

## Meditation

### Magnificat Counterpoint – the story behind Mary's song

*Mary's song of praise in Luke 1 has been sung, set and meditated on by Christians for hundreds of years. It voices authentically the life and heart that sung it. True worship sings between its lines – praise, adoration and the willingness to say yes to God whatever the cost – in obedient love for him and out of a reflection of his compassion and commitment to others. (Thank you Matt Hatch at Mosaic Church, Leeds for some of the fresh teaching that inspired this meditation.)*

*If you find this helpful, you might like to download the audio version of it on our seasonal page at [www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-seasonal](http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/whereworldandworshipmeet-seasonal) or read the Shepherd devotional we wrote last year as part of our Omega Course for Advent. (You'll find that in session 2 at <http://www.thesanctuarycentre.org/resources/Omega+-+Session+2.pdf> )*

His life could mean the death of mine.

A reputation shattered. And hard lies spoken by people who won't believe – or can't believe – the unbelievable truth.

Even perhaps a stone thrown. And then another and another. Until breath stops short and life is lost. And deathly silence comes.

And if no silence – then noise. And if no stones, then words that break and bruise and exclude. And whispers, always whispers. Cold shoulders; points; stares. And more and more. Until breath stops short and the life I've known is lost.

Joseph.

Time and again I have breathed out his name in anticipation – half-joy, half-nervous apprehension.

Since my earliest days I've been preparing to be a wife.

His wife.

He is my future. My security. My destiny.

His name to be mine. His identity to cover me, protect me, define me. His sons to come from me and rise up in his strong shadow to tower over me. A wing overstretching us; a fathering presence guiding us.

Safety. Security. Acceptance. Hope.

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So yes, *his* life could be the death of mine.

I could lose everything for his tiny form.

But still my soul sings.

And still I say yes.

I fear the Lord more than the stones or words or loss of everything I hold dear.

I love the Lord more than anything I call precious...

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For his life is The Life.

It is the very death of death.

His word is The Word.

It lives and breathes and cannot come back empty.

And I want to hear it released among us. The promise in skin and bones among us – speaking the Truth.

For centuries prophets have told of his coming, and I can't remember a time when I didn't hear of it as my people's dearest dream. Sometimes just a whisper when the soldiers were near. Sometimes in rousing songs by the fire. But always persistent. Always there. Our favourite story. Our strength to carry on.

In my heart too, his name spells hope. The thought of him has always been my song.

He is our future. Our security. Our destiny.

His name will be ours. His identity will cover us, protect us, define us. God's son to come from me and rise up in his strong shadow to tower over me. A wing overstretching us; a fathering presence guiding us.

Safety. Security. Acceptance. Hope.

And more. And more. Still my soul sings!

Wonderful Counsellor; Prince of Peace; Champion of justice and King of Kings.

Redeemer; Deliverer; Saviour – Jesus.

The Messiah come at last.

God with us. God for us.

Now the islands will have their hope.

The hungry will be satisfied – full of good things. And the humble? Well the humble will be lifted high.

The law will be fulfilled. Redemption will come. And the poor – the poor will finally be restored.

Even the rich will see the hollowness of their satisfaction next to this.

Next to *him*.

Tables will turn and perfume will pour.

People will recognise the Lord God of all.

Wrongs will be righted and rough roads smoothed;  
Trees and mountains will clap as this king rides through.

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But what if one day.

One dark day.

His life will mean death for him?

Though he – so pure – wouldn't pick up one stone. What if there are words? And more words? Whispers, rumours and lies. What if they seize him and take him and reject him as Isaiah says?

The humblest one of all raised high above us all.

Alone. Anguished. Long past a mother's rescue being enough. Far beyond my protective love.

How will I then let go of this dearest hope? Surrendering again my dream of a family so I – and even they that mock and deny and jeer and crush – can be forgiven and freed.

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For I sense even his death would mean life for us.

Full life. Abundant life. Exuberant, eternal, life-giving life. For us.

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And so my hand rests here waiting to feel the first signs of his miracle growth.

And I watch. And I wait. And I pray and I praise. And I gladly risk my everything for his costly grace.

For his life will mean life.

Forever.

So I'll give my life for his life.

Gladly.

And people will always call me blessed

Because of this joyous sacrifice - because of this heartfelt YES!