

Mary's Song

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[0 : 0 0] time this evening, let's turn back to the passage we read in Luke chapter 1, looking at verses 46 to 48 in particular.

Luke chapter 1 and reading at verse 46, And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

And behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed. The Gospel of Luke begins, or really near the beginning in these early chapters of Luke, with or incorporates three songs, as they're usually called by commentators.

Here the Song of Mary, and then we have at verse 67, the Song of Zechariah, father of John the Baptist, and then in chapter 2 we come to the Song of Simeon, in chapter 2 and verse 29 to 32. As you'll know, I'm sure, these songs have been given Latin titles, the titles being simply the first words of each of these songs.

[1 : 1 8] So that Mary's song here is called the Magnificat, the next one of Zechariah, the Benedictus, and finally that of Simeon, the Nunc Dimitus, just using the first words of the songs in Latin, and giving that as a title to these songs.

And these are features of the way that Luke introduces his Gospel about Jesus Christ, and about the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Because Luke's great concern right throughout the book, this Gospel, is to really answer the question, who is this?

What is this person about? Who is he? And what is the meaning of his life? That's why you find so often, as you read through Luke, and it's always good to read these books of the Bible, through in one go if you can, because that gives you really sometimes more information than you would just reading portions of it, or different parts of the Bible along with it.

If you read it through, you'll find this question is on the lips of more than one person, different types of people. Who is this man? Who is this Jesus? And that's why we're taken right into the very beginnings of Christ's ministry, Christ's life on earth, Christ's life as a human being, as he came to take out human nature.

And interestingly, the song itself here, the song of Mary, as well as the other two songs, really tie up very closely with some parts of the Old Testament, some of the prophecies in the Old Testament, some of the Psalms, and there's a very close relationship, in fact, between the song of Mary here, and the song of Hannah, back in the Old Testament, in 1 Samuel, and chapter 2.

[3 : 0 2] And that's an interesting exercise for you later on, if you have time, just read the two side by side, the song of Hannah, and the song of Mary. And you'll find that there are very common themes running through them.

For example, especially God's support for the poor, God's choice of the poor to convey his will, and his word, and his way of salvation, and God's rejection of the proud, those who stiffly resist him, all of these things are built into these songs, and especially, they emphasize the greatness of God himself, in relation to all of these issues.

So, if you can do that, that's an interesting comparison, and you'll find so many things in common, between Mary's song, and the song of Hannah, in 1 Samuel. There are two things tonight, that we want to just bring out, from these early verses in the song.

First of all, how Mary is occupied, in praising God. Verse 47, My spirit rejoices in God, my saviour, my soul magnifies the Lord.

And we'll see two points, in relation to that, Mary is occupied, in praising God, because this is first of all, a song about God, and secondly, it's a song from Mary's soul, from her very inmost being, she praises this God.

[4 : 29] That's the first point, she's occupied in praising God. Secondly, the point is that Mary's God, is presented in her song, in her praise. Not only is she singing about God, or praising God, she's presenting God, in the way, that she actually praises him.

And there are two things in that, as well, that will pick out, how Mary presents this God, in the way that he acts, and secondly, in her own experience, of this God, which is very much a feature, behind her praise.

So Mary, is occupied, in praising God. My soul, magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices, in God, my saviour. It's a song about God.

Now that doesn't mean, there's nothing in the song, about Mary. There's a lot in the song, about Mary. She refers to herself, more than once. And as you go through the song, you'll see that, she mentions herself.

My soul, magnifies my spirit. He has looked, at the humble estate, of his servant, or his bond servant, his servant, as she is.

[5 : 41] He has done great things, for me. And so on, she mentions, much about herself. And yet, that's really just, in a sense, in a way to convey, how her burden is, to present God, and to praise, this God.

Yes, there's things about Mary, but it's much more, about Mary's God. It's much more, about this God, that she's praising, that she wants to, present, in her song of praise.

And that's one of the great things, about praise, isn't it? It brings you, out of yourself. When we come, to praise the Lord, and especially, when we come, to sing the Lord's praises, we're actually brought, out of ourselves.

The focus, is taken out of ourselves, and on to God. The focus, comes to, to rest upon, the God we praise, and the features, of that God, the attributes, of that God, the acts, of that God, the kind of, of being, that God is, as he's revealed himself, to us.

The wonderful things, that he has done, in his acts, of redemption. So much, that you can pack, into the praise of God, about God himself. And that is, one of the great features, of praise.

[6 : 54] And it's one of the things, that you find, so much lacking, in those, who actually, do not engage, in the praise of God. The praise of God, really focuses, the lens, on God himself.

So not giving, the praise to God, that is due to him, is really turning, the lens, onto ourselves. There are people, in our town tonight, who've never praised God, who don't see the need, to praise God, who think, praising God, is a waste of time.

That's the ultimate selfie. You know how, it is nowadays, that people, sometimes, well very often, in fact, take selfies, with their mobile phones, especially, if they're in, somewhere, of note, if it's, somewhere famous, in the world, or perhaps it's, with some so called, celebrity or other, and they want to have, a photo of themselves, taken alongside, of that celebrity, so, they just reach out, with the phone, and turn it that way, and there you go, there's your selfie, and it shows, you were there, you were there at that moment, but it's about yourself.

It's really saying, I was there at that time, I had a photo taken, with whoever it is, it was with. And the ultimate selfie, is to turn the lens, on yourself, in such a way, that never praises God.

There are people out there, who've never praised God, who do good things, in their lives, who help others, in their lives, who support charities, and yet, because of the fact, that, they refuse, or turn away, from the idea, of praising God, or entering into, a place like this, where God is praised, without realizing it, I'm sure, for most people, but really, that's just turning the lens, on to themselves, it's just living for self, and living by self, and of course, Jesus tells us, very, very plainly, that if anyone, would be his disciple, the first principle, of discipleship, is to deny yourself, and praise, is a denying, of yourself, praise, is turning, your mind, your attention, your focus, away from yourself, and on to God, it doesn't mean, you don't express, yourself's needs, to God, it doesn't mean, you don't actually, take account, as Mary is here, of the kind of person, she is, a humble, poor, servant of God, doesn't mean, you don't present that, to God, by way of confessing that, or mentioning that, but you do it, in a way, that focuses on God, and not on yourself,

[9 : 32] I am poor, and needy, the psalmist says, yet God, has been mindful, of me, God is merciful, to me, God is everything, to me, see the focus, is on God, and that's where, you find, so much of, what happens, at Christmas time, to be contrary, to this praise, that's given, to God, this praise, that takes you, out of yourself, and focuses on God, because as you, very well know, I don't need to tell you this, it's something, that you're aware of, every year, and seems to be, increasing every year, that Christmas, is of course, a time, of much, commercial activity, much, materialistic

activity, and you know, for, so much of, what happens, at Christmas time, is, is really simply, no more than, and no less than, magnifying, the gods, of materialism, the gods, of worldliness, the gods, of excess, the gods, of pride, the gods, of jealousy, the gods, of all these kinds, of gods, that people, actually worship, even without realizing it, but for Mary, this is, a time, for magnifying, the Lord, and so it is, for us as well, tonight, we magnify, the Lord, we praise, the Lord, our soul, comes, to reach out, to God, in praise, and in adoration, as we realize, who he is, and what he's done, and what he continues, to do for us, so we follow,

Mary's words, my soul, magnifies the Lord, my spirit, rejoices, in God, my Savior, one of the things, we should, constantly give thanks, to God for, is how he has taught us, the importance of praise, and what praise is, and what happens, in praise, be thankful, tonight, that God, has shown you, that in praising him, you are taken out, of yourself, and you focus, upon him, and you seek, to make him great, now that's really, what Mary is doing, you notice, this word, that she's using, my soul, magnifies the Lord, it's a song, about God, but it's a song, about God, in which Mary, is doing something, very particular, she is magnifying, the Lord, there was a day, when getting, a magnifying glass, for Christmas, was quite exciting, probably wouldn't be, all that exciting, nowadays, when you think of, the kind of gifts, that do we give, to our children, and grandchildren, them, but magnifying glasses, in my younger days, were very exciting things, there weren't many, of them around, and if you got, a magnifying glass, you went around with it, outside, and you stopped across, the spider, or this beetle, and you put it across, and you put it across, the beetle, and you saw it, in a bigger, in a bigger picture, and you saw some detail, that you wouldn't, otherwise see, magnifying, you see, is making things big, making things great, that's the literal sense, of the word magnify, and it follows, into the spiritual sense, of it as well, my soul, magnifies the Lord, she's not content, with presenting God, as if he were a small God, because the praise of God, is a praise, that seeks to magnify, and of course, there's a sense, in which none of us, can make God, any greater, than he is, God is great, you can't reduce that, and you can't actually, expand on that as well, he is great, that's how he is, he's always been great, he's eternally great, he's unchangeably great, but of course, this is a word, that applies to, Mary's lifestyle, and Mary's praising of God, and what Mary is doing, in praising God, is in her presentation, of God, she's making him great, in her announcement, that's the business, of the Christian's life, isn't it, to make God great, some of us, maybe carry, a photograph, of, a child, or grandchild, or grandchildren, in our pockets, in our wallets, in our purse, in our handbag, whatever, and sometimes, if we're asked by people, have you got any photos, of the children, we'll take it out, we'll show to them, oh yes, there they are, that's the most recent one, and of course, then, they start, usually gushing about, the photo, and the children, or whatever, oh that's lovely, or whatever, but the thing is, you're bringing that out, and it's just a miniature, of the person, that you want to actually, show, to those, that you're showing the photo to, but Mary is doing, is the opposite, she's not really wanting, a miniature, of her God, to be presented, she wants to present, as big, a picture of God, as she can, and isn't that, the business of our lives, what do people actually, think of me tonight, and of you tonight, do they think, the God we worship, is a small God, if so, then that's our fault, to some extent, at least, because our concern, has to be, the God we worship, the God we present, to people, the God we witness, to, the lifestyle, we live, should all, be about, as far as, as possible for us, to present, a God who is great, and so we magnify, this God, we want to make him great, we want to see, his name made great, in our, congregational life, in our districts, in, in people's lives, around us, magnifying the Lord, is the business, of our Christian life, as Mary, is teaching us here, so that's the first thing, in Mary being occupied, and praising God, it's a song, about God, it's a song, where she wants, to magnify the Lord, where she is, about magnifying him, and secondly, it's a song, from the soul, my soul, magnifies the Lord, and my spirit, rejoices, in God, my savior, now some people, sometimes get a bit, entangled, and get wrapped up, in trying to make, a distinction, between soul, and spirit, is our spiritual, part, let's call it that, just for simplicity, you know that, as human beings, we have two parts, to our being, we have the physical part, our bodily side, we have the spiritual part, sometimes called the soul, sometimes the spirit, there is a, a view, in theology, that says, that human beings, are tripartite, that we're made up, of body, soul, and spirit, so there's a distinction, between soul, and spirit,

I think, myself, that I prefer, the theological view, that says, the soul, and spirit, are essentially, the same, but just a description, in different ways, of the spiritual part, of us, our inner being, if you like, our spiritual side, but looked at, in different ways, and you're more often, find, more often than not,

in the Bible, that when the word, soul is used, it's used, with the sense of, that which is, distinguished from my body, and when the word, spirit is used, very often, it takes on, the meaning of, that part of me, that's in communication, with God, now it's the same, spiritual part, but looked at, from different perspectives, sometimes the emphasis, is on, how it's distinguished, from or distinguished, from the bodily side, of our human nature, other times, the emphasis, is on how, in our inner being, in our spirit, or in our soul, each part, we are in communion, with God, and we are in communication, with God, but it's essentially, the one part, whether you call it, soul or spirit, that's what we are, it's not what we have, it's what we are, it's not that we have a soul, we are souls, we are spirits, we are bodies, we are human beings, comprised of both, soul and body, together, and that's, important, when you come to think, of God's redemption, God's salvation, because, God doesn't just, save our souls, I know that's, very often, how we speak about it, or present it, as the saving of our souls, but it's a very limited, sense of salvation, if that's really, and it may give, the wrong impression, when God saves our persons, that's why, there's a resurrection, when the day of Christ arrives, and when he will call his people, from the grave, when they will rise, to meet him, they will rise, with new bodies, with no sin, reunited, with their spirit, the souls, to form one whole, redeemed person, well, this is what Mary is saying, my soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices, in God, my savior, what she really is saying is, it's from my very inner being, that this praise, emanates, she's not just using her lips, she's not just practicing words, that she's been taught, she's not speaking parrot fashion, what she's saying is, from the very depths, of my inner being,

[18:46] I am magnifying, I am praising the Lord, and we'll see later, how that is very closely connected, with our own spiritual experience, of God, which lies behind, all true praise, of God, now of course, in passing, really, we can say, something that we saw, in our study of the early chapters, of Genesis, that, this really, essentially, is what makes human beings, different to, and distinguished, from all other forms, of animal life, only human beings, have the capacity, to praise God, the capacity, to worship God, the capacity, and the ability, to have communion, with God, only Adam, and Eve, walked, with God, in the garden of Eden, there were many other forms, of life around them, many other forms, of animal life, around them, that God had formed, that were at that stage, perfect, in that perfect environment, but it was Adam, and Eve, before they fell, that had, this communion, this capacity, for communion, with God, that's what makes us, unique, as human beings, in the creation of God, that's why, as we saw, in Genesis, when God came, to create human life, human beings, they said, let us make man, in our image, he deliberated, he actually did something, which he didn't do, with any of the rest, of the creation, he had a conversation, within himself, which really, itself, is part of, showing us, how distinct, human life is, from other forms, of life, now of course, there are many, many spin-offs, from that, and different ways, in which the, the, the, the whole topic, lends itself, and is connected, with, very many, other biblical topics, the sanctity, of human life, for example, whether it's, unborn life, or, old, life, or, life, that's incapacitated, in some way, doesn't make any difference, to God, it's all human life, it's all distinguished, by being created, in his image, part of, his deliberation, where he distinguishes, it from every other, form of life, it is above, every other form, of human life, and here, you can see that, in Mary's song, apes don't praise the Lord, chimpanzees, don't praise the Lord, you can train them, to do many amazing things, but you can't train them, to praise, you can't train them, to actually extol, and magnify the Lord, because they don't have a soul, with which to do it, they are not, created, with the kind of life, that creates, that praises, the Lord, we are designed, as human beings, for that, and, that's why, the two, greatest events, in human history, in many respects, are firstly, the way in which, the Holy Spirit, vacated, our human soul, at the fall, when we sinned, against God, we are no longer, given access, to life, we had forfeited, that life, and the second, is when the Holy Spirit, comes back into, make a home, in our souls,

I'm not in any way, suggesting, that is, something less than, or something, that is, makes the death of Christ, the birth of Christ, life of Christ, insignificant, at all, but, from our personal, experience, point of view, these are the two, great points, in human history, the vacation, of our soul, when the spirit, departed, and the occupancy, of our soul, when the spirit, comes back, creating life, in us once again, that's salvation, and that's, what our soul, is designed for, as we were created, by God, so Mary is occupied, in praising God, it's a song about God, it's a song from, her soul, or from her spirit, secondly, Mary's song, presents God, Mary's God, is presented, in her praise, and you see, first of all, how she refers to, how God has acted, he has looked upon, the humbly state, of his

servant, for behold, from now on, all generations, will call me blessed, for he who is mighty, has done, great things for me, and holy, is his name, and his mercy, is for those, who fear him, he has shown strength, with his arm, he has scattered, the proud, and the thoughts, of their heart, he has brought down, the mighty, from their thrones, and exalted, those of humbly state, and so on, down through the song, what God has done, who God is, what he's like, and especially, what God has done, in his actions, and it's interesting, how this really, takes us to, something that is, often emphasized, in the Bible, about God, you notice how Mary, yes she's talking again, about herself, in verse 48, where he has looked, on the humble estate, of his servant, and back in verse 38, you'll find that, the announcement made to Mary, by the angel,

Mary's response there, in verse 38, behold, I am the servant, of the Lord, Lord, I am God's bond servant, let it be, to me, according, to your word, and all of that, shows you, that Mary, is happy, to be regarded, as a humble, servant, of God, not someone great, not someone, who would call herself, great, but it shows you, something about, God's method, of operation, salvation, because here is God, choosing this young woman, to be the bearer, of his son's humanity, in order that he come, into the world, by taking our human nature, to be born, of this woman, what God is doing, you see, is consistent, with what he does, elsewhere, he's acting, in a way, that offends, our human pride, he's acting, in a way, that offends, our human pride, why would God, choose, a poor girl, to carry, the, the, unborn Jesus, in a woman, give birth to him, in due time, why would it not, be a princess, why not someone, of significance, this after all, is the son of God, is God himself, in the second person, of the Trinity, that God is, why would he choose, a poor girl, and why would he choose, someone who is not married, and attach this, stigma to her, that she was carrying, a child, and yet, she had not known, the one she was betrothed, to Joseph, and the Bible, makes that so, clear to us, before, they had come together, before there was, anything of that, she was found, to be of child, she was found, to be pregnant, why would God, do such a thing, why would God, choose such an environment, for a son, to be born into, not in a palace, not in a grand mansion, but in a very poor, dwelling, surrounded by animals, well, it's because God, always, acts, contrary to our human, conventions, he always, offends, our human pride, and giving, glory to himself, have you ever noticed, in, the genealogy, in Matthew's gospel, the family tree, of Jesus, if you like, that there are, five women, mentioned, in the list of names, in Jesus, family tree, that would be unusual, even, from the point of view, of there being, women mentioned, because that was not normally, the convention would be, as most of the other names, in fact, in that family tree are, their men's names, their father's names, but there are, four women mentioned,

Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and then you come, to Mary, and each of these, is not simply a woman, but a woman, to which is attached, something, offensive, something, that you might say, offends, our human pride, or at least, would offend, at times, the thinking of the people, of Israel themselves, Tamar, had a relationship, with one of Jacob's sons, Judah, and had a child, by him, Rahab, was a prostitute, who belonged, to Canaan, Moab, was the place, Ruth came from, they were traditional enemies, sworn enemies, of the people of Israel, of the children of God, Bathsheba, is not even mentioned, by name, in Matthew 1, it simply says, Solomon was born, of her, who was the wife, of Uriah, as if to point out, the significance, of David's sin, that he sinned, with somebody else's wife, and then there's Mary, who came to be found pregnant, before she was married, that's God's way friends, he doesn't act, by human convention, he doesn't give himself, a great name, by complying, with what seems, to us, to be acceptable,

God is himself, God will give glory, by his chosen means, and God will offend, our human pride, and our human conventions, just so as to give himself, the glory, so that it should be, clearly demonstrated, as Paul says, in the opening chapters, of 1 Corinthians, with regard to the gospel itself, and the nature of the gospel message, as it presents, the crucified Jesus, so that no one should boast, says God, because he, will have the glory, not so it is, that's the principle, that you find here, in the way that God acts, in the way that, Mary speaks about, her being the humble, servant of God, accepting her place, nothing grand about it, nothing regal about it, nothing in a way, that would present, human glory, human convention, it's all to do, with God being God, and God drawing, our attention, to the fact, that his ways, are not our ways, or are his thoughts, our thoughts, that's what makes him great, or an aspect, of his greatness, and in fact, this is really, in a sense, about, what Paul said, to the Corinthians, in his second letter, where he spoke about,

[30 : 36] Jesus there, in terms of, the son of God, becoming poor, you remember there, that he mentioned it, in second Corinthians, and chapter 8, and at verse 9, where he said, with regard to the same person, for you know, the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for

your sake, he became poor, so that you, by his poverty, might become rich, that's one of the great texts, of the Bible, who would have imagined, you know, if it had been left, to you and I, to define, God's grace, and how God's grace, comes to be made known, and how it should come, to be seen, through the birth of Jesus, you would never have thought, of putting it in those terms, this is the grace of God, that though, the grace of the Lord, Jesus Christ, that though, he was rich, the richness of deity, and the status of deity, and the royalty, of deity, which he never lost, the Lord was obscured, yet, he became poor, that you, by his poverty, might, be made rich, and that's what Mary's song is about, that God's ways, as it, in many ways, cuts across our ways, and our wisdom, is the means, by which God, not only brings glory to him, but benefit to us too, and then there's Mary's, experience, my soul, magnifies the Lord, my spirit, rejoices, and that really, in the tense of it, should be, my spirit rejoiced, in God my Savior, because she's going back, to reflect upon, verse 31, and verse 48, where, we find her, mentioning there, about God's, dealings with her, and her experience of God, and that experience of God, lies behind her, praise of God here, we cannot praise God, without, personal experience of God, yes we can actually, mouth words, we can do things, in that way, and, you would never want, to put anyone off church, of coming to church, by saying, oh you're not converted, you can't come to church, because you can't, meaningfully praise the Lord, of course you wouldn't, but nevertheless, it's true to say, that as only as we know, the Lord inwardly, for ourselves, as only as we've, experienced God, in our hearts,

God, in our souls, God savingly, working in us, that we then, find praise, in a way, that wasn't there before, words that were used before, now used much more, meaningfully, as we express, our praise, and thanksgiving, to God, God, but you notice, she's saying, my spirit rejoices, in God, my Savior, personalizing, this God, to herself, as her Savior, Jesus's sinlessness, did not come about, sinlessness, in terms of his human nature, I mean, it did not come about, it was not provided for, by the sinlessness, of Mary, Roman Catholic theology, tells you, of the immaculate conception, that Mary herself, was sinless, and therefore, because of her sinlessness, her son, Jesus, was born, a sinless human being, that was not, what ensured, the sinlessness, of Jesus, what ensured, the sinlessness, of Jesus, was the fact, that he was begotten, by the Holy Spirit, not, by human fatherhood, and born then, of this woman, Mary, who herself, was a sinner, why else, would she say, God, my Savior, if she didn't need, to be saved, and why would she say, God, my Savior, if she didn't have any sin, she wouldn't need, a Savior, but God, she recognizes, is her Savior, whether, in fact, she thought about, Jesus, that was going to be born, of her, in this word, or whether she was, she was just thinking, of God, in a more general sense, we can't be sure, but it is true, theologically, and nevertheless, and in actuality, and it's the wonder, of the incarnation, isn't it, one of the wonders, of many of the incarnation, that the child,

Mary brought, into the world, was actually, her creator, the child, she conceived, in her womb, was the uncreated God, who by Mary's conception, and the Holy Spirit's, begetting, was now, in the form, of a human being, was adding humanity, to his already, divine nature, the child, that Mary, nursed, on her breast, on her breast, and cuddled, in her arms, and helped, to raise, as a child, into an adult, was no less, than her savior, as she fondled, to him, on her lap, she was fondling, the savior, of the world, the one, in whom, she herself, had salvation, what an amazing, thing is that, if you've, as many of you, have had the experience, of bringing children, into the world, and having, that child, in your arms, as an infant, as a helpless infant, dependent, on you, and on your care, imagine, looking down, at an infant, and saying, my eyes, are seeing,

God, in the flesh, God, my creator, my savior, as I, cradle him, in my arms, as I say, maybe, Mary wasn't quite, given that insight, at this point, but that is the reality, of the situation, nonetheless, that's who she brought, into the world, remember, as we've said, more than once already, when you come to ask, who is Jesus, you don't think about, a human nature, though it's part, of his being, his son, who is he, is, in terms of his person, and his person, is that he, is the son of God, who took our nature, who was always, the son of God, beforehand, and remained, so afterwards, but his person, his identity, is defined, as the person, of the son, of God, God, in our nature, and you see, she's saying, my spirit, rejoices, in God, my savior, she's rejoicing, inwardly, and in our being, is gushing out, with this very deep word, that's used here, a word, which really, takes us right, deep into the meaning, of rejoicing, it's used, elsewhere, of rejoicing, in verse 44, for example, you have the same, word amazingly, used there, of the babe, in Elizabeth's womb,

[37 : 53] John the Baptist, before he was born, as they met together, Mary and Elizabeth, Elizabeth felt a child, leaping in her womb, and some people, you see, would say to us today, well,

that's just the way, things were thought about, in those days, Elizabeth thought, that this was a leap of joy, but babies in the womb, always do that, don't they, they move about, but you see, you read there, that Elizabeth, was filled with the Holy Spirit, and somebody filled, with the Holy Spirit, is not going to be saying, something that we shouldn't, take for granted, filled with the Holy Spirit, she said, the babe in my womb, leap for joy, I can't explain, how John the Baptist, as a fetus, as an unborn infant, in the womb, would actually experience joy, but that's what the Holy Spirit, led Elizabeth to say, and that's the fact of the matter, because, it's such a remarkable event, John the Baptist, the forerunner, coming to meet, in the womb of his mother, with his saviour, that he's going to announce, as the Lamb of God, in their adulthood, as he is still, in Mary's womb, and that's how, the Holy Spirit, gave this joy, to Mary, that she was going to bear, and bring into the world, this child, this Jesus, this one, that all the generations, previously had looked towards, and now it's reached the point, where she, is carrying that child, and where she's going to give birth, to the Son of God, in his humanity, there will be many, wide eyes, gasps of joy, as presents are opened, this Christmas day, this Christmas time, whether it's today, or tomorrow, it will, not matter, in this respect, at least, that, those who receive the presents, will be wide eyed, as they open them, and rejoice, as they see, what they have longed for, coming to reality,

Mary, what Mary is saying, is that, that's how we should be, with Jesus, nothing less than that, because this is nothing less, than what Mary tells us, God in the flesh, God the Savior, God in our nature, God coming to take, our situation, our sins, our death, to himself, let's rejoice, as we think of the incarnation, let's look into our souls, and tonight, and every night, see to what extent, we appreciate, what this God has done, as Mary put it, that he has done, great things, for us, his humble, servants, let's pray,

Lord help us, to appreciate, with wonder, the miracle, of your coming, into the world, help us, to look with amazement, as your gospel, of Luke, tells us to, that the way, in which you came, and the reason, for which you came, help us always, oh Lord, to be humbled, at the thought, of God becoming human, at the thought, of you humbling yourself, so as to enter, into our condition, help us to rejoice, oh Lord, in the fact, that you have done so, that you have done so, most completely, help us to rejoice, in the fact, that you have done, what you came to do, and that you have done, it most perfectly, help us to rejoice, in the salvation, that is now presented, to us in all its fullness, in the person, of this Savior, help us to rejoice, in God, as our Savior, receive our thanks, and praise, once again we pray, pardoning all our sin, for Jesus sake,

Amen. Amen. Let's conclude, our service this evening, looking at, singing in Psalm 98, 98 on page 360, we'll sing verses 1 to 4, O sing a new song, to the Lord, for wonders he has done, his right hand, and his holy arm, him victory, hath won, verses 1 to 4, on page 360, let's stand to sing, Amen. O sing new songs, do the Lord, for wonders he has done, for wonders he has done, his right hand, his holy arm, in victory hath won, in victory hath won, in victory hath won, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, the Lord, his salvation, hath caused it to be known, hath caused it to be known, it's as it's in the even sight, he openly hath shown, he openly hath shown, he openly hath shown, he openly hath shown, he openly hath shown, he mindful of his grace and truth, to his grace and truth, to his grace and truth, to his grace and truth, and the salvation of our God, all time of the world, [44 : 57] Let all the air dance to the Lord, send forth a joyful noise, send forth a joyful noise.

Lift up your voice, allow to Him, sing praises and rejoice, sing praises and rejoice, sing praises and rejoice.

I'll go to this side door here after the benediction just now. Now may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you now and evermore. Amen.