



THE WOMEN IN MATTHEW ONE

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Mary the Mother of Jesus

What we know about Mary:

- From Nazareth
John 1:45-46: *Philip found Nathanael and told him, "We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."⁴⁶ "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" Nathanael asked. "Come and see," said Philip.*
- From the lineage of David
Luke 2:4-5: *So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*
- A virgin, betrothed to Joseph
Matthew 1:18-19: *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

What we don't know about Mary:

- Who her parents were.
- How old she was.
- If she was educated.

The Angel Gabriel appeared to her.

Luke 1:26 – 38

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, ³³ and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

³⁴ "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

³⁵ The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called ^[b] the Son of God. ³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. ³⁷ For no word from God will ever fail."

³⁸ "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

Mary's response to the Angel Gabriel:

Verse 29: *But she was greatly troubled. . .*

Verse 34: *And Mary asked to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"*

Verse 38: *And Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled."*

Verse 45: (Elizabeth said) *"Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"*

Let's think of some of the normal, natural questions and objections that Mary could have legitimately raised at that point.

Mary visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:39 – 45

At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

The Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55:

And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸ for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."

Matthew gives us more information about the birth of Jesus:

Matthew 1:18 - 25:

This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But after he had considered this, 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. ²¹ 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."

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Why was it essential that the Christ be born of a virgin?

It is not an optional theology. Your whole destiny—and mine—depends upon whether or not it is true.

The Christ could not be born by ordinary means. Otherwise he would have inherited the same sinful nature that all of us have inherited. Jesus was fully God and fully man, because he was born of a human but his birth was not like that of any other human birth. The virgin birth was necessary to secure both a real human nature and a completely divine nature.

Mary was called blessed and favored:

Luke 1:28:

The angel (Gabriel) went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

Luke 1:30:

And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

Luke 1:41-42:

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴²In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!"

Luke 1:48:

(Mary said) "From now on all generations will call me blessed,"

What was Mary's life like?

With a new baby and still very young herself, Mary and Joseph go to a foreign land to save the baby. It was a totally different culture, different language, different lifestyle. What was their life like there? How do you think they survived?

Finally, they return to Nazareth, several more children are born to Mary and Joseph, Joseph uses his skill as a carpenter to earn their living. But can you imagine what people said and thought about them?

Then Mary stood at the foot of the cross and watched Jesus suffer and die. At that moment she probably didn't feel like she was "blessed and favored by God."

Why did God choose Mary?

What was it about this young lady that qualified her for this incredible privilege of bearing the Savior of the world?

When she dedicated Jesus at the temple, the prophet Simeon said to Mary:

"This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." (Luke 2:34-35)

Can you imagine the conversations she and Joseph had as they raised Jesus? What was it like to raise a perfect child—one who never needed correction or punishment? He was perfect; his mother and earthly father were not; his siblings were not.

It is an incredible truth that God became flesh and dwelt among us, and for his earthly mother, we can only imagine the joy and the amazement she knew as she watched this miracle baby grow, and the pain she knew as she watched him die the cursed death of a crucifixion. But she was there when Jesus rose from the dead.

We can only imagine what it was like to be chosen by God for this assignment. What if he had chosen you?

God uses the unqualified and unworthy

So, here are these five women, Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba and Mary. The only women mentioned in the genealogy of Jesus Christ. Why did the Holy Spirit include just these women?

1 Corinthians 1:26 - 29:

Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. ²⁸ God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, ²⁹ so that no one may boast before him.

So you see the beauty of this genealogy? Can you understand why these five women were listed? They were listed to encourage you and me, and to show us the vastness of God's marvelous grace!.