

Luke 1:54

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;

Analysis

Mary declares God's help of 'his servant Israel' in remembrance of mercy, connecting her personal experience to national covenant promises. The phrase 'holpen' (Greek 'antelabeto') means to take hold of, support, or help—God actively intervenes for His people. Calling Israel 'his servant' echoes Isaiah 41:8-9 and affirms the nation's covenant relationship despite unfaithfulness. 'In remembrance of his mercy' indicates God acts according to His covenant promises, not Israel's merit. This demonstrates Reformed covenant theology—God's faithfulness to His word and His people based on His character, not their worthiness. Mary understands Jesus's coming as fulfillment of God's ancient promises.

Historical Context

Written during Roman occupation when Israel seemed forgotten, Mary's words affirm God's covenant faithfulness. Jesus's birth fulfills centuries of promises to Israel, demonstrating that God never abandons His covenant people even through long periods of apparent silence.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does God's covenant faithfulness encourage us during apparent divine silence?
2. What does it mean that God remembers His mercy and acts accordingly?
3. How does Jesus's birth fulfill God's promises to Israel?

Interlinear Text

ἀντελάβετο	Ἰσραὴλ	παιδὸς	αὐτοῦ	μνησθῆναι	ἐλέους
He hath holpen	Israel	servant	G846	in remembrance	of his mercy
G482	G2474	G3816		G3415	G1656

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 98:3 (Grace): He hath remembered his mercy and his truth toward the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

Micah 7:20 (Grace): Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.

Isaiah 44:21 (References Israel): Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me.

Jeremiah 31:20 (Grace): Is Ephraim my dear son? is he a pleasant child? for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still: therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the LORD.