- Poor (Luke 2:24)
- Inexperienced (probably has not traveled beyond her home region)
- Illiterate (based on the culture of the day)
- Limited future
- Knows the Old Testament
- Reflective by nature (Luke 2:19; 51)

☐ **Elizabeth and John celebrate with Mary (39-45)**

Mary rushes to visit her cousin, Elizabeth (39).

Elizabeth's unborn son, John, leaps for joy at the presence of the unborn savior (41, 44).

Elizabeth declares that Mary is blessed among women (42). In Hebrew culture, a woman's status was based to a great extent on her children: her significance was tied to their significance. While we don't want to elevate Mary higher than she deserves, we don't want to minimize her place in God's plan either.

Elizabeth recognizes Mary's son as "my Lord" (43). Elizabeth demonstrates humility as she steps into the background.

❑ **Mary sings a song of celebration (46-55)**

Mary's song of praise is known as "The Magnificat" (a Latin word for "glorifies"). The song uses the form and language of a Jewish psalm and is saturated with Old Testament echoes of praise to God. Her song reveals Mary's great desire to magnify the Lord, not herself.

In her song of celebration, Mary praises God for:

- What he did for Mary (46-49)

He saved her (47)

He chose her (48)

He was mighty for her (49)

- What he did for us (50-53)

God is merciful to the:

God-fearing (50)

Helpless (51)

Humble (52)

Hungry (53)

- What he did for Israel (54-55)

God will remember his mercy and keep his promises.

Magnify the Lord for his Mercy.

CELEBRATE THE SON!