

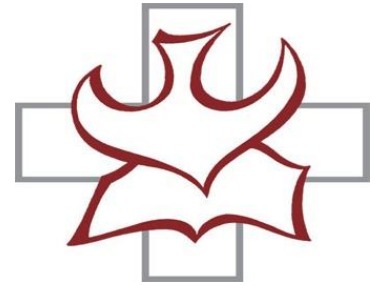
Magnificat

Latin for "Magnifies"

Isaiah 7:10-14 Luke 1:26-38; 46-56

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In the Gospel of Luke, what happens to John the Baptist happens to Jesus but in a *greater way*, because Jesus is the Son of God.

John the Baptist was a miracle baby given to elderly Zechariah and Elizabeth; and Zechariah responds with the song of praise called the ***Benedictus***.

Jesus is a miracle baby given to a virgin named Mary and her fiancé Joseph; and Mary responds with a song of praise called the ***Magnificat***.

The angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus to Mary. Purely by grace alone, God chose Mary to be the **mother of Jesus**. She is the only one in the history of the world to have that honor¹!

All of Israel's hopes, promises, and prophecies will come true in her Child. Mary heard the Word of God, and she believed God's promise. By the power of the Holy Spirit at work through the Word, Mary conceives Jesus!

In the historic creeds of the Holy Christian Church, we confess these truths with these words:

[Jesus] was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; APOSTLES' CREED
Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, NICENE CREED
We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man; God of the Substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; Perfect God and Perfect Man ATHANASIAN CREED

¹ Mary is certainly "blessed" and remembered through all generations. However, she is not to be worshipped, venerated, adored, nor prayed to; nor is she our "Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix" (CCC 969) as the Roman Catholic Church falsely teaches. She is as "lowly" in sin as we all are. God was gracious to her exactly as He is to us. Mary is "blessed" because God chose her, by grace *alone*, to be the mother of Jesus. That role in salvation history is personal and unique; no one else gets that honor.

Mary's child is the *very Son of God*, the *Savior of the world*, the One who fulfills all the *Old Testament Messianic prophecies*! What began with Abraham 2000 years prior, will now be fulfilled through Mary! The new era of salvation has begun; the Savior is now on earth!

Mary heard the Word of God and believed! She understood the significance of what was happening.

*God was no longer present on earth in the Temple in Jerusalem;
He was now present on earth in the womb of Mary!*

God was now *incarnate: in flesh*;
God is with us: Immanuel!

After this *dramatic relocation* of the presence of God to the womb of Mary, Mary responds with a well-crafted song of praise to the Lord; her song is called the *Magnificat*, named after the first word of the Latin translation: "magnify" the Lord².

Mary is "blessed"
because God
chose her,
by grace alone,
to be the
mother of
Jesus.

There are two themes in the *Magnificat*; mercy and fulfilled promises. Here is how Mary teaches about *God's mercy*:

And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty handed. Luke 1:50-53

God is merciful to those who fear Him; to those who are repentant and trust in His mercy. However, the proud, the arrogant, and the self-righteous have no place for God in their life. They reject the Lord. They ignore His Word. Those who are rebellious, self-righteous, arrogant, and

² Notice how Mary's *Magnificat* is patterned very closely to Hannah's prayer in *1 Samuel 2:1-10*. Both women prayed/sang in response to miracle babies! Hannah would give birth to Samuel, who would become a great OT prophet. Hannah is a "type" of Mary, and Samuel is a "type" of Jesus. The mothers are both blessed *by grace alone* by God and given a child; the sons are both miracle babies who will serve the Lord and speak His Word -- Jesus of course is greater, since He is the Son of God, *conceived by the Holy Spirit*.

disobedient will be scattered, brought down, and sent away empty handed. It is a warning to us to repent and turn from sin! Don't ignore God's warning! Don't let your heart grow hard; don't let your pride overtake you. Don't let yourself be arrogant, self-righteous, or rebellious.

The *Magnificat* teaches us that God is merciful to those who fear Him; to those who are repentant and trust in His mercy. The *Magnificat* calls us to humble ourselves, acknowledge our sinfulness, and confess our need for the Savior that Mary will give birth to.

God sent His Son Jesus to exalt the lowly, and to fill the hungry, He does that through the forgiveness of sins. The work of the Savior will show His compassion and mercy. The very Son of God will humble Himself and die on a cross. He became lowly for your sake, as He took your sins upon Himself. *The Son of God was given a body so that He could take your place and suffer and die for all people.* He was sacrificed once and for all --- the work of salvation has been finished. God's mercy for you is found only in Jesus, the Savior conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. Mary *magnifies* the Lord for His mercy; Mary's *Magnificat* teaches us that God's mercy is found only in her Son, Jesus. *God is merciful to those who fear Him; to those who are repentant and trust in His mercy.*

The second theme in Mary's *Magnificat* is that of fulfilled Old Testament promises.

[The Lord] has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to His offspring forever." Luke 1:54-55

God is faithful and He keeps His word and promises. 2,000 years before Mary, God made a promise to Abraham that one of his descendants would bless the entire earth. Now that promise is coming true in Mary's child, conceived by the Holy Spirit. The Son of God will unite every nation, tribe, people, and language through faith. Salvation is for all people – all the nations of the earth receive God's Mercy in Jesus. **God is faithful and He keeps His word and promises.**

God's faithfulness is a major theme of Advent. Just as God kept all of His Old Testament promises, which came true in Jesus; so too He will keep all of the promises He makes to you as well. You can trust God. You can depend on Him and His Word. He will not fail you nor let you down. Because God is faithful, we look to Him for all good things, and we turn to Him in times of trouble! **God's promises comfort, strengthen, and stabilize you each day.** Here is a sample of promises that God makes to you each day:

Watch over your life (Psalm 121)

Defend you from all evil (Psalm 97:10)

Provide your daily bread (Matthew 6:11)

Make all things work for good in your life (Rom 8:28)

Listen to and answer your prayers (Psalm 5:3)

Strengthen you when you are weak (Isaiah 41:10)

Comfort you when you mourn (Psalm 34:18)

Guide and direct every step of your life (Prov 3:5-6)

Give you His Holy Spirit (Luke 11:13)

Empower you for holy & godly living (Romans 8:11)

Assure you of His love and forgiveness (Hebrews 10:22)

Give you hope, peace and security each day (Ps 62:1-2)

God is Faithful to you: You can trust Him! **God's promises comfort, strengthen, and stabilize you each day!** The second theme in Mary's *Magnificat* is that *God is faithful and He keeps His word and promises.*

Mary's *Magnificat* is a treasure of the Holy Christian Church! It is still being sung today! God is no longer present in the Temple in Jerusalem – the Old Testament days are over! God is now **incarnate, in flesh**, in the womb of Mary! The Son of God was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary to bring God's mercy you. And you can trust God's mercy, because He is faithful: He keeps His promises! Amen!