

Women of The Bible—Mary
Part 1- The early years

1. What do we know of Mary? An overview
2. **Luke 1:26-56 - Mary's call**
 - a. Verses 26-27- ***Meeting Mary***
 - i. What do we learn about Mary from this passage?
 1. She lived in a small rather insignificant town of Nazareth
 - a. Historian Josephus named over 200 cities in his writing regarding the area of Galilee- yet never mentioned Nazareth
 - b. The Jewish Talmud listed over 60 towns in Galilee and again never mentioned Nazareth
 2. She was virgin betrothed to Joseph the carpenter. What is betrothed? It was a legally binding agreement even though they were not yet married (Dt 22:23)
 3. Based off of these two observations, was she an important person?
 - b. Verses 28-33- ***The angels greetings***
 - i. Discuss the angel and his greetings.
 - ii. This passage demonstrates that she was chosen by God. How amazing is that thought to this young girl?
 - c. Verses 34-38- ***How can this be?***
 - i. What does the angel offer to answer Mary's question from vs 34?
 1. It will be through the work of the Holy Spirit
 2. God has already done a miracle with your cousin Elizabeth
 3. Conclusion: Nothing is impossible with God
 - ii. How does Mary's acceptance of the angel's explanation reflect upon her as a woman of God?
 - iii. What is different about her response from Zechariah's regarding John? (v 34,38) "*Unlike Zacharias, Mary had not difficulty in believing that what the angel promised would happen (Lk 1:45). She did have a question concerning how (v 34) it would happen*" Roper
 - d. Verses 39-45- ***Mary visits Elizabeth***
 - i. The trip from Nazareth to Judah would be 70-80 miles. Why make this trip to see Elizabeth? What might she have wanted to share with her cousin?
 - ii. Vs 42- The elder woman, Elizabeth exclaims "blessed are you"... According to David Roper, this was a Hebrew expression meant to point out not just that she was blessed, but that she was the "*most blessed*".
 1. Mary was especially blessed.
 - e. Verses 46-56- ***Mary's Praise of the Lord***
 - i. How does Mary address God?
 1. Lord- 46
 2. God my savior- 47

- ii. How does she describe her response to God?
 - 1. Her soul magnifies the Lord
 - a. What does magnify mean?
 - 2. Her spirit rejoices in God
 - 3. She will be called blessed because of what HE has done for her (49)
- iii. How does she describe the works of God?
- iv. Comments?
 - 1. Her focus seems to be on God's hand and strength offered to the humble and lowly

f. Why did God find favor with this young, betrothed woman?

- i. She was a Godly person (Lk 1:30)
- ii. She believed in God and his power (Lk 1:31-33)
 - 1. She asked *how* it would be possible, but did not doubt God's ability to make it happen (Lk 1:45)
- iii. She was humble (Lk 1:38a) - her use of the word slave is the feminine form which was the lowliest form; the most despised and mistreated of slaves.
- iv. She was submissive (Lk 1:38b)- even though the call placed on her would surely be difficult there is no word of complaint or hesitation
- v. She knew the scripture
 - 1. Her song reveals an understanding of the character of God. It has been said that her song reflects upon around 12 different Old Testament passages. What makes this more interesting is that it was only the boys who were allowed to attend the synagogue schools.

3. (For Joseph's call see Matthew 1:18-25)

- a. Consider these thoughts
 - “When Mary walked into Nazareth, returning from her three months with Elizabeth, it must have been obvious to everyone that she was pregnant. Gossip probably spread quickly.”
 - “Joseph must have been devastated.” Roper
 - “He must have realized, however, that now both he and Mary would be targets for the snicker and snide remarks of the crude and unfeeling. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate.”

- i. See Mt 1:24-25

- b. Comments?

4. Luke 2:1-38- announcement and birth- Pay attention to the repeated praise offered

- a. Verses 1-7- **The birth of Christ**
 - i. Why does Mary make the trip? It is generally agreed that Mary would not have been required to go by law.
 - 1. How does this reflect upon Joseph and Mary?
 - a. Strength

- b. Commitment to each other and family
 - ii. Comments?
 - b. Verses 16-19- ***The Shepherd's visit***
 - i. What are Mary and Joseph told by the shepherds?
 - ii. How would it be to hear these things?
 - iii. What significance is there in verse 19?
 - c. Verses 22-24- ***Jesus presented at the temple***
 - i. What does the text show us about Mary?
 - 1. She was careful to do what the Law required
 - 2. She was poor (Lev 12:8, Luke 2:24)
 - d. Verses 25-35- ***Simeon's Praise***
 - i. Discuss the praise offered.
 - ii. What is said concerning Joseph and Mary? (v 33)
 - iii. Discuss the words directed at Mary (v 34-35).
 - e. Verses 36-38- ***Anna's Praise***
- 5. Matthew 2:11- wise men**
 - a. ***Additional praise.*** What is said regarding the wise men's (Magi, seekers of knowledge) visit.
- 6. Matthew 2:13-18- Flight to Egypt**
 - a. How would this angelic direction impact you? Your life? Your family? Notice the power in his words—"*to search for the child, to destroy him.*"
 - i. There is no hesitation for Joseph or Mary. They obey.
 - ii. Some have asked what they lived on as they were in Egypt. Possibilities:
 - 1. Joseph found work
 - 2. The gifts from the Wise men.
 - b. Other warnings and directions would follow
 - i. Mt 2:20
 - ii. Mt 2:22
- 7. Luke 2:41-51- boy Jesus in the temple**
 - a. ***What is revealed*** about Joseph and Mary in this text?
 - i. They were careful to do what God wanted. It was a requirement that all men went to Jerusalem three times a year.
 - ii. They were amazed by their son (v 48)
 - iii. They were concerned for the welfare of their son (v 48)
 - 1. Describe how you think Joseph and Mary felt?
 - 2. Have you ever lost a child? When you find them you are upset and relieved.
 - iv. They were still without understanding (v 50)
 - v. Mary continued to treasure up all these things (v 50)
 - b. Side note: We have here in this passage the first recorded words of Jesus... literally he is saying "I must be in the things of My Father."
- 8. What influential qualities have we seen thus far in Mary?**
 - i. She was a Godly person (Lk 1:30)

- ii. She believed in God and his power (Lk 1:31-33)
- iii. She was humble (Lk 1:38a)
- iv. She was submissive (Lk 1:38b, 2:22, 41)
- v. She knew the scripture (Lk 1:46-55)
- vi. She was committed to and cared for her family (Lk 2:4-5, 48)