



# Mary

“Women in the Genealogy of Christ”

*“And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God.” Luke 1:28-30 KJV*

“Blessed are you among women” was the angel’s message to Mary. We accept this as a wonderful thing. But let’s think about Mary’s situation. She was probably a young girl; some people think she may have only been 13 or 14 years old. She had recently become engaged to a man she loved, Joseph.

The feelings inside her young body must have been very confused for many reasons. She had to tell her parents who would naturally have thought that she was pregnant to Joseph and been upset with her. And, Mary and her parents would be looked down on by the town because she was pregnant out of wedlock. Joseph knew he had not had any sexual relationship with her so he would be upset. Did Mary really think it was a blessing when it first happened? According to the Gospel of Luke 1:38 Mary responded to the angel and said “Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.”

Much has been said about the words of Mary when she visited her cousin Elisabeth who would bear John the Baptist. Elisabeth and Zachariah were older and were so blessed to be able to bear a child and then Mary comes to them, a young girl, and tells them she is going to have the Saviour of the world. But Elizabeth responds “Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.” Luke 1:42

We never hear what her parents say. But we do know that Joseph was confused. He loved Mary, and he knew he had not had intercourse with her, and yet she was pregnant. What was he to think? According to Matthew Joseph thought about just putting her away until this baby was born. Actually we are told that according to their laws at that time, he should have divorced her and she could have been stoned for her sin. Yes it was a blessing, but why did it have to be done this way. Then God steps in and helps Joseph. According to Matthew 1:20 “But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesis: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

Their people had gone through generations of banishment, subjugation, homelessness, injustice, and prejudice. This was a wonderful blessing for the Jews.

We know the ancestry of Mary and Joseph by names mentioned in Matthew and Luke, but as far as anything else, they are sort of strangers! Doesn’t anyone care about their parents and what work they did, what their financial status was, what their status was in the community? Those things don’t seem to be important. We do know that God selected her and I believe that he selected Joseph to be her husband, and help her raise their son who was not really theirs and who would be killed by angry jealous leaders. It would have taken a special man to raise that child. It would have taken special people to be the brothers and sisters of a sibling who claimed to be the Son of God. We do know that in addition to Jesus, there was James, Joses, Judas, and Simon as well as daughters. We know that Mary had a very special cousin, Elisabeth, who with her husband Zechariah gave birth to a son, John the Baptist.

Then we can also hear Mary asking why they had to travel to Bethlehem to have this child born. Surely it could have happened at another time of the year when the taxes weren’t being counted. And, particularly when she was almost due to deliver. Couldn’t someone else have gone for them? Wasn’t there someone there that they could have made arrangements with ahead of time to stay with?

Probably the most important thing for us to learn from Mary is that each one of us is called by God to do His will. Some calls are more definite than others, and none of us can compare to the calls that were given to Mary and Joseph. Each Christmas, and throughout the year, we need to realize that we are called to do God’s work. From a babe born in a manger we learn that we can’t always make things convenient for us. There is a reason we can’t see.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the love You gave to us through Mary, the peasant girl. We thank You for Mary who in blind faith carried the Christ Child so that we may all have eternal life. Help us to spread the Good News and know that You gave Your only Son for us. Amen

1. Why was Mary afraid to tell Joseph?
2. What is the significance of the Christ Child being born to a peasant virgin girl?
3. Do you wonder what people in the small town said behind the backs of the family?
4. Can you begin to understand the feelings of her parents?
5. Do you ever feel chosen for a task that you don't really want to do? Or that you don't understand? Does God call to you today?

© Gail Kennedy Keffer