

THE GOD OF CHRISTMAS Part II

Luke 1:46-56 (NIV)

⁴⁶And Mary said:
 "My soul glorifies the Lord
⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸for he has been mindful
 of the humble state of his servant.
 From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
 holy is his name.
⁵⁰His mercy extends to those who fear him,
 from generation to generation.
⁵¹He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;
 he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.
⁵²He has brought down rulers from their thrones
 but has lifted up the humble.
⁵³He has filled the hungry with good things
 but has sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel,
 remembering to be merciful
⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants forever,
 even as he said to our fathers."

The second half of Mary's song continues to highlight the God of Christmas. In verse 52 Mary speaks about God bringing down rulers from their thrones. In Mary's first-century context the ruler was Rome. Now this was no ordinary run-of-the-mill empire. Rome was built on human strength and military prowess. Nations that defied Rome were swallowed up quickly. Rome did what it wanted to do; the empire did not worry about whether its actions were just or unjust, as long as it remained the powerful juggernaut, the supreme lord over all.

But, in God's eyes, no human authority operates strictly on justice. Because sin has infiltrated the fabric of humanity, human power is composed of, and will act in, injustice. Mary recognizes this truth and proclaims it in her song for the world to hear. Her God is the God of justice, unlike that of human authority.

1. God **always stands on the side of justice**. (v. 52)

- Human authority will never carry us through; only through God's authority will we find victory.

Human thrones only focus on the individuals who sit on those pedestals. We are the “kings and queens” of our domains, and we will do everything we can to get what we want, no matter who we hurt in the process.

But, the God of Christmas will not stand for any forms of injustice.

- God is against any kind of oppression.

God’s authority favors justice; human authority does not. Hence, God will take it upon himself to rid of injustice by bringing down the rulers and the thrones that support unjust principles. God will not allow our selfish desires to damage other people’s lives. The humble, those who are pure and innocent, are the individuals whom God will uphold instead.

Why is God attracted to the humble, the pure, and the innocent?

2. God cares for those **who do not exalt themselves above himself**. (v. 53)

- The “rich” are those who think they can depend solely on their possessions; therefore, they do not think they ever need God.

When we depend upon our own “richness” we are just favoring our thrones, our authority. But, when we live in this manner, what we are really saying is that we do not need God; in fact, we exalt ourselves over and above God and his will for our lives. We claim to be the true lords over our existences and stomp upon the purposes that God wants us to live by. But, at the end of the day, it will be us who will go away hungry; we will be separated from God forever and will spend the rest of eternity in spiritual emptiness.

- God will only provide for those who need him; those who exalt themselves will be turned away.

This is the perfect picture of what our relationship with Jesus should be. We do not exalt ourselves because we know we need God. We desire after him because he will provide us with good things. And the best of the good things is Jesus himself. When we live by a humble posture such as this, God will welcome us into his arms of love. He will engage with us via his personal touch of compassion and mercy. But, if we deny him, he will deny us as well. God gives us a choice, either to let him fill us up or to be sent away from him. In this season of Christmas we must make the right choice – choose God, choose Jesus to become Lord and Savior of our lives.

The offering of Jesus into human history showcases God’s great love for this world:

3. God’s character is one of **genuine kindness**. (v. 54)

- God’s nature is to always help the broken and the needy.

God helps. God heals. God restores. God blesses. This is God’s character; he is compassionate and loving. Since the early times in Israel’s history, God has been merciful to those who laid their trust in his divine authority. God always extends towards us, never giving up in hopes that broken people such as ourselves will reach back and hold onto him forever.

- To experience God’s help we need to grasp onto his extended hand of mercy.

And there is where the bond between creation and the Creator is formed, when we reach out towards God's kindness and allow his compassion to mend our brokenness. The birth of Jesus is the beginning of that union between humanity and the divine. God's help for the world has now taken physical shape in the life of Jesus. God initiates the connection with us, but we must reciprocate by letting his love change and mold us to become followers of him. We must surrender our whole being under Jesus' lordship in order to experience God's genuine kindness, whose care is total and complete:

4. When God cares **he cares from beginning to end.** (vv. 54-55)

- History is characterized by God's mercy over his people. ("to Abraham and his descendants forever")

God's salvation began in time and continues forward through our generation and beyond. It is a saving grace that encompasses all of human history, meaning that his love is for all people. This wonderful news is what Christmas is all about. The totality of God's care for the world is unveiled in the word and deed of Jesus.

- This mercy finds its fulfillment in Jesus, the Savior.

It is the Jesus story that we truly understand the God of Christmas. Mary's song unravels all of the mystery about God. God truly looks out for you and me. He searches for us by casting his net of unconditional love. His desire is that all of us hold onto this net and are brought into a loving relationship with him. This Christmas make every effort to draw into intimacy with God through Jesus. Let the miracle story of Christmas guide you into the holy presence of the divine. Allow the mercy of God to penetrate your heart and change you from the inside out through the life of his son Jesus. May the God of Christmas touch you in a special way today.

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