

OPEN TO BEING CHOSEN

LUKE 1:46-55

DECEMBER 25, 2022

THE HOOK:

According to the Promise: Ga 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the **promise**. 1Jo 2:25 And this is **the promise** that he hath promised us, even **eternal life**.

Nu 23:19 God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (KJV) *19 God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? (NIV)*

THE WORD STUDY:

LUKE: The evangelist, probably the same person who is called by St. Paul, "the beloved physician," Col 4:14 The name Luke, or Lucas, Phm 1:24 is the same as Lucanus in Latin. Luke was the writer of the gospel, which bears his name, and of the Acts of the Apostles, having been the friend and companion of St. Paul in most of the journeys recorded in the latter book. Thus, in Ac 16:11 he first uses the word "we," and shows that he was with Paul at Troas and in his first Macedonian tour. After they reach Philippe, an interval of separation occurs; but they are again together at Philippi when Paul sails thence for Jerusalem, and from that time he continues with the apostle in his labors, voyages, and sufferings, to the close of his first imprisonment at Rome, Ac 17:1; 20:5-6,13-16; 21:1-28:31; Phm 1:24; 2Ti 4:11 His personal history before and after this period of his companionship with Paul, is unknown, or rests on uncertain traditions. His own narrative contains the least possible mention of himself; yet we cannot doubt that he was eminently useful to the early church, by his learning, judgment, fidelity, and even his medical skill, besides leaving to the church universal the invaluable legacy of his writings.

PROMISE: Used by Paul to denote the spiritual gifts of God, chiefly the Messiah, the Holy Spirit, and the fullness of gospel blessings, of which an assurance was given to Abraham and other saints in behalf of themselves, and of believers who should come after them, Ro 4:13-14; Ga 3:14-29 The "children of the promise" are either Isaac's posterity, as distinguished from Ishmael's; Jews converted to Christianity; or all true believers, who by faith lay hold on the promise of salvation in Christ. In Heb 11:39 "promise" means the thing promised, Ac 1:4 The "exceeding great and precious promises" of God include all good things for this life and the future; which are infallibly secured to his people in Christ, 2Co 1:20; 1Ti 4:8; 2Pe 1:4 On the ground of the infinite merits of their Redeemer, infinite love, unbounded wisdom, and almighty power are pledged for their benefit; and having given them his only son, God will with him freely give them every inferior blessing he sees to be desirable for them, Ro 8:32

PROPHECY: The foretelling of future events, by inspiration from God. It is very different from a sagacious and happy conjecture as to futurity, and from a vague and equivocal oracle, without any certain meaning. A true prophecy can come only from God; and is the highest proof of the divine origin of the message of which it is a part. A true prophecy may be known by these marks; being announced at a suitable time before the event it foretells; having a particular and exact agreement with that event; being such as no human sagacity or foresight could produce; and being delivered by one claiming to be under the inspiration of the Almighty. Many of the prophecies of Scripture foretold events ages before they occurred - events of which there was then no apparent probability, and the occurrence of which depended on innumerable contingencies, involving the history of things and the volition's of persons not then in existence; and yet these predictions were fulfilled at the time and place and in the manner prophesied. Such were the predictions respecting the coming and crucifixion of the Messiah, the dispersion and preservation of the Jews, etc. The Scripture prophecies are a scheme of vast extent, the very earliest predictions reaching down to the end of the world's history - a scheme gradually and harmoniously developed from age to age, and by many different persons, some of them not fully apprehending, and "searching diligently what the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify," 1Pe 1:11 the whole manifestly the work of Jehovah, and marvelous in our eyes. A degree of obscurity rests on the prophetic writings, which patient and prayerful study alone can dispel; while those that are yet unfulfilled must await the coming of the events, which will make all at length clear. Many predictions relating primarily to events and deliverance's near at hand, were also designed of God as sure prophecies of yet more illustrious events in the future. For example, the general subject of the predictions in Mt 24:1-51 is the coming of Christ, to judge his foes and deliver his friends. In penning a sketch of this subject, Matthew imitates a painter depicting from an eminence the

landscape before him: the tower of the village church in the near foreground, and the mountain peak in the dim and remote horizon, rise side by side on his canvas. So in painting the coming of Christ, Matthew sketches first some features of his coming in the destruction of Jerusalem to occur within forty years, and in the next verse some distinctive features of his second coming at the end of the world; yet both belong to the same general view. Respecting the New Testament phrase, "This was done that it might be fulfilled," etc., see FULFILLED. For other meanings of "prophecy," see PROPHEETS.

What Is the Significance of Mary's Song?

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One might wonder why Mary's song would be considered significant. Are they not just words spoken in a moment of happiness? The truth is that her song speaks of who she is and how deep her [faith](#) is. In **verses 46-47** she says, "My soul praises the greatness of the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior." Mary's faith is rooted in Jewish tradition. We can surmise that she has come from a devout Jewish family and she believes in the God of her ancestors.

Her faith is further established in verses 48-50. Here she speaks of God looking on a humble servant with favor. She acknowledges that God is taking her humble status and using it to exalt her for generations to come. In **verse 49** Mary says that she will be called blessed because "the Mighty One has done great things for me, and his name is holy." She praises God for the mercy he bestows on all who will fear him.

In the last four verses of her song, she speaks of the wondrous things God has done for her ancestors, for her, and for all who will believe. Her recognition of the mighty deeds God has performed and the mercies He has given to the people of Israel is significant. She is telling us that while she may be nervous about her situation, she knows God has it all under control. He would not give her this blessing only to abandon her.

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible:

Lu 1:4. She commends her faith, and encourages it (Lu 1:45): Blessed is she that believed. Believing souls are blessed souls, and will be found so at last; this blessedness cometh through faith, even the blessedness of being related to Christ, and having him formed in the soul. They are blessed who believe the word of God, for that Word will not fail them; there shall, without doubt, be a performance of those things which are told her from the Lord. Note, The inviolable certainty of the promise is the undoubted felicity of those that build upon it and expect their all from it. The faithfulness of God is the blessedness of the faith of the saints. Those that have experienced the performance of God's promises themselves should encourage others to hope that he will be as good as his word to them also: I will tell you what God has done for my soul.

IV. Mary's song of praise, upon this occasion. Elisabeth's prophecy was an echo to the virgin Mary's salutation, and this song is yet a stronger echo to that prophecy, and shows her to be no less filled with the Holy Ghost than Elisabeth was. We may suppose the blessed virgin to come in, very much fatigued with her journey; yet she forgets that, and is inspired with new life, and vigour, and joy, upon the confirmation she here meets with of her faith; and since, by the sudden inspiration and transport, she finds that this was designed to be her errand hither, weary as she is, like Abraham's servant, she would neither eat nor drink till she had told her errand.

1. Here are the expressions of joy and praise, and God alone the object of the praise and centre of the joy. Some compare this song with that which her name-sake Miriam, the sister of Moses, sung, upon the triumphant departure of Israel out of Egypt, and their triumphant passage through the Red Sea; others think it better compared with the song of Hannah, upon the birth of Samuel, which, like this, passes from a family mercy to a public and general one. This begins, like that, My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, 1Sa 2:1. Observe how Mary here speaks of God.

(1.) With great reverence of him, as the Lord:

"My soul doth magnify the Lord; I never saw him so great as now I find him so good."

Note, Those, and those only, are advanced in mercy, who are thereby brought to think the more highly and honourably of God; whereas there are those whose prosperity and preferment make them say, What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? The more honour God has any way put upon us, the more honour we must study to give to him; and then only are we accepted in magnifying the Lord, when our souls magnify him, and all that is within us. Praising work must be soul work.

(2.) With great complacency in him as her Saviour: My spirit rejoiceth in God my Saviour. This seems to have reference to the Messiah, whom she was to be the mother of. She calls him God her Saviour; for the angel had told her that he should be the Son of the Highest, and that his name should be Jesus, a Saviour; this she fastened upon, with application to herself: He is God my Saviour. Even the mother of our Lord had need of an interest in him as her Saviour, and would have been undone without it: and she glories more in that happiness which she had in common with all believers than in being his mother, which was an honour peculiar to herself, and this agrees with the preference Christ have to obedient believers above his mother and brethren; See Mt 12:50; Lu 11:27-28. Note, Those that have Christ for their God and Saviour have a great deal of reason to rejoice, to rejoice in spirit, that is rejoicing as Christ did Lu 10:21, with spiritual joy.

2. Here are just causes assigned for this joy and praise.

(1.) Upon her own account, Lu 1:48-49.

[1.] Her spirit rejoiced in the Lord, because of the kind things he had done for her: his condescension and compassion to her. He has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden; that is, he has looked upon her with pity, for so the word is commonly used.

"He has chosen me to this honour, notwithstanding my great meanness, poverty, and obscurity."

Nay, the expression seems to intimate, not only (to allude to that of Gideon, Jg 6:15) that her family was poor in Judah, but that she was the least in her father's house, as if she were under some particular contempt and disgraced among her relations, was unjustly neglected, and the outcast of the family, and God put this honour upon her, to balance abundantly the contempt. I rather suggest this, for we find something toward such honour as this put upon others, on the like consideration. Because God saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb, Ge 29:31. Because Hannah was provoked, and made to fret, and insulted over, by Peninnah, therefore God gave her a son, 1Sa 1:19. Whom men wrongfully depress and despise God doth sometimes, in compassion to them, especially if they have borne it patiently, prefer and advance; Jg 11:7. So in Mary's case. And, if God regards her low estate, he not only thereby gives a specimen of his favour to the whole race of mankind, whom he remembers in their low estate, as the psalmist speaks (Ps 136:23), but secures a lasting honour to her (for such the honour is that God bestows, honour that fades not away):

"From henceforth all generations shall call me blessed, shall think me a happy woman and highly advanced."

All that embrace Christ and his gospel will say, Blessed was the womb that bore him and the paps which he sucked, Lu 11:27. Elizabeth had once and again called her blessed:

"But that is not all,"

saith she,

"all generations of Gentiles as well as Jews shall call me so."

[2.] Her soul magnifies the Lord, because of the wonderful things he had done for her (Lu 1:49): He that is mighty has done to me great things. A great thing indeed, that a virgin should conceive. A great thing indeed, that Messiah, who had been so long promised to the church, and so long expected by the church, should now at length be born. It is the power of the Highest that appears in this. She adds, and holy is his name; for so Hannah saith her song, There is none holy as the Lord, which she explains in the next words, for there is none beside thee, 1Sa 2:2. God is a Being by himself, and he manifests himself to be so, especially in the work of our redemption. He that is mighty, even he whose name is holy, has done to me great things. Glorious things may be expected from him that is both mighty and holy; who can do every thing, and will do every thing well and for the best.

(2.) Upon the account of others. The virgin Mary, as the mother of the Messiah, is become a kind of public person, wears a public character, and is therefore immediately endued with another spirit, a more public spirit than before she had, and therefore looks abroad, looks about her, looks before her, and takes notice of God's various dealings with the children of men (Lu 1:50) as Hannah (1Sa 2:3 c.). In this she has especially an eye to the coming of the Redeemer and God's manifesting himself therein.

[1.] It is a certain truth that God has mercy in store, mercy in reserve, for all that have a reverence for his majesty, and a due regard to his sovereignty and authority. But never did this appear so as in sending his Son into the world to save us (Lu 1:50): His mercy is on them that fear him; it has always been so; he has ever looked upon them with an eye of peculiar favour who have looked up to him with an eye of filial fear. But he hath manifested this mercy, so as never before, in sending his Son to bring in an everlasting righteousness, and work out an everlasting salvation, for them that fear him, and this from generation to generation; for there are gospel privileges transmitted by entail, and intended for perpetuity. Those that fear God, as their Creator and Judge, are encouraged to hope for mercy in him, through their Mediator and Advocate; and in him mercy is settled upon all that fear God, pardoning mercy, healing mercy, accepting mercy, crowning mercy, from generation to generation, while the world stands. In Christ he keepeth mercy for thousands.

[2.] It has been a common observation that God in his providence puts contempt upon the haughty and honour upon the humble; and this he has done remarkably in the whole economy of the work of man's redemption. As God had, with his mercy to her, shown himself mighty also (Lu 1:48-49), so he had, with his mercy on them that fear him, shown strength likewise with his arm. First, In the course of his providence, it is his usual method to cross the expectations of men, and proceed quite otherwise than they promise themselves. Proud men expect to carry all before them, to have their way and their will; but he scatters them in the imagination of their hearts, breaks their measures, blasts their projects, nay, and brings them low, and brings them down, by those very counsels with which they thought to advance and establish themselves. The mighty think to secure themselves by might in their seats, but he puts them down, and overturns their seats; while, on the other hand, those of low degree, who despaired of ever advancing themselves, and thought of no other than of being ever low, are wonderfully exalted. This observation concerning honour holds likewise concerning riches; many who were so poor that they had not bread for themselves and their families, by some surprising turn of Providence in favour of them, come to be filled with good things; while, on the other hand, those who were rich, and thought no other than that to-morrow should be as this day, that their mountain stood strong and should never be moved, are strangely impoverished, and sent away empty. Now this is the same observation that Hannah had made, and enlarged upon, in her song, with application to the case of herself and her adversary (1Sa 2:4-7), which very much illustrates this here. And compare also Ps 107:33-41; 113:7-9; Ec 9:11. God takes a pleasure in disappointing their expectations who promise themselves great things in the world, and in out-doing the expectations of those who promise themselves but a little; as a righteous God, it is his glory to abase those who exalt themselves, and strike terror on the secure; and, as a good God, it is his glory to exalt those who humble themselves, and to speak comfort to those who fear before him. Secondly, This doth especially appear in the methods of gospel grace.

1. In the spiritual honours it dispenses. When the proud Pharisees were rejected, and Publicans and sinners went into the kingdom of heaven before them,--when the Jews, who followed after the law of righteousness, did not attain it, and the Gentiles, who never thought of it, attained to righteousness (Ro 9:30-31),--when God chose not the wise men after the flesh, not the mighty, or the noble, to preach the gospel, and plant Christianity in the world, but the foolish and weak things of the world, and things that were despised (1Co 1:26-27)--then he scattered the proud, and put down the mighty, but exalted them of low degree. When the tyranny of the chief priests and elders were brought down, who had long lorded it over God's heritage, and hoped always to do so, and Christ's disciples, a company of poor despised fishermen, by the power they were clothed with, were made to

sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel,--when the power of the four monarchies was broken, and the kingdom of the Messiah, that stone cut out of the mountain without hands, is made to fill the earth,--then are the proud scattered, and those of low degree exalted.

2. In the spiritual riches it dispenses, Lu 1:53.

(1.) Those who see their need of Christ, and are importunately desirous of righteousness and life in him, he fills with good things, with the best things; he gives liberally to them, and they are abundantly satisfied with the blessings he gives. Those who are weary and heavy-laden shall find rest with Christ, and those who thirst are called to come to him and drink; for they only know how to value his gifts. To the hungry soul every bitter thing is sweet, manna is angels' food; and to the thirsty fair water is honey out of the rock.

(2.) Those who are rich, who are not hungry, who, like Laodicea, think they have need of nothing, are full of themselves and their own righteousness, and think they have a sufficiency in themselves, those he sends away from his door, they are not welcome to him, he sends them empty away, they come full of self, and are sent away empty of Christ. He sends them to the gods whom they served, to their own righteousness and strength which they trusted to.

[3.] It was always expected that the Messiah should be, in a special manner, the strength and glory of his people Israel, and so he is in a peculiar manner (Lu 1:54): He hath helped his servant Israel, antelabeto. He hath taken them by the hand, and helped them up that were fallen and could not help themselves. Those that were sunk under the burdens of a broken covenant of innocency are helped up by the blessings of a renewed covenant of grace. The sending of the Messiah, on whom help was laid for poor sinners, was the greatest kindness that could be done, the greatest help that could be provided for his people Israel, and that which magnifies it is,

First, That it is in remembrance of his mercy, the mercifulness of his nature, the mercy he has in store for his servant Israel. While this blessing was deferred, his people, who waited for it, were often ready to ask, Has God forgotten to be gracious? But now he made it appear that he had not forgotten, but remembered, his mercy. He remembered his former mercy, and repeated that to them in spiritual blessings which he had done formerly to them in temporal favours. He remembered the days of old. Where is he that brought them up out of the sea, out of Egypt? Isa 63:11. He will do the like again, which that was a type of.

Secondly, That it is in performance of his promise. It is a mercy not only designed, but declared (Lu 1:55); it was what he spoke to our fathers, that the Seed of the woman

should break the head of the serpent; that God should dwell in the tents of Shem; and particularly to Abraham, that in his seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed, with the best of blessings, with the blessings that are for ever, and to the seed that shall be for ever; that is, his spiritual seed, for his carnal seed were cut off a little after this. Note, What God has spoken he will perform; what he hath spoken to the fathers will be performed to their seed; to their seed's seed, in blessings that shall last for ever.

Lastly, Mary's return to Nazareth (Lu 1:56), after she had continued with Elisabeth about three months, so long as to be fully satisfied concerning herself that she was with child, and to be confirmed therein by her cousin Elisabeth. Some think, though her return is here mentioned before Elisabeth's being delivered, because the evangelist would finish this passage concerning Mary before he proceeded with the story of Elisabeth, yet that Mary staid till her cousin was (as we say) down and up again; that she might attend on her, and be with her in her lying-in, and have her own faith confirmed by the full accomplishment of the promise of God concerning Elisabeth. But most bind themselves to the order of the story as it lies, and think she returned again when Elisabeth was near her time; because she still affected retirement, and therefore would not be there when the birth of this child of promise would draw a great deal of company to the house. Those in whose hearts Christ is formed take more delight than they used to do in sitting alone and keeping silence.

40 And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth.

41 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:

42 And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

43 And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44 For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

45 And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.

46 And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,

47 And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

48 For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

49 For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.

50 And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.

51 He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52 He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.

53 He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.

54 He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;

55 As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.