

# Looking into Mary's Heart and Soul

## Part One: Faith and Submission

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:26-38

Luke gives us details about Mary. Her responses to some great events in the story of Christ's birth and childhood reveal faith, humility, courage, and attention to the work of God in her life and in the lives of others around her. This series will examine those things, in the first two chapters of Luke, that reveal much of what was in Mary's heart and soul. For one who received no formal training, Mary is a brilliant example of pure child-like faith for us all.

Our Scripture reading shows Mary's response to a visit from the angel Gabriel. Without any warning or preparation, Mary was suddenly confronted, not only with the surprise of an angelic visitation, but with a challenge to comprehend a miracle. This was not some distant, abstract idea that she must believe. She was going to experience things that were life-changing...life-changing for her, for everyone else around her, even for the rest of the world! Her response would reveal a heart that not only believed **in God** but was ready to **believe God** (Hebrews 11:6). Mary was willing to trust Him with her life and submit to His will.

This is in sharp contrast to Zacharias, a godly priest, who was also confronted with an angelic visitation and a life-changing promise. The details are in Luke 1:5-23. When Zacharias was told that he would have a son in his old age he hesitated and asked for a sign. The angel's visit didn't quite seem enough for him. God's gentle rebuke was to make him unable to speak until the son was born. This son would be John the Baptist (See Luke 1:57-80; Matthew 3:1-17; John 1:6-8,15-34).

Mary's faith gave her opportunity to speak and praise the Lord openly. Zacharias' hesitation made him mute for about nine months.

Let's glean a few things from Mary's example.

### **Mary was surprised by the honor that was given to her – Luke 1:28-29**

It was not the mere surprise of an angelic visit in general but rather the complimentary greeting. Mary was not expecting any special praise or honor. It actually troubled and perplexed her. She probably immediately considered all her weaknesses and faults, as well as the plain fact that she was an ordinary, poor person. She saw nothing special in herself which deserved such a blessing as this. See Matthew 25:34-40.

## **Mary's faith had questions – Luke 1:30-34**

It was not doubt. It was a desire to understand the angel's statement. What Gabriel said contradicted natural facts. Mary had kept her virginity. She was saving herself for her future husband. So, the idea of having a son caused her to ask a simple question: "How can this be?"

James 1:5-6 tells us that, when we don't understand, we can ask God for wisdom. But we must ask in faith! So, we learn that faith **may** inquire. It even **should** inquire. We can doubt our understanding. But we must not doubt God.

Please note that Mary did not doubt the greatness of the Son who was to be born. She did not question His reign and His kingdom, which would have no end.

## **Mary surrendered herself as a servant to the will and to the Word of the Lord – Luke 1:35-38**

Mary was presented with the entire Trinity in Luke 1:35. She flinched not at that amazing statement. She took to heart that "...*With God nothing shall be impossible.*" (Luke 1:37). She was ready to trust and follow. Confidence in the goodness of God enables us to trust what He says and follow His instructions. See Psalm 119:68,105; 149:10 cp. 89:15.

## **Can we be like Mary?**

- Are we humble rather than presumptuously assuming God's approval of all our works? See I Corinthians 4:1-7 cp. Philippians 3:12-15; Psalm 19:9-14; 139:23-24; Hebrews 4:12-16; James 4:10; I Peter 5:5.
- Most, if not all of us, will not have an angelic visitation in our life. But we have the living Word of God to speak to us (Hebrews 4:12-13; II Timothy 3:15-17). Do we care enough to prayerfully inquire and search the Scriptures for understanding of the mysteries and promises of God? See I Corinthians 2:12-16 cp. Psalm 77:1-6; 119:160-162; Proverbs 2:1-11; Isaiah 28:9-10; I Timothy 4:12-16; II Timothy 2:15; II Peter 1:2-4.
- Can God's will surprise us without us doubting and resisting Him? Can we trust God without a safety net? Are we stranded on God? See Romans 11:33 – 12:3; II Corinthians 12:7-10; James 1:2-8 cp. Matthew 16:24-26; John 6:66-69; Job 13:15; Psalm 73:23-28.