

December 20, 2020
Willerup United Methodist Church
Sermon Notes
Pastor Marvin Singh
Christmas: Mary



Created by Isabel Martínez Isabel
from Noun Project

This Advent we are meditating on the scene around the manger and the different characters who surrounded it.

In the story of Christ's birth, we find the Inn-keeper in the town of Bethlehem, who allowed the expectant family to have a place where they keep their animals. The Emperor August Caesar who made a decree for the census to be taken. The angels and the shepherds, Joseph and Mary, and later King Herod, and the Wise men from the East who were guided the Star, all connected with the birth of baby Jesus.

This week we will look at Mary.

Luke 1:26-55

²⁶In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

²⁹Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. ³¹You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. ³²He 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, ³³and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

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

³⁵The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. ³⁷For nothing is impossible with God."

³⁸"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

³⁹At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When 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! ⁴³But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

⁴⁶And Mary said:

"My soul glorifies the Lord

⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,

⁴⁸for he has been mindful

of the humble state of his servant.

From now on all generations will call me blessed,
⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me—
holy is his name.

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

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

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

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

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

⁵⁵to Abraham and his descendants forever,
even as he said to our fathers."

There were so many Mary's in the New Testament.

Mary the mother of our Lord,

Mary the sister of Martha, Luke 10:38-42; John 11:17-44, 12:1-2

Mary Magdalene, Luke 8:2; Mark 16:9

Mary the mother of James, sometimes referred to as "the other
Mary," Matthew 27:55-56, 61, 28:1

Mary the mother of Mark, Acts 12:12; Barnabas was also related to
this Mary, Colossians 4:10

Mary, who was greeted by Paul in Romans 16:6

Here we will study Mary the mother of Jesus.

The name appears as *Maria* or *Miriam* in the New Testament. Both
are Greek forms of the Hebrew name Miriam.

Mary was largely confined to the infancy narratives of Matthew and
Luke in their initial chapters. The remaining references to Mary in

the gospels are few and relatively uninformative. Finally we see Mary at the foot of the cross, where she and the beloved disciple are entrusted by Jesus to each other's care, John 19:25-27. The only other explicit reference is found in Acts 1:14, where she and the disciples are described as "devoting themselves to prayer."

New Bible Dictionary, pg. 736-737.

Mary is described **Luke 1:26-33**.

Mary was living in Nazareth, in Galilee, and was engaged to a carpenter named Joseph.

The angel Gabriel described her as "highly favored," and further describes her: "you have found favor with God."

Mary asks a question – Luke 1:34-38

1. How this will be, since I am a virgin?

She asked this when the angel Gabriel visited her and brought this message – that she has found favor with God and will give birth to a son, who will be great and called the Son of the Most High.

She was struggling and was troubled.

The answer is given by the angel to her.

"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you, ... **For nothing is impossible with God.**"

These **questions** come to our minds too.

a. When the Lord had compassion over the people. The disciples asked him, "**How will we feed so many people?**" Matthew 14:13-21.

This is a remote place, it's getting already late ... We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish. In other words, how can we do it?

The Lord enabled them to see the miracle of God. Not only did they feed this big crowd, but also had enough leftovers.

b. When Elijah asked the widow of Zarephath to prepare him a meal in the midst of famine. 1 Kings 17:8-24

She replied, “... **I don’t have any bread - only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.**” Elijah said first give me some food, and make something for you and your son. The Elijah answered her: For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says, “the jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the Lord gives rain on the land.”

c. When the Israel was surrounded by the armies of Aram, Elisha’s servant asked, “**Oh my Lord, what shall we do?**” 2 Kings 6:8-23. Elisha answered, “**Don’t be afraid ... those who are with us are more than those who are with them.**” ... Then the Lord opened his eyes and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.”

Yes, we too are confronted with situations which are beyond our understanding to face. The Lord answers, and shows us the way out.

Yes, everything is possible with God. The word is *with* – are you with Him?

In our seminary we used to gather for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Before we said grace, we would sing a chorus. One of them I remember was this:

Without him I can do nothing,
Without him I will surely fail,

Without him I will be drifted
like a boat without sail.

Paul says to the Philippians, “I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength,” Philippians 4:13

2. Mary’s response was: **“I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me as you have said,”** Luke 1:38.

What is your response to the call God gives to us?

a. Moses comes to my mind. When God called him to lead the Israelites from the Egyptians slavery. Exodus chapters 3-4.

His **response:**

The **excuses** he began to give. 3:11, 13; 4:1, 10, 13.

* Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?

* When people ask, “Who sent you, what is his name?” What shall I tell them?

* What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, “The Lord did not appear to you.”

* I have never been eloquent, neither in the past, nor since you have spoken to your servant, I am slow of speech and tongue.

* Oh, please send someone else to do it.

The Lord **answered all his excuses, but also got angry.**

b. On the other hand there was **little Samuel**, being raised in the temple of God under his mentor Eli, 1 Samuel chapter 3.

Three times Samuel heard a voice calling his name: Samuel, Samuel. He went to Eli and inquired whether he called him or not. Two times Eli answered, he did not call, go and sleep.

Remember Samuel did not know yet know the Lord. The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him, (vs.7). Eli realized it now and instructed him to respond.

“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”

c. The Call of Isaiah, Isaiah chapter 6.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, **‘Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?’**”

Isaiah replied, **“Here am I, send me.”**

Mary accepted and was ready to become God’s servant. Are we making excuses for not responding to the call of God?

Let us examine ourselves in the light of this word.

Mary expressed through her praise song

“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.”

God chose her, for the Savior to born through her.

God can use you to bring His Savior Jesus Christ to many.