

STUDY GUIDE WEEK TWO

Songs of Luke: "My Soul Magnifies the Lord" - Mary's Song

Winter 2025 - Pastor Grangaard

Overview

Adapted from *The Lutheran Study Bible*: Mary's song, often called the Magnificat (or magnify in Latin), reveals key themes in Luke's telling of the gospel. Faithful Jews had been waiting for God to keep ancient promises and repair the damaged creation (Luke 2:25-38, Luke 23:50-51). This would require putting down the powerful, lifting up the lowly, feeding the hungry, and sending the rich away empty (Luke 6:20-31). Mary's song begins by naming God twice, first as "the Lord," (describing a God acting toward creation with forgiveness, tenderness, and mercy) then as "God" (describing a God who acts to bring about justice, either by protecting the weak or by punishing the abusive. Mary's song, then, expresses hope that God will act in both mercy and justice).

Key Scripture Luke 1:46-55 [26-56]

⁴⁶ And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant.
Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed;
⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
⁵⁰ His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.
⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.
⁵² He has brought down the powerful from their thrones,
and lifted up the lowly;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants for ever.'

Questions

1. What does Mary name as God's activity in her song?
2. What is hopeful? What is challenging?
3. Why does God favor Mary?



The Magnificat as a Song of Praise and Prayer

Mary's Song, the Magnificat, is sung during Vespers, or prayer for the evening time. It is both a song of praise and prayer. As evening comes, we look to the light of Christ that scatters the darkness. With Mary, we magnify God's faithfulness, mercy and justice in psalms, songs, and prayers. The service follows a simple pattern of Opening, Psalmody, Word, and Prayer and it concludes with the Lord's Prayer and a greeting of peace.

Opening

Dialogue

God is our light and our salvation

Our refuge and our stronghold.

From the rising of the sun to its setting

We praise your name, O God.

For with you is the fountain of life,

And in your light we see light.

Hymn of Light: Joyous Light of Heavenly Glory ELW 561 verses 1-2

Psalmody

Psalm 121

Word

Reading Luke 1:46-55 [26-56]

Bible Study with Hymns

Prayers

Prayer: Luther's Evening Prayer

We give thanks to you, heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ your dear Son, that you have graciously protected us today. We ask you to forgive us all our sins, where we have done wrong, and graciously to protect us tonight. Into your hands we commend ourselves: our bodies, our souls, and all that is ours. Let your holy angels be with us, so that the wicked foe may have no power over us. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Peace