

December 19, 2021

KIBC Sunday Worship Service (the Fourth Advent Sunday)

Messenger: Pastor Teiichiro Kuroda

Title of the Message: “My Soul Glorifies the Lord”

— Mary’s Magnificat —

Text: Luke 1: 46~55

1:46 And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord

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

1:48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,

1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me holy is his name.

1:50 His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

1:51 He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

1:52 He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

1:53 He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

1:54 He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

1:55 to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”•

Introduction

- Today is the Fourth Advent Sunday. **Merry Christmas!**
We have lit candles of “the Advent Wreath” every Sunday. The first candle symbolizes “expectation”, the second one symbolizes “preparation”, the third symbolizes “light” and the fourth, today’s candle, represents “promise”.
- The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is “the fulfillment of the promise” of God. People over the world who believe in Jesus celebrate the birth of the infant this week
My friend, we should “wait” for months until a baby will be born. And when “the time” (the time of fulfillment) has come, a baby will be always born and the whole family welcomes the baby. We would like to celebrate the birth of Jesus the Son of God.
- By the way, Mary who became mother of Jesus said as below —
1:46 And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord
1:47 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
- Verses 46~55 is called “Mary’s Praising Song” (Magnificat in Latin) A girl called Mary, a teenage girl, it is said she was fourteen years old, praised God. How could Mary sing such an amazing song of praise?
- We simply can’t believe from a human viewpoint that a mere teenage girl could praise God in this way. However, we can believe it from a viewpoint in faith. I believe that Mary had a simple faith. It was not mere a theory in her head or knowledge.
- We see Mary, a teenage girl who was chosen by God. Here we can see God’s secret. Today, let’s focus on Mary who was mother of Jesus and consider the birth of Jesus. Two points follow.

Main Points

1. Mary, Who Is God's Chosen Instrument

1) **Being Humble before God.**

1:48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed,

- Mary said about her situation before God **“the humble state of his servant”**. **“A servant”** means “a maid servant” who follows orders of her master faithfully. It means that she belongs to her master.
- I think that a humble man is faithful before God. If we want to see our true image we need to stand before a mirror. The Bible is like a mirror that reflects our heart. When we read the Bible, we come to see our real heart in a mirror. Therefore, we come to have real humility when we stand before God. When we are caught in “the true light” we begin to see our real self.
- Mary put herself before God and praised, **“the humble state of his servant”**. Then, with what song do we praise God?

• **Mary's Praise**

1:48 From now on all generations will call me blessed,

Why did Mary become an example of blessed women for all generations? Was she an excellent woman? Was she a woman of good descent? Did she make an effort and practice hard to be blessed?

⇒ No, she wasn't. She said, **“I am the Lord's humble servant.” (1:38)**

- Mary said, **“The Lord has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.”** She confessed that God who has authority has been mindful of her.

2) **Her Faith in God**

1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me.

- Mary confessed, **“The Mighty One has done great things for me.” (1:49)**, even if it was before the birth of Jesus.
- Why could Mary speak such fearless words? Had she had a special experience with God before? Is it a reason that she spoke such a big word? Mary was not yet married at that time. Unlike today, an unmarried woman who is pregnant would be never accepted. She must have overcome at least four hurdles as below —
 1. It was a supernatural event and beyond common sense.
 2. No one would have understood it.
 3. It was a scandal and she would be slandered and accused.
 4. She needed to get Joseph to understand her situation.
- The law didn't recognize such cases in Jewish society at that day. If it was brought to light, she would receive a death sentence. Her life was in danger. But she said fearlessly, **“the Mighty One has done great things for me.”** With this statement, she accepted her situation.
- However, no one can accept quickly such unbelievable thing. He would usually be surprised, fear and thrown into a panic.

- Then, how could she accept the situation?

1:48 for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

She understood herself, her nature. (She confessed that she was the Lord's servant.)

She could accept this astonishing situation. But why could she and what was hidden behind her word?

⇒ She had trust (faith) in God. At the same time, it was a great challenge for her.

- If she had no faith in God, she might be sentenced to death. Furthermore, Joseph and Mary's parents must have disgraced themselves in Jewish society. We come to understand that her faith in God absolutely encouraged her.
- My friends, to have faith in God means to trust in Him, not have doubt. The complete faith gives us peace. Human beings grow and mature when they have a trust relationship. It is true that if we don't have any trust in each other we can't keep good relationships.

{Illustration} A Circus Performer on the Flying Trapeze

- **I have heard a story about circus performers on the flying trapeze. They entertain an audience with a breathtaking performance in the air. It is one of the high points.**
- **The aerialists at the circus show an astonishing performance in the air. They say the most difficult thing is to match the timing between two performers. If one of them misses the timing, they would fall straight down.**
- **They also say that he who swings must not grasp the receiver's hands on his own initiative, but take off his hands from a handle trusting his receiver. Then the receiver holds tightly the hands of the other performer. ⇒ This is a trust relationship.**

- What we should know is that we are not excellent beings. However, God has trust in us. If we release what we hold tightly He will be a receiver and will hold our hands. Mary's "Magnificat" shows her simple faith.

1:49 for the Mighty One has done great things for me holy is his name.

- A name reveals its existence. God is the "Holy" One. "Being holy" is "hagiozo" in Greek which means "holiness nothing to compare with". It means that nature of God is "holiness" itself.

**{Illustration} The Beginning of "the Lord's prayer":
"Hallowed Be Your Name"**

**A term "hallow" is "hagiozo" in Greek. It means "Be His name holy".
It means that God's nature, "holiness" must be absolutely holy.**

- Like this, Mary trusted God perfectly. Therefore, God loved her and blessed.
The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you. Luke1:28
- Faith begins first to trust in God. Mary's trust in God gave her blessings. Now we see that the important key for life is hidden here; what is the meaning of life? We may judge one's achievement with one's social success. But do we judge the true meaning of life by such achievements?

⇒ Only in God we find it: To trust in God, love Him and receive His blessings. In this meaning, Mary trusted in the correct One.

- There is another important meaning in her pregnancy.

2. The Fulfillment of God's Word

1. Mary was chosen by "God's mercy".

1:50 His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

God's mercy extends from generation to generation. It is so great, isn't it.

God's promise ⇒

"Know therefore that the Lord our God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commandments." Deuteronomy 7:9

(1) "Mercy" is God's nature.

1. "Mercy" "Mitleid" in German

It means to shoulder a burden together, to have experience hardships and pains together.

2. To understand one's needs

To understand others' pains

It is written about Jesus as below —

"Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." Hebrews 2:18

3. Forgiveness of sins, generosity

"Mercy" forgives sins with generous mind.

(2) The Bible tells about "God's mercy".

Mark 1:41 Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing" he said. "Be clean."

Luke 1:58 Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and shared her joy.

Luke 1:72 to show mercy to our fathers

Luke 1:78 because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven...

- Mary who had simple faith was blessed by God. When God's mercy is poured on a man of faith, God's glory comes to reveal ⇒ It is "Magnificent". (Mary's "Magnificat")
- There is another important thing.

(3) The birth of Jesus is to show "God's mercy".

"But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners." Matthew 9:13

- Jesus came to this world in appearance of a human being and it was because of "God's mercy".

⇒ His purpose was to take us to God.

Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life. Jude 1:21

- We are also able to walk in “God’s mercy”.
Because of Jesus Christ, God pours **“His mercy”** on those who lead a humble life like Mary. My friends, **when “God’s mercy” is poured on people who have faith ⇒ God’s glory comes to reveal. This is the fulfillment of God’s marvelous works in reality.**
- Mary was herself a humble servant. However, she became God’s instrument to receive amazing blessings. This is the key point that she received God’s blessings. God is the One of mercy. (God’s nature)
⇒ Mary had faith that God’s promise is absolutely fulfilled.

Conclusion

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—Mary’s Magnificat—

1. Mary had faith in God. Human beings ⇒ to God
2. God’s mercy was poured on Mary. God ⇒ to human beings

* God bless you!