

Luke 1.²⁶⁻⁵⁵

'God my Saviour'

Background

The theme of our services leading up to Christmas is simply 'Jesus saves!' and we'll be using Luke's gospel as the basis for our morning studies.

Luke's lengthy gospel record is a masterly account of the life and ministry of Jesus, recorded in such a way that the narrative becomes an exposition of the **salvation** which Jesus came to effect. Jesus Himself would specifically declare towards the end of that ministry that "*the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost*" (Lk.19.10): Luke's narrative effectively provides a helpful explanation of what that salvation involved for Jesus and what it entails for those who trust in Him.

It's partly for that reason that Luke gives far more space than any of the other gospel writers to the details surrounding the birth of Jesus, an opening section which culminates in a genealogy whose climax ties Jesus closely to "... Adam (the name means literally 'the man'), the son of God" (Lk.3.38). Jesus is most truly and fully 'one of us', from those earliest moments as a tiny embryo in the womb of a virgin.

Luke means his readers to see that Jesus has come now, as the 'true man', to be and to do all that the first man so signally failed to be do: and thereby to 'undo' the damage occasioned by sin in the garden of Eden.

Mary's great song here (the '*Magnificat*', so called after the opening word of the song in Latin) is the first of many, and from the start the focus of the song is on 'God my saviour'.

And it is manifestly *God* who has come to effect for us salvation. It's *God* who sends His angel (v.26): it's *God* who will make her conceive (vv.30f): it's *God* who will establish the kingdom of this child (vv.32f): it's *God* who will make it all happen (v.35): it's *God* who will fulfil His promise (v.37).

The scope of this saving work of God is comprehensive, as Mary recognises in her song. The revolution may not have been televised (to quote an old, early 1970s song), but it's certainly begun! It turns everything upside down, because what Jesus will effect through first His life and then His death results in the great 'reversal' – the downward spiral of sin is put in reverse: or, as C S Lewis put it in one of the Narnia Chronicles, '*Death itself would start working backwards.*'

Comprehensive as this saving work of God may be, however, it's also very personal. '*My soul .. my Saviour .. for the Mighty One has done great things for me.*' Luke wrote his gospel for an individual (Theophilus), and was concerned to help the man make (or sustain) his own personal response to Jesus as Saviour. May this Christmas season prompt such songs of rejoicing in all our hearts.

I suggest that days **(1)**, **(6)**, and **(7)** are the ones on which you concentrate if you're not going to manage them all: I've added in some extra questions for discussion in relation to each of these 3 days.

1) Monday 13th December – favoured

Read [Luke 1.26-28](#)

“.. ‘Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you’” (Lk.1.28)

Luke narrates at some length the circumstances surrounding the birth of Jesus and is keen from the start to highlight the way in which God is pleased to involve ordinary men and women in His extraordinary work.

Luke notes all the details carefully: in what ways have you seen the Lord’s attention to detail in His kind providences towards you?

The angel’s words to Mary are applicable to all who are in Christ: what difference will it make to your living today to be greeted thus?

Prayer: *Lord, You have shown me great favour! Make me mindful of those many varied ‘benefits’ which You have bestowed on me, and fill me with great gratitude today.*

2) Tuesday 14th December – kingship

Read [Luke 1.29-33](#)

“You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call Him Jesus ..” (Lk.1.31)

God was now fulfilling a promise long since made – the promise of a King, wise, strong and righteous, whose kingdom will endure for ever: He was to be called ‘Jesus’, because salvation is known as our lives are placed under His kingship.

Have you owned Jesus as Lord? How did God bring you into His kingdom?

You are to call Him Jesus too – ‘the Lord saves’: how have you experienced His saving power and grace?

Read Psalm 72 which celebrates the enduring nature of the promised King: in what ways does our life as a fellowship of His people give people a taste of that kingdom of God in Christ?

Prayer: *Thank You, my Lord and King, that You deliver the needy who cry out, taking pity on them and saving Your people from death.*

3) Wednesday 15th December – supernatural

Read [Luke 1.34-35](#)

“.. ‘How will this be,’ Mary asked the angel, ‘since I am a virgin?’ ..” (Lk.1.34)

The gospel is fundamentally supernatural. Mary doesn’t doubt that but needs the reassurance of the angel as to how a virgin such as she is will conceive and give birth to a son. God comes upon His people by His Spirit to do His great things through them.

How does the assurance that the Spirit has 'come on' you as a believer impact your day by day living?

In what ways have you seen God at work in your life doing well-nigh 'impossible' things?

Prayer: *How great You are, O living God, and how mighty are the works of Your hand! Use my life as the canvas on which You continue to display Your glory.*

4) Thursday 16th December – trustworthy

Read [Luke 1.36-38](#)

".. No word from God will ever fail .." (Lk.1.37)

The Lord by His angel had given His word to Zechariah and Elizabeth: and now He gives His word to Mary. The fact that Elizabeth is (remarkably) pregnant serves a further re-assurance to Mary that she can trust God's word of promise. So can you!

What promises of God to you have been wonderfully fulfilled?

How does the assurance that no word from God will ever fail encourage you?

Prayer: *Lord, You have made some amazing promises! How wonderful to know that all Your promises find their fulfilment in Jesus. Help me to trust Your word today!*

5) Friday 17th December – blessed

Read [Luke 1.39-45](#)

".. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil His promises to her .." (Lk.1.45)

The word of God is to be believed, His promises embraced. Your enjoyment of the blessing of God is tied closely to your taking God at His word and trusting He'll fulfil His promises to you. The 3-fold repetition of 'Blessed' (vv.42, 45) underlines just this.

How careful are you to be sensitive, alert and obedient to the leadings and promptings of the Spirit of God?

For whom may you be able to pray for or pronounce God's blessing today?

Prayer: *Grant me the blessing always of Your Spirit coming on me, O Lord, that I may be a channel of Your blessing into the lives and experience of those I meet today.*

6) Saturday 18th December – personal

Read [Luke 1.46-49](#)

".. my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour .." (Lk.1.47)

The gospel is very personal. God may be the infinite Creator, but He takes to do with ordinary individuals. Mary got that. She delighted in the realization that the living God was 'mindful' of her and pleased to do great things in her and for her.

You too are 'blessed' as a believer (see [Eph.1.3](#)): what would be the evidences of that 'blessedness' which the children growing up in our fellowship today will see?

What has caused you to rejoice afresh in God your Saviour over these past days?

In what ways is it evident that, like Mary, you are the Lord's servant (see [v.38](#) too)?

What would you tell an enquiring friend have been (and are) the great things which the Mighty One has done for you and for your fellowship?

Prayer: Sometimes, Lord, I get tired and stressed and You seem very distant. Stir within my heart again today a joy in Yourself and a delight in all You do for me.

7) Sunday 19th December – help

Read [Luke 1.50-55](#)

".. His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation" (Lk.1.50)

God is indeed a very present help in time of trouble for all who look to Him. Practical help flows from His merciful heart in pursuit of His covenant love: it will find varied expression, but whatever your need, as you look to Him, be sure He will help you!

Why is pride such a barrier to knowing God's blessing?

What is your own testimony to the ways in which the Lord has 'filled the hungry with good things'?

Like Hannah (see [1 Sam.2.1-10](#)), Mary was able to see that her experience of God's mercy was seen also on the larger canvas of history: what instances of the Lord's performing such 'mighty deeds with His arm' (vv.51-55) can you think of?

Prayer: Thank You, Lord, that I may approach Your throne of grace with confidence, and that there I will always receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.