

Our theme for today: It's all Him!

Yes, it's all Him: His presence, His mercy, His strength, HIM! We are promised!

There are a lot of reasons that could have led Mary to focus on the negative. She could have been anxious, she could have worried; she might have said, "*what hope is there to be found that might recover joy; is there any hope that might bring joy?*" She might even have felt that God had forgotten her. God has not forgotten – God is with us. God is **present**.

Mary could have lived a life of guilt. She could have feared impending judgment – after all, "*all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.*" But she says that for those who fear God, they do not need to fear the judgment. Why? Because God will give **mercy**. In God's providence, our fear of God will overcome our fear of judgment.

Mary could have felt weak and helpless. She could have felt overwhelmed and powerless. But she knew that there is a pathway to hope, there is a pathway to joy. As in Mary's case, and so too ours, when we feel overwhelmed, when we feel powerless, God will bring His strength. His strength is enough, more than enough. His **strength** will overcome any weakness of ours.

Mary could have cried over her poverty – if, indeed, she was poor. Mary could have set her heart on the things of the world, the trappings of the world. She could have sought and craved blessings, she could have placed her attachment to good things only – all without acknowledging the giver. But she did none of this. She rejoiced in **Him**.

Scripture

⁵⁴ *He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever."*

Luke 1:54-55

Thought provokers

- We have learned much about the pathway to joy over the last few days. With that, can you see that we are included and invited likewise to that path? Discuss how you see yourself in these verses.

Reflections

When you put your heart and mind on the One who gives the blessing there is peace; there is comfort; and, there is joy. Mary's song reflects not just herself, but those in her nation and how God has constantly provided. She rejoices in God's presence, God's mercy, God's strength, and in Him who blesses. She also sings of us. How do we know that? If we believe in the Lord Jesus and put our trust in Him, we are counted as Abraham's offspring.

Let's remind ourselves of what the Scriptures say about Abraham's offspring in both the book of Galatians and then once more in Luke's writings.

"So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith." Gal. 3:9

*"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to **promise**." Gal. 3:27-29*

*"He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever." Luke 1:54-55*

If our faith is in Christ, we are blessed along with Abraham. And what did Abraham receive? He received a promise! And the promise? Not just land, and descendants, but a blessing (Genesis 12:1-3)! In Luke, we see the context that surrounds that blessing – it is that of mercy.

God offers us His presence – through faith. God offers us His strength – through trust. God offers us Himself – through faith. God offers us His mercy – through fear of Him! Why such great promise? Because of the child that Mary is now carrying. Yes, it is – all Him! Is it any wonder that she sings!

Prayer and Song

Take time to pray and sing praises to Him. Here is one written by Jazz composer Dave Brubeck.

God's Love Made Visible

*God's love made visible!
Incomprehensible! Christ is invincible!
His love shall reign!*

*From love so bountiful, blessings uncountable
make death surmountable!
His love shall reign!*

*Joyfully pray for peace and good will!
All of our yearning he will fulfill.
Live in a loving way!
Praise him for every day!
Open your hearts and pray.
His love shall reign!*

God gave the Son to us

*to dwell as one of us – a blessing unto us!
His love shall reign!*

*To him all honor bring,
heaven and earth will sing, praising our Lord
and King!
His love shall reign!*

*Open all doors this day of his birth,
all of good will inherit the earth.
His star will always be guiding humanity
throughout eternity!
His love shall reign!*