

Mary's Song of Praise

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

Selected Scripture:
Luke 1:46-56

God to be the mother of Jesus according to the flesh would also testify to her nobility of character and purity of heart. To go further, however, and assert, as some have, that Mary herself was miraculously conceived and born free from sin, is not scripturally supported and a mistaken thought entirely.

Our Key Verse shows a loving heart in full harmony with God, and it is noteworthy to see how Mary came to such a faithful state. In response to Mary's troubled mind at the message that she was highly favored and blessed among women, the angel Gabriel reassured her in three ways. First, Gabriel reminded her of the many prophecies relating to the promised birth of Jesus. Being well versed in the Scriptures, Mary likely recalled the words of Isaiah 7:14: “The Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.”

Second, Gabriel told Mary that the Holy Spirit—God's power—would accomplish this miracle. He said, “The power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.” (Luke

MARY'S EXAMPLE OF faithfulness and obedience to God's instruction speaks loudly to her character. The Scriptures indicate to us that both Mary and Joseph were pious people, as demonstrated in their annual trips to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. (Luke 2:41) The fact that Mary was chosen by

1:35) Perhaps this brought to her mind Exodus 40:34-38, in which God promised to overshadow the Tabernacle in the wilderness with the pillars of a cloud and of fire. To an Israelite such as Mary, it was comforting to believe that God would hover above her like an eagle over its nest with wings outspread, protecting, providing, and helping. Considering the many miracles God had performed on behalf of his people no doubt soothed Mary's troubled mind in this time of need.

Third, Gabriel told Mary that her cousin Elizabeth was also about to bear a son. Elizabeth had been barren, but had now conceived "in her old age." (Luke 1:36) This additional miracle was enough to convince Mary that God was indeed able to perform whatever he wanted, as Gabriel declared, "With God nothing shall be impossible." (vs. 37) Mary might have also recalled Isaiah's words corroborating the words of Gabriel: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 55:11

After hearing these reassurances and proofs from the angel Gabriel, Mary put the entire matter into the Lord's hands with these beautiful words: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." (Luke 1:38) This loving and complete acceptance of God's will is reminiscent of that which Hannah expressed concerning the miraculous birth of her son, Samuel: "Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God."—I Sam. 2:1,2

Let us be as faithful as Mary, knowing the prophecies concerning the call of the church, and remembering the begetting of God's called ones as sons of God. Let us remember that God will accomplish in us what he desires—the development of a bride for his Son, Christ Jesus. ■