

December 22
Lesson 4 (NIV)

MARY'S PRAISE

DEVOTIONAL READING: 1 Samuel 2:1-10

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:39-56

LUKE 1:39-56

³⁹At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"



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**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.**
**53 He has filled the hungry with good
 things
 but has sent the rich away
 empty.**
**54 He has helped his servant Israel,
 remembering to be merciful**
**55 to Abraham and his descendants
 forever,
 just as he promised our
 ancestors.”**
**56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for
 about three months and then
 returned home.**

KEY VERSES

*Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord
 and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.”*
 —**Luke 1:46, 47**

HONORING GOD

Unit 1: David Honors God

LESSONS 1-5

LESSON AIMS

After participating in this lesson, each learner will be able to:

1. Retell the story of Mary’s visit to Elizabeth and the song of praise that resulted.

2. Explain the significance of Mary’s song with regard to its vision of the kingdom of God.
3. Write a prayer (or song) of thanksgiving that celebrates the ways in which God has blessed his or her life.

LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction

- A. A New Arrival
- B. Lesson Context
- I. Family Visit (LUKE 1:39-45)
 - A. Traveling (vv. 39, 40)
 - B. Jumping for Joy (v. 41)
 - C. Praising (vv. 42-45)
Say Something Nice
- II. Expectant Mother’s Song (LUKE 1:46-56)
 - A. Blessings for Mary (vv. 46-48)
 - B. The Mighty One (vv. 49-51)
All Generations
 - C. A Great Reversal (vv. 52, 53)
 - D. Blessings for Israel (vv. 54-56)

Conclusion

- A. A Song of Praise for All
- B. Prayer
- C. Thought to Remember

HOW TO SAY IT

| | |
|------------|----------------------|
| Gabriel | Gay-bree-ul. |
| Hebron | Hee-brun or Heb-run. |
| Magnificat | Mag-nif-ih-cot. |
| Manoah | Muh-no-uh. |

| | |
|-----------|-----------------|
| messianic | mess-ee-an-ick. |
| Zechariah | Zek-uh-rye-uh. |
| Zephaniah | Zef-uh-nye-uh. |

B. Lesson Context

Last week's lesson articulated God's great promise to David that the Lord would establish a kingdom from the line of David that would last forever. After many centuries have elapsed, today's lesson brings us to the fulfillment of that promise.

Luke's Gospel opens with the announcement of two very important births. The angel Gabriel appeared to the priest Zechariah to announce that his aging (and barren) wife, Elizabeth, was to bear a son to prepare Israel for the coming of the Messiah ([Luke 1:17](#)). In due course, Elizabeth's son was named John—eventually known to us as John the Baptist. The fact that Zechariah was rendered mute was a sign of the power of God and the certainty of his promise, as well as a rebuke to Zechariah's skepticism.

Some six months later, Gabriel appeared to the young virgin Mary in the town of Nazareth. Gabriel told her that she would give birth to a son to be named Jesus ([Luke 1:31](#)). The promises made about this child were of the highest order. He would be called the Son of God and was to sit on the throne of David forever ([1:32, 33](#)). Mary was overwhelmed by the magnitude of the news but nevertheless pledged her obedience ([1:38](#)). Today's lesson opens as she sets out to

Introduction

A. A New Arrival

How do you react when you find out someone you love is expecting a child? For many people, the birth of a child is a time of great joy—and rightly so. A new baby signifies many things: the love between a husband and wife, the enlargement of a family, the arrival of a new generation, the extension of a family line, and so forth.

Yet sometimes other feelings surround the arrival of a child—feelings such as worry and anxiety for the future, fear or uncertainty about the reactions of others, and mistrust between the parents. The Scriptures reveal such instances. Consider the mixed feelings that must have attended the birth of Seth in the aftermath of the murder of Abel ([Genesis 4:25](#)). Or think of the fear that Moses' mother experienced that led her to hide her new baby boy in the reeds ([Exodus 2:1-3](#)).

Today's lesson concerns a birth announcement that was simultaneously incredible and terrifying to the young woman who received it. How would she respond to the announcement?

visit Elizabeth, a member of her extended family (1:36).

I. Family Visit

(LUKE 1:39-45)

A. Traveling (vv. 39, 40)

39, 40. At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.

While the phrase *at that time* is not exceptionally precise, we should assume that the events of today's text occurred very shortly after Gabriel appeared to Mary (see [Lesson Context](#)).

The hill country refers to the region around Jerusalem (compare [Luke 1:65](#)). It is difficult to be more specific about the destination. Some commentators suggest that *a town in Judea* is a reference to the city of Hebron. The book of Joshua recounts that "Kiriath Arba (that is, Hebron), with its surrounding pasture land, in the hill country of Judah" was given to the priests ([Joshua 21:10, 11](#)). All of this matches up well with what we know about Zechariah and *Elizabeth* both being from priestly families (see [Joshua 21:13](#); [Luke 1:5](#)).

If Mary travels from Nazareth to Hebron, her journey is at least 70 miles. The fact that Mary sets out on this jour-

ney is amazing. According to the customs of the day, she should be accompanied on a journey of such length. Luke's lack of details shows that he is more concerned with moving the narrative forward than on the minutiae of the journey.

Mary greets Elizabeth when she arrives in Elizabeth's home. This is important to Luke, given that he mentions it three times (see [Luke 1:40, 41, 44](#)). This initial greeting accords with the social norms of the day. Elizabeth is the superior of the two: she's considerably older than Mary (see [1:7](#)), the wife of a priest, and thus a descendant of Aaron. Given these facts, it is proper for Mary to initiate the greetings.

B. Jumping for Joy (v. 41)

41. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

We do not know the content of Mary's greeting, but we do know something of its results. Luke has already noted that John would be filled with the Holy Spirit in anticipation of the coming of Jesus (see [Luke 1:15-17](#)). When John leaps in his mother's *womb*, he begins to fulfill this role as the one who will go before the Lord to proclaim his coming.

But *Elizabeth* too is *filled with the Holy Spirit*. This is a clear indication that what-

ever she is about to say or do will be prophetic in nature (compare [Acts 2:4-41](#)).

C. Praising (vv. 42-45)

42. In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!”

Elizabeth greets Mary with a surprising fullness and richness of language. She places herself in a subordinate role to Mary, who is *blessed ... among women*, and whose child is likewise *blessed*. The form and content of Elizabeth’s proclamation is definite in its prophetic quality. The *loud* volume of her voice in this context indicates conviction (compare [2 Chronicles 15:14](#); [Ezra 10:12](#); [Nehemiah 9:3-5](#)). Similar language is used elsewhere of Elizabeth’s own son, John. John’s preaching will be, in the words of Isaiah the prophet, as “a voice of one calling in the wilderness” ([Mark 1:3](#); see [Isaiah 40:3](#)).

43. “But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?”

In greeting Mary as *the mother of my Lord*, Elizabeth indicates her submission to Mary’s unborn baby. Her use of the term *my Lord* is extremely significant, echoing earlier messianic prophecies ([Psalm 110:1](#); compare [Matthew 22:44](#); [Mark 12:36](#)). It anticipates Jesus’ designation as Lord at his exaltation to the right hand of God (see [Acts 2:33-36](#)). Elizabeth

expresses amazement that she is privileged to be a part of the work of God in and through Mary.

44. “As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.”

The Holy Spirit empowers Elizabeth to recognize the meaning of John’s leaping and to articulate its significance in the moment. Luke connects *joy* with the coming of salvation and redemption (see [Luke 1:14, 47](#)). Leaping can be associated explicitly or implicitly with joy and salvation in Luke’s writings (see [6:23](#); a different but related word is used in [Acts 3:8](#); [14:10](#)).

45. “Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

Mary is additionally called blessed because she has believed what the angel revealed to her. Mary’s acceptance obviously contrasts with Zechariah’s reaction ([Luke 1:20](#)).

Elizabeth’s first blessing was spoken in the second person ([Luke 1:42](#): “Blessed are you”), while this one is pronounced in the third person (*blessed is she*). This more general address opens the blessing to all who believe what God reveals about his Son and respond in obedience ([John 6:37-40](#); [17:20-26](#); [20:29](#)).

SAY SOMETHING NICE

silent (Mark 9:5–7; etc.)?

Most funerals feature a eulogy. This compound Greek word could be translated “good words.” It can be tricky to create a eulogy for certain people! Take President Richard Nixon for example. His legacy is always associated with Watergate. What “good words” could be spoken at his funeral?

President Bill Clinton delivered a memorable tribute to President Nixon in 1994. Clinton acknowledged Nixon’s mistakes but declared that he should not be remembered solely for them. “May the day of judging President Nixon on anything less than his entire life and career come to a close,” Clinton implored. He instead focused on President Nixon’s accomplishments.

While eulogies are associated with funerals, the eulogy of Jesus was given before he was born! Through the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth spoke good words that announced the good news about Jesus, even while he was still in the womb. How much more should we bless his name!

—J. E.

What Do You Think?

What one habit do you most need to develop to prepare you for times when God prompts you to speech or action?

Digging Deeper

What one habit do you most need to develop to know when to keep

II. Expectant Mother’s Song (LUKE 1:46–56)

A. Blessings for Mary (vv. 46–48)

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

Mary responds to Elizabeth’s greeting with the song that forms the bulk of today’s text. Like the Psalms and other poetry of the Old Testament, Mary’s Song (often referred to as the Magnificat) derives its poetic qualities not from meter or rhyme, but from the expression of ideas in parallels. Two, three, or more statements follow one another to express similar concepts. This creates a lyrical effect that conveys both thought and emotion.

The themes of Mary’s song are familiar to readers of the Old Testament. Mary adapts traditional expressions of hope in God’s promises as she reacts to God’s announcement that he is about to fulfill those promises. Mary’s song most closely resembles Hannah’s prayer of praise after the birth of Samuel (see [1 Samuel 2:1–10](#)).

For the Old Testament poets and prophets, the days when God would fulfill his promises lay in the uncertain future ([Hebrews 11:1, 2, 39, 40](#)). Those

future ([Hebrews 11:1, 2, 39, 40](#)). Those poets and prophets could not say when or how God would fulfill his pledge to bless his people ([Romans 15:8](#); [2 Corinthians 1:20](#)), restore them to himself ([Isaiah 49:8](#); [Hosea 14:4](#)), and make all nations his ([Psalms 46:10](#); [102:21, 22](#); [Zephaniah 3:9](#)). They could only affirm God's faithfulness: if he has made a promise, then he will fulfill it—period ([Deuteronomy 32:4](#)). In times of distress, hope is to be found in God's rock-solid faithfulness.

In contrast with the Old Testament poets and prophets, Mary stands at the very threshold of fulfillment. She is pregnant with the child through whom God will act to do what he has promised. But the fulfillment of God's promise comes at a cost: she is burdened with a pregnancy that will appear to everyone around her to be the result of sexual immorality ([Luke 4:22](#)), not divine intervention. And beyond the birth of her child, she too cannot say how God will go about fulfilling his pledge ([2:34, 35, 41–51](#)). Even so, she can, like the prophets before her, celebrate God's faithfulness.

47. “and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

The focus of [Luke 1:46–50](#) is on God's blessings for Mary personally. An example of the parallelism characteristic of Hebrew poetry is Mary's use of soul and *spirit* in these first two verses to refer to

the depths of her being (compare [Isaiah 26:9](#)).

The main idea of the verse before us is echoed in [Habakkuk 3:18](#): “Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will be joyful in God my Savior.” The term *Savior* highlights God's ability to rescue people from difficult circumstances ([Isaiah 63:8, 9](#)). In the immediate context, this may include Mary's amazement that God has healed the pain of Elizabeth's infertility. The theme of God's salvation and his ability to do what seems impossible underlies all of [Luke 1](#), especially Mary's song.

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

As Mary's song progresses, she outlines the reasons for her praise. First, the fact that God regards *the humble state of his servant* reveals his character. The psalmist saw God's care for the lowly as central for understanding his work in the world (example: [Psalm 138:6](#)). The word translated *humble state* is also rendered “humiliation” ([Acts 8:33](#); [James 1:10](#); compare [Philippians 3:21](#)). Mary seems to be referring to the oppression of poverty that she—and Israel as a whole—are suffering under (see commentary on [Luke 1:52, 53](#)).

We should take special note of Mary's humility. To be God's *servant* echoes the similar expression in Hannah's song (see

1 Samuel 1:16, 18). The Greek word could be less poetically but more pointedly translated *female slave*. Mary's use of the term recalls her earlier response to the angel Gabriel after being told that she was to conceive miraculously (Luke 1:38). This is a response of total submission by one who recognizes her unworthiness to be *blessed* in such a manner.

What Do You Think?

Without giving advice, how might you counsel someone whose circumstances lead him or her to doubt God's goodness and mercy?

Digging Deeper

How would your counsel to a believer differ from counsel to an unbeliever? Why?

B. The Mighty One (vv. 49–51)

49. “for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

Mary gives a second reason for praise: she has some inkling of the nature of the *great things* God is doing through her. Two key attributes of God are emphasized as the cause of his work.

The title *the Mighty One* calls to mind the imagery of God as a warrior on behalf of his people that is found throughout the Old Testament (see Deuteronomy 10:17, 18; Isaiah 10:20–27; 49:25, 26). God's might cannot be separated from his holi-

ness (Habakkuk 1:12). Isaiah frequently refers to God as “the Holy One” (Isaiah 1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:20; 12:6; etc.). The creatures that gather around the throne of God constantly say, “‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty,’ who was, and is, and is to come” (Revelation 4:8).

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

This verse shifts from focusing on God's might and holiness to his *mercy*. Indeed, his might and his mercy are joined together in a seamless whole in this song. The God who is a warrior also lifts up the lowly, shows mercy to *those who fear him*, fills the hungry, and so forth. The phrase *those who fear him* recalls the language of proverbs. The fear of God is associated with wisdom and with blessing (Proverbs 1:7; 3:7, 8; 9:10–12; etc.).

From generation to generation calls to mind the fact that God's promises endure; they do not fail (Exodus 20:4–6; Psalm 33:11; Isaiah 34:17).

ALL GENERATIONS

Generational differences are real! But what *are* these generations? Sociologists and others recognize several, though the dates can differ slightly.

Often referred to as the Greatest Generation (born 1901–1924), its members

survived the Great Depression and World War II, leading the country to rebuild after both. The Silent Generation (born 1925–1942) followed and maintained their accomplishments.

Baby Boomers (born 1943–1964) came next. They have been referred to as idealists, not content with the world that was left to them. Generation X (born 1965–1979) has been called the latchkey generation; they cared for themselves, often with limited parental attention. Today, much focus is given to the Millennials (born 1980–2000) whose influence in shaping the world now predominates.

Mary recognized that the work God had done and would do through Jesus would affect *every* generation—those of her day and of all the days to come. What characteristics do you share with the Jesus Generation?

—J. E.

51a. “He has performed mighty deeds with his arm;

With this verse, the lens begins to pan out to take in more of the surroundings. We move from a focus on Mary to a broader consideration of God’s dealings with humanity. This is not the first time God *has performed mighty deeds with his arm* (see [Deuteronomy 26:8](#); [Psalms 89:10, 13](#); [136:12](#); [Jeremiah 32:21](#)); now he stands ready to do it again through the coming of his Son to redeem humanity.

51b. “he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

The Greek word behind *thoughts* refers to the understanding or the musings of a person ([Ephesians 4:18](#); [1 John 5:20](#)). God has *scattered* those who are arrogant in their understanding or their attitudes.

Though Mary exults in God’s ability to know and judge the thoughts of the proud, we should assume these prideful attitudes are making themselves known in conduct as well. Pride contrasts with humility; only one of these attitudes finds a reward in God’s presence ([Proverbs 29:23](#)).

What Do You Think?

How would you respond to those who point out situations where God seems to be absent because wicked people are prospering?

Digging Deeper

What teachings of Jesus’ support your response? How would you use [Judges 6:12, 13](#); [Jeremiah 12:1](#); and/or [Habakkuk 1:2–4](#)?

C. A Great Reversal (vv. 52, 53)

52, 53. “He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

The theme of reversal becomes explicit here. The *rulers* and the *rich*—those who exult in their own strength and power in opposition to God—are very often honored in this world. But in God’s purposes, those who are *humble* and the *hungry* are the recipients of his gracious action (compare [Matthew 5:45](#)). Mary recognizes that her situation is only one example of a time when God has *lifted up* the lowly.

Jesus will reiterate the point made here in [Luke 1:53](#) when he preaches his Sermon on the Plain. At that time, he will pronounce blessings on the hungry and the poor ([Luke 6:20, 21](#))—blessings paired with woes on the rich and well fed ([6:24, 25](#)).

The rich, by contrast, are *sent ... away empty*. They receive no consolation because they have placed all their earthly efforts into accumulating power and possessions for themselves. They have not cared about the suffering people who are around them ([16:19–31](#)). It is not to be so in the kingdom that God’s Son comes to establish ([Matthew 25:31–46](#)).

What Do You Think?

How would you respond to those who use passages like this to argue that true believers will always be prosperous?

Digging Deeper

In addition to [John 15:20](#); [2 Corin-](#)

[ans 6:3–10](#); and [Hebrews 11:36–38](#), what other texts would be important to consider?

D. Blessings for Israel (vv. 54–56)

54. “He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

Mary’s song now focuses on *Israel*. God is about to do something new through Mary, but that new thing is part of a long history of God’s work through his covenant people. Mary sings that God *has helped ... Israel*. God does this by *remembering to be merciful*, an idea found in the Old Testament (examples: [Genesis 8:1](#); [Psalms 25:6, 7](#); [98:3](#)).

The people of Israel have languished under foreign domination for many centuries, most recently by the Romans. God has Israel in mind and is on the move to help them. But the help he is bringing is not what people anticipate.

What Do You Think?

What can you do to prepare yourself to be Jesus’ representative to those feeling forgotten by God?

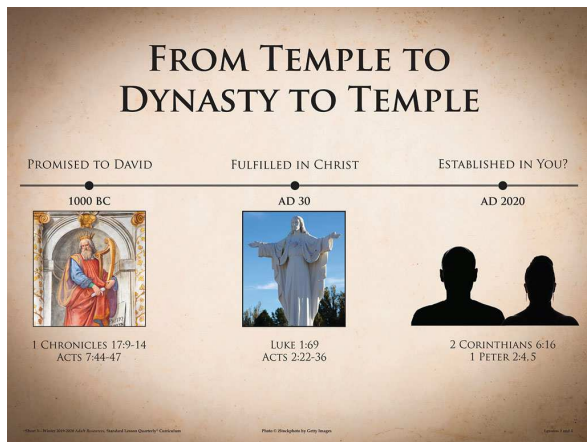
Digging Deeper

How do [Job 2:11–13](#) and [16:1–5](#) inform your preparation?

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

ancestors.”

The reasons for Mary’s praise are embedded deeply in the original promise that God made to *our ancestors*, as well as *to Abraham and his descendants forever* (see [Genesis 12:1-3](#); [Galatians 3:16](#)). The coming of the Son is not a radical break with that promise but a fulfillment of it.



Visual for Lessons 3 & 4. While discussing the questions with verse 48, ask how Christians’ being the temple of the Lord informs their answers.

56. Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Since the six months of [Luke 1:36](#) and the *three* of the verse at hand equals nine, we wonder if Mary stays long enough for John’s birth. The text doesn’t say.

Conclusion

A. A Song of Praise

God was working out his purpose for

and through Mary. What he began in his humble servant has spread through the world as the good news of Christ is told in all nations to all people. Her song still resonates today as Christians seek to care for the lowly and disadvantaged, spreading hope that God sees every trial and has a plan to make salvation available to everyone. In this season, spread hope in God’s Son!

B. Prayer

Father, we are thankful for your work through Mary. Teach us to see the ways in which you work through those the world considers “lowly.” We pray in Jesus’ name. Amen.

C. Thought to Remember

God works through even the lowliest to achieve his highest purposes.

INVOLVEMENT LEARNING

Enhance your lesson with [NIV Bible Student](#) (from your curriculum supplier) and the reproducible activity page (at www.standardlesson.com or in the back of the [NIV Standard Lesson Commentary Deluxe Edition](#)).

Into the Lesson

Divide the class in half. Members of

one half will name a single blessing that most of them enjoy in common. Then the other half is to respond similarly, but the blessing they name must begin with the last letter of the first group's response. The first group then is to respond by naming a shared blessing that begins with the last letter of the second group's response. Encourage creative responses.

Play continues until one group is unable to answer. (Give groups enough time to confer when it's their turn, but don't let the game drag out.) Play as many rounds as time and interest allow.

Alternative. Distribute copies of the "Bless You!" exercise from the activity page, which you can download. Have students work individually to complete the activity as indicated in no more than one minute.

After either activity say, "To be blessed is to recognize and enjoy some kind of prosperity. In describing the visit of Mary to Elizabeth, Luke repeatedly wrote of blessing and being blessed. Let's see what this has to do with us."

Into the Word

Put students into three groups and give each a handout (you prepare) as follows: **"To Jesus and John the Baptist" Group:** [Luke 1:39-44](#); see also [Mark 1:1-4](#). **"To Mary" Group:** [Luke 1:45-49](#); see also [Luke 2:33-35](#). **"To All Generations"**

Group: [Luke 1:50-56](#); see also [Matthew 19:28-30](#).

Include on each handout the following instructions: "Messages sent via Twitter (known as tweets) were limited to 140 characters originally. This was to ensure that users communicated succinctly. Do the same here, addressing your tweets to the namesake(s) of your groups. Use the passages on your handout as a source of content."

Give the groups 10 minutes to work on their tweets. Move among the groups to offer encouragement as needed. Use the commentary and these sample tweets to help groups that seem to be stuck.

"To Jesus and John the Baptist"

Group: "You are relatives whose destinies were intertwined before birth. The older will introduce the younger to the world as the Lamb of God!" [134 characters including spaces, not including quotation marks]

"To Mary" Group: "Your faith and courage will allow the great things promised to you to be fulfilled. Joyful news now turns later into heart-piercing sorrow." [139 characters]

"To All Generations" Group: "Your world will be turned upside down! The Messiah will take the power from the arrogant. The downtrodden will be exalted." [122 characters]

Have groups explain their tweets.

Point out that today’s text sets the stage for the entire gospel.

Into Life

Say, “The word *blessed* occurs four times in today’s text. In two of those cases, the word being translated is the source of our English word *eulogy*. We think of eulogies in terms of funerals, but in [Luke 1:42b](#) the word is used in anticipation of Jesus’ earthly ministry. In what ways have you been blessed by him?” Depending on class size, this can be for discussions in small groups or as a whole class. Expect “eternal life” to be the first and top answer; if it’s not, explore why.

Announce a time of singing about being blessed by God as you distribute hymnals or public-domain lyrics from the internet. Possible hymns are “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing,” “Count Your Blessings,” and “There Shall Be Showers of Blessings.” Close with prayer, allowing participants to verbalize thanks to God for his blessings.

Option. As learners depart, distribute copies of the “Praying from the Psalms” exercise from the activity page as a take-home. To encourage completion, promise to discuss the results at the beginning of the next class.

To print the reproducible activity page, simply click the highlighted text below to create a pdf file on your hard drive. Then open the pdf file in Acrobat Reader and print.

Activity Page (December 22—Mary’s Praise)

MARY’S PRAISE

Lesson 4, Luke 1:39-56, NIV

BLESS YOU!

Match the first part of each of these blessing quips to its conclusion.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ___ 1. May you never forget what is worth remembering. | a. and never want as long as you live. |
| ___ 2. May the saddest day of your future | b. be no worse than the happiest day of your past. |
| ___ 3. May God give you: for every storm a rainbow, for every tear a smile. | c. so that you will always have something to strive for. |
| ___ 4. May you be in Heaven a half hour | d. and never close his fist too tight on you. |
| ___ 5. May your smile be big and wide | e. before the devil knows you’re dead. |
| ___ 6. May the Lord keep you in His hand | f. and may trouble be always a stranger to you. |
| ___ 7. May your pockets be heavy and your heart be light; | g. and may your pockets always have a coin or two inside. |
| ___ 8. May you live as long as you want | h. for every care a promise and a blessing in each trial. |
| ___ 9. May good luck be your friend in whatever you do, | i. may good luck pursue you each morning and night. |
| ___ 10. May you get all your wishes but one | j. nor ever remember what is best forgotten. |

PRAYING FROM THE PSALMS

How has God been active in your life this year? Praying portions from the Bible’s songbook, the Psalms, can help us recall and thank God for his work in us. Try memorizing one or more of the following verses from Psalms and work them into your prayers this week.

Safety and Security—“The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore” (Psalm 121:7, 8).

Strength and Peace—“The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace.” (Psalm 29:11).

Answers to Prayers—“May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed.” (Psalm 20:4).

His Enduring Presence—“May God be merciful unto us, and bless us and make his face shine on us” (Psalm 67:1).

His Remarkable Creation—“May the Lord bless you from Zion, he who is the Maker of heaven and earth.” (Psalm 134:3).

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