

MARY, MOTHER OF JESUS

Introduction

Mary was the young Galilean Jewish woman of Nazareth, whom God chose to be the vessel to bare His physical presence on earth in the life of Jesus, who would be called the Son of God. The amazing touch of God on Mary's life that was about to happen was revealed to her by an angel (**Luke 1:26-38**). A betrothed virgin at the time, the baby who would be Jesus was conceived within Mary by the Holy Spirit. It was a divine conception (**Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:35**), termed the Immaculate Conception by the Catholic Church. Mary's betrothed, Joseph, was also informed, in advance, by an angel of this special event (**Matthew 1:20-23**).

Mary gave birth to Jesus in the town of Bethlehem, when she and Joseph traveled there to register in a census required by Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus. With Bethlehem crowded with citizens from all over the region registering in the census, lodging was difficult to find. Mary and Joseph found refuge in a place where animals were kept and, after his birth, laid Jesus in a manger or feeding trough. Such was the humble start of the Son of God born of the virgin Mary.

Mary's Background and Life

Little is recorded in the Bible about Mary's background. According to the apocryphal writing called the Protoevangelium, a work not included in the authorized biblical canon, Mary's parents were Joachim and Anna, an elderly couple of Jerusalem. Another early apocryphal writing purported Mary's birthplace to be Sepphoris in Galilee. These are interesting but unsubstantiated details about Mary.

According to the gospel of Mark, Mary did have other children. Scoffers of Jesus' ministry are recorded to have said, "**Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?**" (**Mark 6:3**). Though the names of the brothers were stated, the names of his sisters were not recorded, nor is much mention of the siblings of Jesus made in the New Testament. We believe much of Mary's heritage was omitted from the biblical canon to allow the focus to be on Jesus and give Him the preeminence He deserves.

Mary did have a very notable cousin by the name of Elizabeth who was pregnant at the same time Mary was. Elizabeth gave birth to a son, a contemporary of Jesus by the name of John, ultimately known as John the Baptist, who would prepare the way for the ministry of Jesus, calling on everyone to repent and be baptized.

Throughout the short earthly life and ministry of Jesus, Mary was mostly an observer. The gospels record these events in which Mary is mentioned:

Purification and presentation of Jesus when he was an infant **(Luke 2:22-24)**.

Jesus in the Temple at age 12. Jesus remained in Jerusalem after Passover, while Mary and Joseph traveled a day's journey before noticing he was missing. Jesus sat under the teaching of rabbis, asking them questions and amazing everyone who perceived his understanding and admired the questions he was asking **(Luke 2:41-52)**.

Mary was present at a wedding in Cana in Galilee, as was Jesus. When the hosts ran out of wine to serve the guests, Mary informed Jesus about the predicament. Jesus replied, **"Dear woman, why do you involve me? . . . my time has not yet come"** **(John 2:1-11)**.

At the crucifixion of Jesus, Mary was there among others Jesus knew. Jesus acknowledged her presence, asking her to perceive his situation and suggesting to the disciples that Mary was now their 'mother' and needed support **(John 19:25-27)**. It is interesting to note that Mary is the only person mentioned in the Bible who was present at both Jesus' birth and death.

Closing Thoughts

Mary was a special woman in the sight of God, to have been chosen to give birth to Jesus. She deserves our admiration for being a willing vessel for God's purposes. Having said that, Mary's veneration by some believers seems misplaced, given the many places in Scripture we are told not to worship or esteem other humans, angels, or other beings God created. Please see these passages – **Matthew 4:9-10; Revelation 22:8-9; Romans 1:25; Colossians 2:18**.

Some Catholics and Eastern Christians teach that Mary's body, at her death, was raised directly to heaven, known as the Assumption of Mary. Some believe she has appeared to believers many times over the centuries. Some even believe that Mary, as the

mother of Jesus, is the mother of God. Most Christians place much less importance on Mary's life, citing lack of biblical support, outside of the virgin birth, as cause to venerate her above other children of God called saints.

Mary is a saint, as are all who receive true life in Jesus Christ
(Romans 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; Revelation 5:8).

This is an introduction on the subject of **Mary, Mother of Jesus**. Here are a few other resources you may wish to explore:

[Who Was Mother Mary, Mary the Mother of Jesus? \(christianity.com\)](http://christianity.com)

[3 Things You Didn't Know about Mary \(Mother of Jesus\) in the Bible \(crosswalk.com\)](http://crosswalk.com)

[Who was MARY, THE MOTHER OF JESUS? - WebBible Encyclopedia - ChristianAnswers.Net](http://WebBible Encyclopedia - ChristianAnswers.Net)

[Mary the Mother of Jesus \(allaboutjesuschrist.org\)](http://allaboutjesuschrist.org)

[What does the Bible say about Christian saints? What are saints? \(compellingtruth.org\)](http://compellingtruth.org)