

Luke 1:46-80

Mary's Song

⁴⁶ And Mary said:

“My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him,

from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones

but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things

but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,

remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever,

even as he said to our fathers.”

⁵⁶ Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

The Birth of John the Baptist

⁵⁷ When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son.

⁵⁸ Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

⁵⁹ On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, ⁶⁰ but his mother spoke up and said, “No! He is to be called John.”

⁶¹ They said to her, “There is no one among your relatives who has that name.”

⁶² Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. ⁶³ He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, “His name is John.” ⁶⁴ Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue was loosed, and he began to speak, praising God. ⁶⁵ The neighbors were all filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. ⁶⁶ Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, “What then is this child going to be?” For the Lord's hand was with him.

Zechariah's Song

⁶⁷ His father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied:

⁶⁸ “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel,
because he has come and has redeemed his people.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David

⁷⁰ (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago),

⁷¹ salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us—

⁷² to show mercy to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,
⁷³ the oath he swore to our father Abraham:

⁷⁴ to rescue us from the hand of our enemies,
and to enable us to serve him without fear

⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,

⁷⁷ to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,

⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven

⁷⁹ to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,

to guide our feet into the path of peace.”

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit; and he lived in the desert until he appeared publicly to Israel.

Luke 2:1-7

The Birth of Jesus

¹ In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ² (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³ And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴ So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

⁵ He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶ While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷ and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

**Luke 1:46-80 — Mary's Song,
The Birth of John the Baptist, Zechariah's Song**

1. What happens to people who fear God (1:50)? What happens to those who are proud of themselves (1:51)?
2. What actions of God in Mary's song (1:48-54) have you observed or experienced?
3. What is the significance, meaning, or story behind your name?
4. What two groups celebrated the birth of Zechariah and Elizabeth's baby? (1:58) With whom would you like to celebrate a special event?
5. How did the family and friends respond to the birth of John? How do you react when someone you know has cause to celebrate?
6. How important is it for children to hear from their parents what God's place ought to be in their lives? (Zechariah's song 1:67-79)
7. What can people learn from Zechariah about passing on faith to their children?

Luke 2:1-7 — The Birth of Jesus

8. What feelings do you get when you have to fill out income tax forms? How would you like to have to pay your income tax in person in Washington? Do you think this was a joyful time in Bethlehem? What were the conditions in the city?
9. What was Joseph and Mary's marital status at the time of Jesus' birth? (2:5)
10. How are people (us) like the city of Bethlehem on the night of Christ's birth?
11. In what ways was Christ's birth a simple event? Contrast that to a child being born in your local town today.