

Luke 1:26-38 | Mary Did You Know?

Written by John Fox | 11.23.2022

Text: Luke 1:26-38

Title: Mary Did You Know?

FCF: Disinterest/Ingratitude

Shaft: Mary had a redemptive historical expectation the Messiah would come.

Main Point: Mary knew the story of redemption, and so should we.

Points: What is the story of redemption?

1. The Son of Promise (v.26-29)
2. The Son of David (v.30-33)
3. The Son of God (v.34-38)

INTRODUCTION

Mary Did You Know? - Song

There's a common Christmas Song called *Mary Did You Know?* by Christian comedian, Mark Lowry. It lists out, in sentimental fashion, points about Jesus' mission and divinity that His mother Mary probably didn't know. Or, in the least, the song casts some doubt as to how much she knew. Here are the main questions.

Mary, did you know that your baby boy...

- Would one day walk on water?
- Would save our sons and daughters?
- Has come to make you new?
- Will soon deliver you?
- Will give sight to a blind man?
- Will calm the storm with his hand?
- Has walked where angels trod?
- You kiss the face of God?
- Is Lord of all creation?
- Would one day rule the nations?
- Is heaven's perfect Lamb?
- The child is the great, I Am?

In sharp contrast with this, some people say that Mary knew more than the angel Gabriel told her and have re-written the song to elevate Mary even saying that her voice is for the healing of the nations.¹

This morning I want to spend some time with you looking at what the Bible has to say about how much Mary knew. Now, to do this we must take an extremely broad look at the redemptive history. Why? This is because when the angel Gabriel speaks to Mary, it is at the apex of God's self-revelation so we need to back up to get the whole story. Which brings me to the main point for this morning.

¹ <https://communityspiritucc.org/mary-knew/>

Main Point

Main Point: Mary knew the story of redemption, and so should we.

Points: 1) The Son of the Promise, 2) The Son of David, 3) The Son of God.

BODY

1. The Son of Promise (v.26-29)

The first section of our text brings our attention to the promised Son in the Scriptures.

Luke 1:26-29

26 In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, 27 to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And the angel came to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you." 29 But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be.

1. Luke's Careful Investigation

In the beginning of Luke's Gospel he states that many people have tried to describe "the events that have been fulfilled among us," as a preamble to his own account. That phrase undoubtedly refers to the entire life and ministry of Jesus, but also the long and mysterious story of the history of redemption that God had been telling for thousands of years. So whatever Luke has to tell us will be tied to this legacy of prophecy.

2. Proto-Evangelium

The first place in the Bible we see God's promise to send a Savior is in Genesis 3:14-15. God created everything in the beginning, and it was good!. Life with God under the rule of God. No struggle for food or work. No relational strife. No awkward family Thanksgivings. No brokenness. No hiding. No shame. No cancer. No Death. But after Adam and Eve fell prey to the temptation of the Serpent and sinned, God's world fell into chaos and the stewardship of the word fell into the hands of God's enemy. In Jesus's words, the Devil came to steal, kill, and destroy (Jn. 10:10), and has been a liar from the beginning (Jn. 8:44).

Genesis 3:14-15

14 So the Lord God said to the serpent: Because you have done this, you are cursed more than any livestock and more than any wild animal. You will move on your belly and eat dust all the days of your life.

15 I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.

How did God respond? He didn't wipe everyone and everything out and start again. No, he responded in kind to the broken order the Devil had instituted. God's judgment for the woman is difficulty in childbearing and relational strife with man. God's judgment for the man is to curse the ground and have difficulty in food and work all his days. But first God curses the Serpent with hostility from the offspring (seed) of the woman. God essentially told the Serpent that one day a promised boy would come who would crush his head even as the boy was wounded. After this, God slaughters an innocent animal and covers them with the skins.

This is what theologians have called the Proto-Evangelium, the First Gospel in the Bible. God said that one day He would send the Son of Promise who would crush God's great enemy and make everything right. This promise was passed down through the generations which also created a cultural expectation that the Messiah would come.

3. Sara, Rebeka, Rachael, Hannah, Wife of Manoah, etc.

The next time we see this promise it gets a bit clearer. At first God promised that an offspring of the woman would come. But who would it be? Eventually God comes to **Abraham** and promises to make him great and bless everyone on the earth through him. But **Sara** was barren and wouldn't conceive **Isaac** for 25 more years. Talk about a promised son! But it wasn't him.

And so the struggle continued. **Rebeka**, Isaac's wife, had a very painful pregnancy with **Esau** and **Jacob**. **Jacob** married **Rachael** who died in childbirth but also bore **Judah**. And there are so many more examples. Other examples include people who seemed to be in the Messiah's line but actually weren't like the **Wife of Manoah** (Samson's mother) and **Hannah** who was barren and after divine intervention bore **Sammuel** who judged Israel. Sammuel wasn't the one either, but functions as the narratival bridge to **King David**.

So we see that there was a cultural expectation that God would send the Son of the Promise, the Messiah. And one day he would make everything right. But who would it be? By the time of Israel's conquest of the Promised Land there were millions of Israelites, and tens of thousands from the tribe of Judah.

APPLICATION

- Wait on God.

God, in His wisdom and providence, literally took thousands of years to bring about His promise. All of us struggle with waiting on God. As an aside this morning, I just want you to know, God knows what He is doing. And He will accomplish His good and perfect plans.

2. The Son of David (v.30-33)

Now, you may be thinking, wasn't the conservative biblical chronology about 2000 years from Adam to Abraham and another 2000 from Abraham to Jesus? If so, what is the likelihood of a Messiah motif perpetuating for 4000 years? True, it would have failed, if it were not for ongoing difficulty in child bearing and God's intentional self-revelation. Let's go back to Luke 1.

Luke 1:30-33

30 Then the angel told her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. 33 He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end."

1. Davidic Covenant

The next major leap we get in God's story of salvation deals with King David. The angel Gabriel tells Mary that she will conceive a boy named Jesus and this will be the work of the Holy Spirit. There are three things said of Jesus here:

- 1) He will be great. This is an allusion to God's blessing on Abraham.
- 2) He will be called Son of the Most High. John the baptist was the prophet, but Jesus is the Son.
- 3) He will inherit David's throne. This is a call back to God's next step in redemptive history.

Here is the actual message via Samuel.

2 Samuel 7:11b-16

"The Lord declares to you: The Lord himself will make a house for you. 12 When your time comes and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. **14 I will be his father, and he will be my son.** When he does wrong, I will discipline him with a rod of men and blows from mortals. 15 But my **faithful love** will never leave him as it did when I removed it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and kingdom will endure before me forever, and your throne will be established forever."

These are promises to be realized during David's lifetime in relation to his son, **Solomon**. But there are also promises yet to be fulfilled. The center of these promises focuses on the Father- Son relationship.² So yet again, we have the Son of the Promise, but now it's sharpened into the Son of David. Whatever happened after this point in history, the Israelites knew that God would bring the Messiah through David's line. But Solomon wasn't the Messiah either.

² For a wonderful low res video, see Dr. Peter Gentry's lecture on this passage. Timestamp 26-32 min mark. [the david covenant dr. gentry](#).

2. Immense Cultural Pressure for Childbearing

When we put both of these major examples of God's story of salvation together we have an immense cultural pressure for childbearing in the nation of Israel. This pressure still exists. Elana Bloomfield, a medical doctor in Everett, wrote a research article on *The Jewish Female Body in Israeli Reproductive Practice* in 2009. It's a fascinating article where she discusses the role of Jewish women in childbearing in ancient and modern times. It's not a Christian work, but she does point out the religious duty involved for Jewish women in procreation, and IVF in particular.

Dr. Elana Bloomfield, MD Quote

"As she [Chani] shared with me, she believes that God is using IVF as a means of speeding up the arrival of the messiah:

"And they said it's because it's a sign that the moshiach [messiah] is coming. ... So, they say that as we get closer to the moshiach—they knew that when we lost the Temple that there would be this long gap—then things would start to speed up. And that's what's happening here, that we have to speed up the babies being born. This is God's message, this is God's way of saying, "we're bring[ing] you closer." ...there is a religious aspect to this [IVF]."

God uses women's bodies for a purpose that exists outside of the women themselves; through reproduction, women become instruments for a project that resonates for all living things. IVF returns to the earliest of narratives in which God becomes the active partner in reproduction; God now enlists women's physical reproduction as a means of precipitating the messiah's arrival."³

I share this with you because through it we start to get a sense of the weight that was on Mary as a young Jewish girl to bear a son.

APPLICATION

- If you struggle with infertility or singleness, be reminded that God offers a name better than sons or daughters for those who believe in Him (Isaiah 56:4-5)

Example: You Lost Jesus?!

There is actually a really funny point here as well. After all the waiting we find out in the next chapter that during one of the visits to Jerusalem for holy day they literally lost Jesus and later found him in the Temple ([Luke 2:41-50](#)). Can you imagine the conversation between Mary and Joseph? "We FINALLY have the Messiah and you lost him!"

3

https://depts.washington.edu/chid/intersections_Spring_2009/Elena_Bloomfield_The_Jewish_Female_Body_in_Israeli_Reproductive_Practice.pdf, pg. 268.

3. The Son of God (v.34-38)

So, Mary knew that Jesus was the promised Messiah. But did she know more? Yes!

Luke 1:34-38

34 Mary asked the angel, “How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?”

35 The angel replied to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. 36 And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God.”

38 “See, I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary. “May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her.

1. God Himself

The most amazing thing about the Promised Son, The Son of David, is that he is also God Himself. While everyone in Jesus’s day was hoping for political freedom, God had plans to free His people from sin and death. I have heard this described as the two mountains analogy.

2 Mountains Analogy: If you look at two mountains in parallel it may just look like one big mountain. But if you see their profile you realize there are actually two mountains. This is what it was like for nearly everyone before the birth of Christ. The Jewish people were hoping for an earthly king, but what God had planned was a heavenly king. God wasn’t sending someone else to do the job of saving his people this time for He had come to do it Himself.

Even John the Baptist had a hard time with this and doubted while in prison asking, “**Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?**” (Matt. 11:3). But the truth was that after God had finally come in the flesh. All of God’s revelation in the past had been Divine, but Jesus is the apex because if we see Jesus we have seen the Father (Jn. 14:9).

2. We know more than Mary Did!

Did Mary know Jesus would do particular things like walk on water? Probably not. But however much that Mary knew (which was a lot!), the shocking thing is that we know more. The Epistle to the Hebrews says it this way.

Hebrews 1:1-4

1 Long ago God spoke to our ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways. 2 In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. 3 The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat

down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. 4 So he became superior to the angels, just as the name he inherited is more excellent than theirs.

Jesus's top disciple (Peter) put it this way for us.

1 Peter 1:10-12

10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets, who prophesied about the grace that would come to you, searched and carefully investigated. 11 They inquired into what time or what circumstances the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating when he testified in advance to the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you. These things have now been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—angels long to catch a glimpse of these things.

3. The Boy Who Lived

There are a couple of scenes in the Harry Potter books/movies that I feel like capture the anticipation of Jesus's coming well. One is at the end of the first chapter of the first book. After providing the background on Harry's new home with a family that would never appreciate him, it says,

He couldn't know that at this very moment, people meeting in secret all over the country were holding up their glasses and saying in hushed voices: "To Harry Potter — the boy who lived!"⁴

The other is right before Harry is killed.

In the movie Voldemort says, "Harry Potter, the boy who lived; come to die."

We might better say of Jesus, "The boy who lived, born to die... and rise!"

APPLICATION

- Revel in the wonder of how much you know of God's redemption story.

CONCLUSION

Read the story (Luke 1-2 or The Gospel of Mark)

Spend some time this Christmas season acquainting yourself with the good news of the gospel.

⁴ Harry Potter, The Sorcerer's Stone, Ch. 1, pg. 17.