

PRAYING In The Bible

Mary Song

There are some parts of the Bible that I do not fully comprehend. This current generation wants to dispute everything. I am sure it is a human thing that is not unique to this era. We have had many changes in culture. There was the renaissance era proceeded by the age of enlightenment. Into the twenty first century we are yet again questioning it all. I bring this up because Mary's Song in Luke 1 is not without controversy. Some scholars question why it is here. They doubt a young Jewish maiden could have written it. Was it added later? Is there another reason that Luke put this song in his gospel. There is a Jewish tradition of putting markers on events and people. Markers that help us remember better. Sometimes these markers are to signal significance. Either way the song of Mary has been coined the Magnificat.

Why am I talking about heresy or inuendoes? Who cares if it is in the Bible? God put it there! Besides, this is a song, not a prayer, right? There are many songs of the Bible that can be called prayers as well. Some have coined Mary's song (or prayer) as an exaltation. We will call it a prayer for this study. This prayer is either exalting Mary or God. Possibly it is both. New age scholars question its authenticity or purpose. I scanned through some old commentaries like those of G Campbell Morgan and Matthew Henry. They do not dispute the prayer at all. Instead, they break it down into its wonderful themes towards God. Men of days gone by did not question Gods word. Instead, they just tried to understand its meaning better.

With that said, let us try and understand Mary's prayer just a little better ourselves. Yes, there is some similarities to Hannah's song in 1 Samuel 2. We have all used words from songs to describe our feelings. Many of us have felt like our situation is on the titanic. Yet, we have never set foot on its deck. Mary seems to ponder or treasure things in her heart. She did this twice in the Bible. Both occur in Luke

2. Luke is portraying Mary as a thinking soul. She is someone who ponders what is happening around her. This trait helps us understand her song. This is a prayer of pondering and treasuring what God has done in her life.

Luke 1 46-49 “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.”

Jesus begins his temple prayer acknowledging God. Mary is doing the same thing. If you look at the first encounter of Mary with the angel. She questions what an angel wants with a her. Yet the angel says she is highly favored. Mary’s prayer begins with her reiterating the fact that she is delighted and overwhelmed by the call of God. This is what God has done and this is how I will be blessed by Gods actions and not her own.

Luke 1:50-52 “His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.”

Mary states in verse 48 that she is humble. That generations will benefit from Gods action towards her. This theme continues in verses 50-52. What has God done to humble Mary? He gave her the Christ to birth and raise. Through this act we all have been given the Christ to humble us too. We are a blessed people because of Jesus. Jesus did preform mighty deeds and humble the rulers throughout the ages. The ungodly have always fought the goodness of God. They are scattered in their thoughts. Jesus unites while the Devil divides. Of course, the mother of Jesus saw this all the time in Jesus 34 years on earth.

Luke 1:53-55 *“He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”*

Of course, this follows Jesus template that God provides. I would even say that this prayer ends recognizing that God fulfilled His promise to provide a savior and king to rescue us from our sins. This prayer or song lives up to the template prayer of Jesus. Mary is not asking for anything. Instead, she is acknowledging who is her God. Who provides and who has kept His promises. It is God that gives her joy because He came and made her significant. Yet, these blessings have saved her nation and all humanity from the temptations of the Devil.

This prayer is a good one. There are moments when we just need to praise God. Tell Him of all the good He has accomplished in your life. Why? Is it to butter God up? Honestly, I think it is to remind ourselves of the good things God has done in our lives. There are many more blessings from God than we give Him credit for. Prayer is to God, yet it also returns to our hearts. It humbles us like Mary so that we ponder and treasure God in our hearts. Broken down this is a fantastic prayer from Mary.