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# Mary's Song

Luke 1:39-56

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TOPIC:

## "MARY'S SONG"

Luke 1:39-56

VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 1:39-56 (KJV, Public Domain)

### Prepare

- Gather a Nativity set or a picture of the Nativity, pointing out that before we get to the point of Jesus' birth, we must look at Luke 1:26-38 where Mary received a visit from the angel Gabriel. He explained God had a wonderful plan to save mankind from their sins, and that plan included her. She would be the one chosen to give birth to the son of God. At her moment of acceptance to the mission, she would become part of the greatest miracle; the greatest story ever told.
- Stepping into a mission for God may not always be the easiest task, but it will be one with great reward. Draw a dividing line on a board. Write "easy" on one side and "difficult" on the other. With students help, lists some things about Mary's tasks that may be considered easy and some that may be considered difficult. After that review, write the word "ATTITUDE" in all caps under the chart. How was Mary's attitude about what God was asking her? Are there some reasons why her attitude could have been different? In *Mary's Song*, we will see that amid it all, she had a heart that stood in awe of what God was doing, and she rejoiced despite any perceived coming difficulties.

### Explore – Full Lesson Available on pages 5-14

#### Verses 39-45

A salutation, a leap, and the Holy Ghost entered in. While her husband Zacharias may have been mute at this point, when Elisabeth heard Mary, she **spoke out with a loud voice**, and pronounced words of blessing on Mary while rejoicing in what God was doing.

It is hard to keep a true recipient of God's blessings and miracles quiet. There's a certain ringing deep down in the soul that refuses to be hushed. When God moves, the soul moves with rejoicing, and Elisabeth was no different. She once was barren and now holds the forerunner of Christ in her womb, but for her that's not the greatest miracle; that's not the greatest thing about this moment. Today, she is rejoicing because **the mother of my Lord** has come to visit her. She is rejoicing because she recognized what God was not only doing in Mary's life, but for the salvation of the world.

### Verses 46-56

Upon hearing Elisabeth's confirming proclamation of praise, Mary's mouth opened, and her own heart praised God, saying, ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," (Luke 1:46-47).*** She recognized her lowly status among humanity, but she also recognized the God who is doing ***great things***. Her people have heard of and waited for centuries for the promised Messiah and now, she gets to personally be a part of that story. The story where God is putting down the ***proud*** and He is raising up a Savior. The story where God is moving in humanity to show mercy, forgiveness of sins, and salvation to a world torn apart by sin. She gets to be a part of the story where the promise that was spoken in the days of ***Abraham*** now begins its fulfillment in her. Mary was rejoicing! There was now hope for her people. There was now hope for the world. This is definitely a reason to ***magnify the Lord***.

### Activities

- Praise should never be far from the lips of a child of God. Don't let Mary praise Him by herself. Using the journal pages, write your own song, poem, or letter of praise to God. Or use the blank journal pages to fill in with your own ideas.
- This time of the year we are doing a lot of singing right along with Mary. We are magnifying God in the Christmas songs that we sing. What better way to Magnify God than to sing of the birth of His Son. To go with that singing, younger students (and can be modified for older students by using different methods) can make candles for caroling or their own song books.
- ***"My soul doth magnify the Lord."*** Using a magnifying glass, allow students to look at small things in a new way. What details can they see they have seen before? Mary used her heart and her voice to magnify God. God was doing a new thing, and it was something to get excited about.
- Alternate activity sheets such as **Word Search, Crossword, Memory verse and more** are available on-site for those who just want to work with printed materials.

### Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***"Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour," (Luke 1:46-47).***

- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 15)
- Play a review game of **Hangman** with chosen verses, phrases, or words from the lesson.

## Life

Throughout this week let your heart reflect deeper on the salvation story revolving around the birth of Christ. In the hustle and bustle of life, it's easy to let those familiar details pass, but don't let it. Ponder a little closer the amazingness of the whole story of Jesus's birth (from the announcement to Mary by Gabriel to the fulfilling of His birth in Bethlehem on that wondrous night). Then, let your soul magnify the Lord along with Mary for the marvelous things He has done. Take time to record your thoughts on the **Blank Journal Pages** provided on-site.

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## "MARY'S SONG"

**Luke 1:39-56**

### **VERSE DISCOVERY: Luke 1:39-56 (KJV, Public Domain)**

*The news that Mary received that she would be the carrier of God's plan of salvation was phenomenal, to say the least. One could even say that it all may have been a bit overwhelming. After all, this would be the actual Son of God in her body and the angel Gabriel told her some pretty awesome stuff concerning Him. Upon hearing it all and taking it in – she accepted the calling of God on her life and yielded, literally, her body as a sacrifice.*

*Still, one can imagine questions rolling around in her mind. If our minds get blown away at the little special stuff God does for us here and there, I can't help but think Mary may have been a little taken aback by the whole scene before her and the future that lay ahead.*

*Despite it all, Luke 1:38 tells us she acquiesced to the hand and plan of God, saying, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."*

*Not once did she ever ask for a sign but as the scene of today's lesson unfolds God gives her one. Miraculously and mysteriously God peels back what people could not have known except by divine revelation and confirms not only the promise to her but His plan of salvation for the world.*

### **ELISABETH'S CONFIRMING PRAISE**

**Luke 1:39-40 "And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth."**

These verses pick up immediately after the angel Gabriel departed from speaking with Mary God's plans and promise for her life and the life of the Child she was to carry.

But, before his departure, he encouraged Mary, noting, "For with God nothing shall be impossible," (Luke 1:37) after telling Mary, "Behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also

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conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren," (Luke 1:36). I can only imagine after all that was said and done, she remembered these blessed words and **"arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda."**

Perhaps it was one of those "I just have to see Elisabeth" moments after all she heard. Regardless of the reason, we do know that it was with **"haste"** that she was compelled to go. Immediately, without hesitation, she wanted to be where Elisabeth was. God was doing an unexpected thing in her life and she possibly wanted to connect with the other name Gabriel gave her concerning this great miracle.

So long ago, on a hill far away, Mary went. It almost reads like a fairy tale, but the story herein is very true and worthy to be learned and appreciated for the intricacies of details God weaves through their lives and the history of our salvation, as well as to bring about His promise for mankind.

**"And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth."** Upon arriving at her destination at the house where Elisabeth dwelt with her now mute husband, Zacharias, Mary entered and greeted her according to custom.

**Luke 1:41-45 "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord."**

The words of Mary's greeting aren't recorded, but the response by Elisabeth and what happens after is: **"When Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb."** When Mary's greeting reached the ears of her cousin, God phenomenally made His way known during what seemed to be a very normal and customary interaction between two people.

Something moved in Elisabeth at the hearing of the voice of Mary; and not just the baby inside of her (Although as noted in the lesson he **"leaped"** and reacted to hearing her voice as

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well. See note below). Mary's voice connected with her innermost being by the moving of God's Spirit, hence we see her at this very time being **"filled with the Holy Ghost."**

**Please Note:** Babies in a womb have an amazing connection to their own mother's voice and maybe even dads. But rarely will they react as energetically to a voice they have never heard. This makes the baby's reaction all the more powerful and a reason to take note. The baby, later known as John the Baptist, was filled with the Holy Ghost at this time fulfilling a promise as well (see Luke 1:15). God used an unborn child to spiritually testify of the work He was doing. Awesome!

Can I give you something to try to associate this feeling with? Imagine someone knocking on your door one day to give you the best news possible. Maybe you are one of those famous sweepstakes winners and all your financial needs will be forever taken care of. Or, perhaps someone announced that you are a long-lost relative of someone who has left you an extraordinary inheritance. Maybe that knock brings a lost love home again for which the joy felt cannot be measured in dollars and cents. Any of these events would have us in joyful tears and simply awestruck at what is happening. I can imagine the same (although many, many times more), "I can't believe it!" joy was felt by Elisabeth at the sound of sweet Mary's voice.

Mary and Elisabeth were no longer just cousins of the flesh but they were sisters in the Spirit because God was working mightily through both.

Continuing to be moved by the Spirit of God, Elisabeth's voice rang out in exuberant praise, declaring, **"Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb."** When Gabriel appeared to Mary, he too used words like *"highly favoured"* and called her *"blessed"* (Luke 1:28). Her life would become extraordinarily different from women everywhere and in every era. There wasn't then, and would never be, another woman like her in the entire world or the world's history who was called to do what she did. She was **"blessed."** And Elisabeth's declaration: **"blessed is the fruit of thy womb,"** (even though Mary was nowhere near showing at this time to give the outward appearance of pregnancy) means that she [Elisabeth] was speaking directly about the miracle that God has performed in her [Mary's] life.

In an age where instant notifications, emails, text messaging, social media, and the like didn't exist, as quickly as these events unfolded there appears to be no prior knowledge of Mary's

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pregnant condition before the infilling of the Holy Ghost. God revealed this to Elisabeth and Elisabeth sang out in praise declaring how special she [Mary] is because of the babe [**the fruit of the womb**] inside of her.

Still awestruck at the greatness of all transpiring before her, Elisabeth continues, saying, **“Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”** Immediately, without any questioning of detail or such, she knew that Mary was the **“mother of my Lord.”** What a declaration for Mary to hear! Very shortly, when word got out about her pregnancy, she would hear, I’m sure what I assume to be a myriad of hateful and hurtful remarks. But for now, I can imagine Mary letting Elisabeth’s words wrap around her as a warm hug confirming what God is doing in her life.

Elisabeth continues to tell Mary about the reaction of her own baby at the hearing of her voice: **“Lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.”** Inspired by the Spirit of God, Elisabeth not only felt the baby physically leap but inwardly she knew the reason was for **“joy.”** The forerunner of Christ was already getting happy and testifying to the greatness that was to come through Him.

Ring out these Holy-Ghost inspired words, Elisabeth continues to say, **“Blessed is she that believes.”** That’s a powerful statement. It not only testifies to Mary’s confident acceptance of what God was doing through her but it also shows how much faith must play a key role in anything God calls anyone to do. Hebrews 11:1 reminds us, “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” One’s faith is important for without it we are told it is impossible to please God (see Hebrews 11:6). As scary as this situation was for Mary, she got on board with God’s plan without knowing everything that would unfold in her future.

Because of that, **“there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.”** Mary accepted in faith, and Elisabeth declared that God was moving on her behalf. God has never failed to follow through with His promises. He speaks them. Here it is confirmed. And, it shall come to pass. Other areas of the Bible remind us of this great truth, saying, “For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass...” (Ezekiel 12:25; see also Psalm 111:7).

In response, Mary’s soul joins in with rejoicing!

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## MARY'S SONG OF REJOICING

**Luke 1:46-47** “And Mary said, **My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.**”

**“My soul doth magnify the Lord.”** What God revealed to her through Gabriel and confirmed through Elisabeth is nothing short of AWESOME! It goes beyond the concept of human thinking and understanding and takes you to a realm of the way He thinks and operates. It beckons one to step out into the unknown with a life and a heart of complete trust.

How else is Mary to respond except to say, **“My soul doth magnify the Lord?”** God was about a great work (as He always is). For centuries they have longed for the promise of the Messiah to be fulfilled. Generations have laid up their hopes in store for this great day. Mary's soul can't help but praise God. She knew before anyone else that God was ready to do a great kingdom shift. She is rejoicing because the time is finally at hand for the long-awaited promise to come to pass and she is to be personally involved.

Thus, she was moved to **“magnify the Lord.”** We use the word **“magnify”** to mean “to enlarge.” We can't make God bigger than He already is. 1 Kings 8:27 declares, “The heaven of heavens cannot contain thee.” But we can exalt and praise Him – we can lift His name up at the joy of what He is doing in the lives of His people. We can make our praise of Him grow and grow until it affects the lives of those around us. Through our worship, we can't help but enlarge His territory and gain spiritual ground in the lives of those who witness what God is doing in us.

When was the last time you can honestly say, “My soul doth magnify the Lord?” When was the last time you felt a shift in your spirit to move into the realm of praise over the greatness of God in your life? Mary was at her cousin's house when she rang out with this hymn, rejoicing. You can feel the Spirit of God move you to worship anywhere! You don't have to wait until Sunday morning service! Let your soul **“magnify”** Him now! That's why she continued, and said, **“My spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.”**

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**“God my Saviour.”** This is all about Him and what He is doing. Man cannot save himself. Man does not have the means to secure permanent deliverance from sin for himself. Try as he might, it just won't work.

But, God...

Her people were under the tyranny of Herod and whoever else decided to put their hands in the pot of affliction over them. Worse than that, despite laws and sacrifices, the tyranny of sin still permeated the world and had mankind shackled in its bonds.

But, God...

Mary can **“rejoice!”** There is hope for her. There is hope for her people. There is hope for the world. **“God my Saviour”** is ready to let loose His plan of deliverance once and for all! Titus 3:4-5a says, “But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us...” Rejoice! **“God my Saviour”** had and has a plan to “save us!”

**Luke 1:48-50 “For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.”**

**“For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.”** Who are you to those who see you every day? Are you known as mom or dad, sister or brother? Are you just that church member who sits at the end of pew five from the front? Or, are you just that neighbor down the street? Who are you to those at work or to those who see you drop off the kids at school? How do people identify you? Are you just a passing thought to most or do people “regard” you? Do people take notice of you and your life?

Mary, when she woke up that morning before Gabriel spoke to her, she just saw herself as Mary; nothing more, nothing less. She was just one in a group of young women who lived in her town of Nazareth. Yet, the whole time God **“regarded”** her. God had His eyes on her for something bigger and better in life and she didn't even know it. **“He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.”** In a spirit of humility, she may have viewed herself as nobody

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and her humble surroundings would suggest it as well, but she was somebody God paid attention to.

**“From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”** God is big on remembering those who submit in obedience to His will and allow themselves to be used by Him. “He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him,” (Heb. 11:6). Jesus told His disciples one day after Mary (not the Mary from today’s lesson) anoints Him with the oil from the alabaster box, “Whosoever this gospel shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that she hath done shall be spoken of for a memorial of her” (Mat. 26:13). People are going to remember her.

With the Mary of today’s lesson, the one that would bear the Son of God, people are going to do more than just remember her, they **“shall call me blessed.”** She will forever be linked to the greatest miracle God has ever done and considered **“blessed”** to be a part of it.

**“For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.”** How often has God moved in the life of one to bless and bring about **“great things”** to only have them take credit for it or attribute it to another? Mary didn’t do that. She recognized that God is the **“mighty”** One and that He was the One performing these **“great things”** in her life. 1 Samuel reminds us, “For them that honour me I will honour,” (2:30). She honored God and attributed glory to His name for His mighty hand in her life.

**“Holy is his name.”** Mary is rolling out this beautiful hymn of what God is doing, and in the middle, she takes as we call it today, a praise break! At least, this is how I viewed it. God has overwhelmed her, in a good way, and she can’t help but stop and declare, **“Holy is his name!”**

God is unique in who He is and in how He does things. After God delivered the children of Israel from Pharaoh and his chariots at the Red Sea, Moses and the children of Israel sang a song, Exodus 15:1. In that song, they also recognized the holiness of God. They sang, “Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (15:11). This is the same heart of song that Mary rejoices with in today’s lesson when she pronounces **“Holy is his name!”** Psalm 99:3 declares, “Let them praise thy great and terrible name; for it is holy.”

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When God moves in your life; when He does the impossible, if at no other time, one should especially recognize His holiness, power, and uniqueness through it all and praise Him for it!

**“And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.”** I have a lot of favorite psalms but by far one of my top favorites is Psalm 118. This is one I cling to and often go back to for times when I need encouragement. It starts by giving a brief history of the goodness of God in the life of His people because “his mercy endureth forever.” Then, this beautiful psalm moves to an even more beautiful declaration of God’s promises for those who place their trust in Him. There is not a verse in this Psalm that I don’t like. It even ends with another, “For his mercy endureth for ever,” (Ps. 118:29).

Mary recognized God’s hand of mercy over **“them that fear him from generation to generation.”** Psalm 103:17 also states, “But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children’s children.” Both verses express the unending mercy of God.

God promised David through Nathan the prophet, speaking of his descendants, saying, “I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee,” (2 Sam. 7:14-15).

Mary saw God’s promise to David and that His mercy was still at work to **“them that fear him.”** Proverbs 1:7 says, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge,” (see also Pro. 9:10-11). Time did not erase the promises of God. Though they have waited, and at times the wait may have made it seem the Messiah wasn’t coming, God’s mercy was working it out from **“generation to generation.”**

**Luke 1:51-53 “He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.”**

**“He hath shewed strength with his arm.”** When God has a plan, He shows up in the full strength of His power to accomplish it. God is omnipotent. There is nothing that He can’t do. There is none who can subdue or usurp His power. That’s why we are encouraged to,

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"Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually," (1 Chron. 16:11) because God's strength is unmatched in power and authority.

In His strength, He **"scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts... he put down the mighty from their seats... the rich he hath sent empty away."** He made them broke, busted, and disgusted! Those that should have had no lack; those that should have been top of their game; God humbled them and removed them. Why? Because they lived in relying on their own power and ability. They lived a life of pride; a life in opposition to God. Therefore, "God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (James 4:6).

God flips the script, and He **"exalted them of low degree"** and **"He hath filled the hungry with good things..."** God lifts up and blesses the lowly of this world such as His people Israel. "Though the LORD be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly," (Ps. 138:6). It was the lowly, the unassuming, and the unexpected course that God would use to usher in the reign of the Messiah. From the choosing of a young woman from Nazareth to His lowly birth and being "laid... in a manger," (Lk. 2:7); all was done without pomp and circumstance to bring forth the Savior of the world.

**Luke 1:54-55 "He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."**

**"He hath holpen his servant Israel."** God has been a constant source for His people **"Israel."** They were a people of promise. They were a people who would be an example to other nations (Deut. 4:6-8). They were a people through whom we would be blessed also: "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed," (Gal. 3:8, see also Luke 1:55 (today's lesson); Gen. 12:3). He remembered **"his mercy"** despite their failings and short-comings. God has helped Israel and stood by Israel's side so they can become the people they were called to be.

**Luke 1:56 "And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house."**

Mary, we are assuming, stayed with Elisabeth until the time came for her to give birth to baby John. Gabriel came to her in the sixth month (Luke 1:26), and here we are told she **"abode with her about three months"** which would equal the normal time for pregnancy to be

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completed. Then, she **“returned to her own house.”** After which, verse 57 (not in today's lesson), tells us of the birth of John.

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**TOPIC:**

## "MARY'S SONG"

**Luke 1:39-56**

**Please Answer the Review Questions Below**

1. **T or F.** Mary went to the city of Nazareth to visit Elisabeth (vs. 39).
2. When Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe \_\_\_\_\_ in her womb (vs. 41).  
**A. Leaped      B. Turned      C. Kicked      D. None**
3. **T or F.** Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost (vs. 41).
4. \_\_\_\_\_ art thou among women, and \_\_\_\_\_ is the fruit of thy womb (vs. 42).  
**A. Holy      B. Special      C. Blessed      D. None**
5. Mary said, My soul doth \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord (vs. 46).  
**A. Praise      B. Bless      C. Worship      D. None**
6. **T or F.** God scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts (vs. 51).
7. He hath holpen his servant \_\_\_\_\_, in remembrance of his mercy (vs. 54).  
**A. Jacob      B. Israel      C. Jerusalem      D. None**
8. **T or F.** Mary abode with her about six months, and returned to her own house (vs. 56).

