

# MARY - EARTHLY MOTHER OF JESUS

## A Biblical Perspective

Mary means “loved by Yahweh”. When we first meet Mary in the Bible, she was a humble, faith filled, young (maybe 13 or 14?) Jewish girl who simply saw herself as a person who loved God and who was privileged to serve Him any way she could.

Mary had the highest calling a pious Jewish woman could ever desire: to be the earthly mother of the promised Messiah. Mary humbly accepted her calling and we can learn valuable lessons from her example. Before looking at some key stories lets address some misconceptions about her:

### I. Mary was a very special person

- \* She "found favor with God" (Lk 1:30)
- \* She was "blessed among women" (Lk 1:42)

Based on the gospel accounts, we can conclude that she was a holy, righteous, humble servant of God. She had the great honor of being the earthly mother of Jesus.

Luke 1:46-55 provides us her own self-perspective. In this passage she focuses on God and His greatness, and expresses appreciation for what God has done for her.

Note: Mary was not the mother of the Son of God (who has existed for all eternity and is the second member of the Trinity; Mary is the earthly mother of the Son of Man – Jesus Christ).

### II. Some Questions & Answers

Q: Should we pray to Mary?

A: No. There are no biblical examples or commands to pray to her. All the biblical examples and commands involve praying to God, not a human being such as Mary.

Q: Was Mary sinless?

A: No. In Luke 1:47 she refers to God her Savior (sinless people don't need a Savior). Also, verses like Romans 3:10, 3:23 and others say that we ALL have sinned without exception. Only Jesus was sinless.

Q: Was Mary born of a virgin or conceived by God?

A: No. She is listed in the gospel genealogies with human parents and there is no biblical evidence that she was born of a virgin or conceived by God.

Q: Did Mary remain a virgin her whole life?

A: No. After Jesus was born, she had sexual relations with her husband Joseph and she bore a number of other sons and daughters (Mt 1:18-20, 24-25, 13:53-56; Mk 6:1-3; Lk 8:19-21).

Q: Is Mary to be worshipped?

A: No. Refer to Luke 8:19-21 and Luke 11:27-28.

Q: Can Mary save anyone? Is she involved in the salvation process?

A: No. Only Jesus can save people (I Tim 2:5-6; Jn 14:6; Acts 4:12).

Q: Did Mary play a major role in the New Testament church?

A: Mary played a role like some other women, but apparently not a large role. There is only one brief mention of her outside the gospels (Acts 1:14).

### **Some key snapshots of Mary's life:**

Luke 1:26-56 Mary's calling and her response

Luke 2:41-52 Jesus the boy and Mary's response

John 2:1-11 Jesus the man and His first public miracle, and Mary's response

John 19:25-27 Jesus at his death reveals His love for His earthly mother

### **Some Lessons from Mary's Life:**

- 1) Mary had a special relationship with God
- 2) Mary modeled great faith
- 3) Mary said "yes" to God even though it was costly to her
- 4) Mary valued her commitment to God far above other's opinions
- 5) Mary's life models meditative wisdom (see Luke 2:19, 2:51)
- 6) Mary stayed connected to God
- 7) Mary stayed connected to people who encouraged her (e.g. Joseph, Elizabeth, Apostle John)

### **Other lessons from Mary?**