

• *Mary blessed by God*

Mary has been blessed by God. It leads immediately to worship and praise.

1. A song full of joy

1. **Mary's song is full of joy.** She wants to lift God high in joyful admiration. *'My soul exalts the Lord, and my spirit has rejoiced in God my [☩]1.*

☩¹ 1:47

• *Joy leads to singing and worship*

When God moves in our lives, it leads to outpourings of the Holy Spirit. And outpourings of the Holy Spirit always lead to joy, and joy in the Holy Spirit leads to singing and worship.

2. A sense of privilege

2. **Mary is filled with a sense of privilege and amazement that God should use her.** *'He has regarded the humble situation of his servant. From this time onwards all generations will call me blessed' [☩]1.*

☩¹ 1:48

• *Entirely of God's mercy*

God's people know that any blessing that has come to them has been entirely of God's mercy. Mary attributes what has happened to God: *'He has regarded... His servant'*. She knows it is not her doing at all.

3. God's goodness to the poor and despised

3. **Mary is moved at the way God exalts poor and despised people.** This is a theme of Luke's Gospel. God favours lowliness [☩]1, scatters proud people [☩]2, reduces the powerful to weakness [☩]3, sends rich people away empty-handed [☩]4.

☩¹ 1:48
☩² 1:51
☩³ 1:52
☩⁴ 1:53

• *God tends to use despised people*

What amazes Mary is God's goodness to her despite her humble situation. Mary was not a rich person. We often think that the only people who are used by God are the clever the rich, those who come from notable families, or who have been educated in famous places. None of these things are necessary. When God is doing big things He tends to use despised people.

4. The greatness of what God has done

4. **She is moved at the greatness of what God has done.** When God decided to act the world hardly notices, and yet He does great and mighty things. Soon the greatness of what God has done is discovered, but people like Mary are in at the beginning. *'For the Mighty One has done great things for me; and holy is His name' [☩]1.*

☩¹ 1:49

5. God's character

5. **The great things God does, lead us to see His character.** Mary is praising God for His great and wonderful character. He is 'the Mighty One'. His name is holy. He always does things in a pure and holy manner.

• *The Holy One*

'And His mercy is upon generation after generation, for those who fear Him. He has done mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts.' [☩]1

☩¹ 1:50-51

• *Merciful and tender*

She sees how merciful and tender God is. The nation of Israel is at its worst! An unconverted high-priest followed by spiritually decayed priests and rabbis are the leaders of the land. There are not many people like Zacharias. Roman armies rule the nation. Yet unexpectedly God is having mercy. At a time when Israel seems to be totally abandoned by God, God is sending His Saviour. How unexpected it is! How merciful! How it upsets the thoughts and expectations of clever people!

6. God's ways are so unexpected

• God raises up another 'Son of David'

6. **She realises that God's ways are so unexpected.** She realises that God is fulfilling His promises to the house of David. 'He has brought down rulers from their thrones, and has exalted those who were humble' ¹.

¹ 1:52

Mary is thinking of the line of kings that descended from David. More than five centuries previously God had brought the proud rulers in the line of King David to an end. The kings of Judah in previous centuries had abandoned the godliness of their ancestor David and had turned to idolatry. God 'brought down rulers from their thrones' and ended the kings of Judah. But the line of king David has been preserved, and now God is taking a humble girl and raising up another 'Son of David'. Mary continues her singing concerning God's habit of humiliating the proud and raising the humble.

'He has filled the hungry with good things, and He has sent the rich away empty. He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of His mercy, as He spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and his seed for ever.' ¹

¹ 1:53-55

7. God's promise made to Abraham fulfilled

7. **She realises that God is fulfilling His promises in the Scriptures.** He had sworn to Abraham centuries before that out of his seed would come someone who would be a blessing to all the nations of the world. Mary is lifted up by the Holy Spirit to see that it is at this time and through her body that God is about to fulfil His promise.

8. She views her life in the light of God's purposes

• A great woman of faith but in need of a saviour as everyone else

8. **She views her life in the light of the purpose of God.** Mary's worship is not self-centred. Although she has a sense of privilege, what is stirring her heart is the thought that she is playing a part in the kingdom of God.

Mary was a great woman. She was not conceived without sin as some think. There is not a scrap of teaching in the Bible about that! On the contrary, Mary knows that she needs a Saviour. She worships 'God my Saviour'. She is a sinner as everyone else is. Only Jesus came into this world without sin. Mary was not without sin, but she was a great woman of faith.

• Personal blessing and Kingdom blessing

When God blesses us there is a little context and a big context at the same time. What I mean is: He blesses us personally with amazing privileges, but at the same time He takes forward steps in His kingdom. Mary was amazed that God should use her. What was more amazing was that a forward step was being taken: God was sending His Son into the world.



slices.org.uk

Dr Michael Eaton is highly respected internationally as a theologian, author, preacher and teacher. He lives in Kenya where he is one of the leaders of the Chrisco Fellowship. His *Preaching Through The Bible* (PTTB) books are highly popular worldwide. Michael Eaton puts the theological and practical meaning of the Bible in a clear and down-to-earth way so that what is written can be easily understood by the reader.



These specially reformatted chapters "Slices of Bread" produced by Sovereign World Trust are available in three categories as set out below

Slices for the Nations	Slices for Sponsors	Slices for Everyone / Slice of the Week
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For pastors, libraries and colleges in those parts of the world where resources are scarce and unaffordable In the fullness of time the whole series will be made available free of charge Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or available to download from the Slices web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those in more prosperous circumstances who can afford to contribute to the development of this material and its distribution with a small monthly donation The same material as Slices for the Nations Weekly emailings of 3 - 4 Slices or by download from the Slices web site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those who wish to sample the material or dip into it from time to time, a proportion of the PTTB series is available free of charge Slices for Everyone (as a download) or Slice of the Week (attached to a weekly email) The remainder of the PTTB material is available to Sponsors and those eligible to receive Slices for the Nations

To subscribe please contact: slicesofbread@sovereignworldtrust.org.uk stating which category fits your situation. Further details are at www.slices.org.uk
 Details of the availability of *Preaching Through The Bible* books and how they may be purchased can be found on www.ibtr.org.uk