

Covenant Promises Provided Hope and Comfort

For our text this morning we have come to the last part of Mary's hymn of praise. *"He has helped, (has lifted up) His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."* (Luke 1:54-55) In these words of Mary and the former words of Elizabeth we hear the simplicity of true faith. Mary had heard the words of the angel, and did not doubt them, ". . . you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then you will remember how the angel went on to say, *"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called **the Son of God**."* (Luke 1:31-36) She has just heard Elizabeth exclaim *"Why is it granted to me that the mother of **my Lord** should visit me"* Explaining that the infant within her had just leaped for joy at the sound of Mary's voice and then Elizabeth assured her that what was told to her would surely come to pass.

Little wonder Mary responded with such words of praise for it is evident that she had a greater knowledge than that which the rulers of Israel would exhibit in time. As Paul points out, *"had they known they would not have crucified the Lord of glory."* What I want you to note this morning is that there was a real expectation among the humble of Israel that all God had promised regarding a coming Messiah would indeed take place in time, and it becomes evident that many were hoping that it might come to pass even in their time.

We hear that hope in the response of the shepherds to the words of the angel messenger, *"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."* And we remember how they responded, *"Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."* We hear it in the voice of Anna the prophetess who gave thanks to the Lord, and **spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.** And in the words of Simeon "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for **my eyes have seen Your salvation.**" And then in Elizabeth's awareness of the person of the promised Messiah as she calls Mary "the mother of **my Lord**. And finally in the words of Mary, *"He has helped, (has lifted up) His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever."* Herein we see first, Mary's confidence that what was taking place was the promised deliverance for the people of God; secondly we see that she is quite aware that what is taking place is a result of God's mercy; thirdly she is also mindful that it is all a fulfillment of prophetic promise. It becomes clear that she has accepted the Word of God as authority and therefore she is most willing to submit to God's plan and purpose in her life.

- A. Mary's confidence that what was taking place was the promised deliverance for the people of God. *"He (that is, God) has helped, (has lifted up) His servant Israel*
1. He is providing help
 2. Literally it speaks of one who is assisting, that is, one who is supplying what may be needed - 'to help.
 3. God is going to provide what the elect need most
 - a. Going to provide a covering for our sin
 - b. Going to provide a righteousness - a perfect obedience
- B. Mary then expresses her awareness that all that is taking place is but a provision brought about by the mercy of God alone. - *in remembrance of His mercy.*
1. Mercy is a necessity if God is going to provide redemption for unworthy sinners
 - a. For God is providing a means of salvation for the most undeserving
 - b. Look at our state prior to conversion as listed for us by the Apostle Paul (Eph. 2:1-4)
 2. **But God** was rich in mercy
 - a. He loved us with His great love
 - b. He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses
 3. The only reason you and I have hope of heaven is because God in tender mercy has cleansed us, sanctified us and justified us making us worthy of heaven.

- a. After listing a list of terrible sinful acts in 1 Cor. 6 that would keep us out of heaven.

1 Cor 6:9-11 **Neither** fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners **will inherit the kingdom of God. AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU.**

- b. We then read in verse 11, "**And such were some of you.** But you **were washed**, but you **were sanctified**, but you **were justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. (1 Cor. 6:11)
- c. Note carefully all have been provide for us, **we are** cleansed **we are** sanctified, **we are** justified.

C. Mary knows these things to be true for she is aware that all that is taking place is but the fulfillment of prophetic promises - *as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever*

1. To the unbelieving Jew this will be to their judgment

- a. When the wise men from the east Herod inquired of the chief priest and scribes as to where the Messiah would be born. (Matt. 2:3-6)

Matt 2:5-6 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

- b. Jesus often referred to the Scriptures as evidence of His office and reprimanded the Jews for not believing the Scriptures.

John 5:46 For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

John 5:39 You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.

2. A quick purview of Old Testament shows us that the subject matter of the Scriptures was the coming Christ.
 - a. The promise to Adam that the Seed of woman would crush the serpents head - Gen. 3:15
 - b. The promise to Abraham that in his Seed, all the nations of the earth would be blessed - Gen. 28:14
 - c. The promise to Judah that the scepter would never depart from his descendants - Gen. 49:10
 - d. The promise to David that of his descendant one would come whose throne would be
 - e. an everlasting throne - 2 Sam. 7:16
 - f. The promise of a Redeemer who would bear our iniquities and suffer the wrath of God in our place. Isa. 53

Isa 53:5-6 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

CONCLUSION: What we learn from Mary's song of praise is that all the true believers of that day were knowledgeable of and did look to Scripture for their hope and comfort of a coming Messiah and may we too as God's people in this day look to Scripture alone for our faith and practice.

I close with reading select verses from Psalm 89, verses 3,4; 26-28 but please be mindful the whole of Scriptures are filled with such promises of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ.

I have made a covenant with My chosen, I have sworn to My servant David: 'Your seed I will establish forever, and build up your throne to all generations.'

He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father, My God, and the rock of my salvation.' Also I will make him My firstborn, the highest of the kings of the earth. My mercy I will keep for him forever, and My covenant shall stand firm with him. His seed also I will make to endure forever and his throne as the days of heaven.

Such promises were Mary's hope and comfort and such should be ours.