Some have said that Mary's response to the angels announcement of her coming child birth was to write a Psalm and in reality what is recorded here as here response is like a Psalm. It would be logical for someone brought up in a Jewish home to write something similar to what they know to be poetry, after all Mary had heard the Psalms since her own birth. What she writes is this amazing song of praise. It can be used s a template for our own worship.

Let's look at it.

Mary's Song of Praise: The Magnificat

Luk 1:46 And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord,

The first line is perhaps the most famous line and certainly the most recognizable. It is a strange phrase.

"My soul magnifies the Lord".

What does it prompt in us?

What does it mean to magnify the Lord after all He is already huge?

The inference here is that Mary shares the Lord, passes her praises to others and brings the Lord into conversation or worship.

How can we magnify the Lord?

Luk 1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

Notice here she shares how she feels about magnifying and worshipping God.

We are blessed in that when we worship we also get to enjoy the experience even though the concept of worship is to give credit to who God is.

Too notice that she says "my spirit rejoices." Here we see that the happiness created is not peripheral but deep down it is a soul thing, a spirit thing. Some of what we call modern worship

can be surface but we know when it hits our spirit don't we. Mary gives some reasoning for her state of rejoicing.

Luk 1:48 *for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;*

She speaks specifically of her own situation but it speaks to our own situation doesn't it. She recognizes that she is apparently low in the chain of importance by most standards particularly in her culture yet God recognize her and gives her great status. It may seem a bit difficult to translate this statement to our own situation yet isn't it our story too.

For me. I'm just a deaf bloke, who left school in year 10, fixed books for a living, lived life, got married, then divorced, things went pear shaped in life yet God called me and while I don't think that all generations will call me blessed, I know God has used me in people's life. And he has blessed me. Married to an amazing woman, two amazing boys, a great job, fabulous friends. I can recount how God has blessed me.

Isn't it your story too? Think about it. God's love expressed to you and through you. I love this next bit.

Luk 1:49 *for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.*

It is recognizing who God is AND recognizing his providence in her life. It is like us recognizing God's part in our life of protection, guidance, care the list goes on. Sometimes I think we don't spend enough time recognizing God's interaction with us.

How did God interact with you this week? This isn't a quick cliché question to fit the sermon. It is a real question for us right now.

How did God interact with you this week?

Take a minute to think about it.

Luk 1:50 *And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.*

Here is an interesting statement.

==" God's mercy is for those who fear Him."==

Interestingly, God's mercy is mentioned 5 times in this chapter. The Greek word here is elios and we would translate that compassion. Yet mercy has a more judicial sound to it. An officialness as one commentator stated. Yes, it is compassion but it is binding – One commentator said "It is an on going dealing with our inadequacies."

The other word I looked at here is the word for fear. The Greek word is Phobeo – where we get the word phobia from. It is about being in awe of God. Translated fear but sometimes the Greek word can be bigger than a one word translation. (That is why different translations use different words) Fear is one way to put it, being in awe is another.

Luk 1:51 He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

Luk 1:52 he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate;

Here we see Mary recounting God's actions in the past. She knows the stories form the Old Testament about God defeating armies like the Egyptians, the Philistines, Midianites etc. She knows the history and gives Him credit for it. She recognizes God's role in her nation's history.

Now, here is a question: Can we recognize God's role in our nation's history???

Here is an interesting side point that doesn't come out so much in our English translations. While Mary is looking back the grammar in the Greek is not past but continuing. I don't believe that this is a mistake. I think Mary is not only looking back but being expectant that God will continue His providence, guiding, fighting for us on into the future. It really is a sureness of faith.

From that perspective, one translation uses the term in the next verse. =="He fills the hungry with good things."==

Look at what it says in this version (ESV)

Luk 1:53 he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He continues to do great things, He continues to feed us and care for us.

Mary was expecting God to keep His word and look after her and her baby.

Expectant faith.

The grammar takes a turn after this. And Mary referrers again to history. But look where she takes us.

Luk 1:54 He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

Luk 1:55 as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."

She is saying "As it has been, so it will be"

Now, what about us?

 Have we that expectation of God's care for us?

What dos it mean this Christmas to us? That God is constant in His care.

I love this next verse. With all this talk about God caring – Mary recognizes God uses people and she stays with Elizabeth.

Luk 1:56 And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Here is where we fit in. We are often the expression of God's care and providence – God uses us.