

Mary, the Mother of Jesus

Part 1

Introduction

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is probably the most beloved woman in Christian history, the favorite subject of many painters, sculptors and musicians, but the Bible is sparse in its information of her. It gives us few details about this beloved woman who was honored by God by allowing her to bear our Savior on earth. Much of what we believe about her comes from tradition, rather than Scripture. However, we do know that she was a virgin (Isa. 7:14) and Luke 1:27, that she was engaged to Joseph (v. 26), that she favor with God (v. 29), and that she was obedient to God (Luke 1:38). Our first glimpse of Mary is through Old Testament prophecy.

The Scripture: Isaiah 7:14

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel."

1. What was the prophecy? _____

Thousands of years later that prophecy was fulfilled at Jesus' birth in Luke 2:6.

The Scripture: Luke 1:26-29

"In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.' Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be."

2. How is Mary described? _____

3. What was Joseph's occupation and lineage? _____

4. How did Gabriel greet Mary? _____

5. What was Mary's response? _____

The Scripture: Luke 1:30-33

"The angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid. Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.'"

6. What did Gabriel tell her? _____

The name Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means, "The Lord saves."

7. What else did Gabriel say? _____

The Scripture: Luke 1:38

"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said."

8. How did Mary respond? _____

In her response, we see both Mary's humility and her obedience. Hundreds of questions must have flooded her mind, but she asked only one.

The Scripture: Luke 1:34

"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, 'since I am a virgin?'"

9. What was Mary's question? _____

The Scripture: Luke 1:35

"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'"

10. What was Gabriel's answer? _____

Gabriel then told her that her elderly cousin, Elizabeth. Elizabeth was the only person who would understand the miracle Mary was experiencing because she too was experiencing a miraculous conception. Mary quickly hurried to her cousin's home.

The Scripture: Luke 1:4

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

11. What happened when Mary greeted Elizabeth? _____

The Scripture: Luke 1:42,45

"In a loud voice she exclaimed, 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear!''Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished."

12. What did Elizabeth exclaim? _____

How Mary needed this reassurance!

The Scripture: Luke 1:39-45

Read aloud the beautiful song the Church knows as the Magnificat and meditate on it for a few minutes.

"My soul glorifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me--holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear Him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with His arm; He has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. 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. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as He said to our fathers."

The Scripture: Luke 1:56

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

13. How long did Mary stay with Elizabeth? _____

We can only imagine what these two women spoke of as they visited together, both astonished at what they were experiencing. Now Mary had the problem of telling Joseph about her pregnancy.

The Scripture: Matthew 1:18-19

"This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly."

14. How is Joseph described? _____

The Bible tells us little about Joseph, but because he would be a parent to Jesus, we know that he was someone very special.

15. What did he plan to do? _____

At that time a betrothal was almost equivalent to a marriage.

The Scripture: Matthew 1:20-21

"But after he had considered it, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your Wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.'"

16. What made him change his mind? _____

17. What did he tell Joseph about the baby Mary was carrying? _____

18. What was the child to be called? _____

19. Why? _____

The Scripture: Matthew 1:22-23

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord has said through the prophet: 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel which means, God is with us.'"

20. What would people call Him? _____

The Scripture: Matthew 1:24

"When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife."

21. What did Joseph do? _____

Like Mary before him, Joseph was obedient without question.

The Birth of Jesus

Old Testament prophecy said that the long awaited Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

The Scripture: Luke 2:1,3

"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ...And everyone went to his own town to register."

22. Why did Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem? _____

The Scripture: Luke 2: 6-7

"While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn."

23. What happened there? _____

24. Why was He born in a manger? _____

The Scripture: Luke 2:8-10

“And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

25. Who appeared to the shepherds? _____

The angel told the, frightened men that a Savior had been born in Bethlehem. A great company of angels appeared, giving glory to God. After they left, the shepherds decided to go to Bethlehem and see the Babe. After they had seen him they spread the news of what had happened.

The Scripture: Luke 2:19

"Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."

26. What was Mary's attitude toward everything that had happened? _____

In the second part of this study, we follow Mary's life until she witnesses Jesus' crucifixion and ascension.

The Answers

1. That a virgin would give birth to a son
2. As a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph
3. He was a carpenter and a descendant of David.
4. He said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."
5. She was troubled.
6. That she would give birth to a son. She was told to name Him Jesus and that He would be called the Son of the Most High.
7. That Jesus would reign over the house of Jacob forever, and that His kingdom would never end.
8. "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."
9. How that could be since she was a virgin
10. That the Holy Spirit would come upon her and the power of the Most High would overshadow her
11. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and the baby in her womb leaped.
12. "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished."
13. About three months
14. As a righteous man, unwilling to publicly expose Mary
15. Quietly divorce Mary
16. An angel appeared to him dream and told him to take Mary as his wife
17. That the child was conceived by the Holy Spirit
18. Jesus
19. Because He would save people from their sins
20. Immanuel, which means, "God with us"
21. He did what the angel commanded him
22. To register for a census decreed by the Roman governor
23. Jesus was born.
24. Because there was no room at the inn
25. An angel
26. She treasured them and pondered them in her heart.

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