

Hymns: 51 Love Lifted Me 15 It Is Well with My Soul
Scripture: Psalm 139:7-17

Big Idea: Mom's Loving Sacrifices

Art Linkletter. Does that name ring a bell? He had an audience participation show in the fifties and sixties. One of his most famous segments was "Kids Say the Darndest Things." Who remembers that? Today, it is our **high honor** and **distinct privilege** to have with us a young man who is wise beyond his years -- Henry Murry.

Henry, what special day is it today? Mother's Day that's right. And who is the best mom a boy could have? Of course, **your** mom. You are blessed to have godly parents who love you. Tamara, what better Mother's Day gift can you have than that?

Now Henry, I'm going to ask you a question that **even Google** couldn't get right related to Mother's Day. I'll bet you may be smarter than Google. If you get stuck, we'll see if Gretchen and Ella might help. Here goes. Who is the most famous mom in history? While we're at it, can you name some other famous moms in the Bible? How about Eve, Sarah, Rebekah, Jockebed, Hanna, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Elizabeth. Very good!

Despite all of the folk lore about Mary, the scriptures contain many verses that give us a glimpse into whom she really was. There's also a bit of mystery regarding what she said, how she felt, and how Jesus interacted with her. We will defer the difficult sayings and actions of Jesus related to Mary until next time. Today, we want to focus on understanding whom Mary was and what her life as the mother Jesus was like.

So to kick things off, here's a trick question for you. Can anyone guess where the first reference in the Bible is to the mother of Jesus?

Genesis 3

[15] And I will put enmity between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.

The phrase *her seed* is key. The pronoun *her* refers to the mother of the Savior. Satan was defeated at the cross. Jesus demonstrated His victory over death with the empty tomb as He canceled the curse of death.

Hebrews 2

[14] ... through death he [Jesus Christ] might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

There's another very famous reference to Mary in the Old Testament that is part of most Christmas messages. You know, Isaiah 7:14. We'll read it as it is quoted in Matthew chapter 1

[23] Behold,

*a virgin shall be with child,
and shall bring forth a son,
and they shall call his name Emmanuel,
which being interpreted is,
God with us.*

So a virgin will bear a son who will be called a name that means *God with us*. Who was this virgin? We need only back up a few verses:

*[18] Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise:
When as **his mother Mary** was espoused to Joseph,
before they came together,
she was found with **child of the Holy Ghost**.*

So there we have the first reference to the name of Jesus' mother -- *Mary*. Other interesting facts given include information on how a virgin could be pregnant. The answer was the the Holy Ghost of God performed a miracle. Secondly, we learn she was espoused to a man named *Joseph*. He was described as *a just man* (v. 19) and *son of David* (v. 20).

The passage goes on to instruct Joseph to give this son the name *Jesus* which means *Savior* because *he shall save his people from their sins* (v. 21). Finally, it states that Mary and Joseph delayed consummating their marriage until **after** Jesus was born (v. 25).

Now, let's move over to Luke to find out more details about Mary.

Luke 1

*[26] ...the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto **a city of Galilee, named Nazareth,***

[27] To

a virgin ...

and the virgin's name was Mary.

[28] And the angel came in unto her, and said,

[Rejoice],

thou that art highly favoured,

the Lord is with thee:

blessed art thou among women.

*[29] And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and [wondered] **what manner of salutation this should be.***

This is the first of three references to Mary's cognitive nature. She was a thinker.

[30] And the angel said unto her,

*Fear not, Mary: for **thou hast found favour with God.***

[31] And, behold,

*thou shalt conceive in thy womb,
and bring forth a son,
and shalt call his name JESUS.
[32] He shall be **great**,
and shall be called the Son of the Highest:
and the Lord God shall give unto him the **throne** of his father David:
[33] And he shall **reign** over the house of Jacob **for ever**;
and of his **kingdom** there shall be **no end**.*

Notice that Gabriel announced to Mary she would bear a son who would **rule** over an **everlasting kingdom**. There's no mention of the cross here.

*[34] Then said Mary unto the angel,
How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?
[35] And the angel answered and said unto her,
The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee,
and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee:
therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee
shall be called the Son of God.*

Wow! Mary knew she was a virgin. Virgins do not become pregnant. Not only would she bear a Son as a virgin,
He would be called holy;
He would rule over an everlasting kingdom,
and also would be called the Son of God.

And to add to the shock, Gabriel told Mary that her cousin Elizabeth would also have a miracle birth (v. 36). What was Mary's reaction?

*[38] And Mary said,
Behold the handmaid of the Lord;
be it unto me according to thy word.
And the angel departed from her.*

Here Mary demonstrated her **humility** and **obedience** to the Lord.
Then Mary hurried to visit her cousin Elizabeth in a city in the hill country of Judah.

*[40] And entered into the house of Zacharias,
and [greeted] Elisabeth.
[41] And it came to pass,
that, when Elisabeth heard the [greeting] of Mary,
the babe [John the Baptist] leaped in her womb;
and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:
[42] And she sp[o]ke out with a loud voice, [saying],*

Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.

Now we get to experience the **heart** of this mother to be, Mary, as she looks forward with **great joy** to the honor of bearing and mothering this Son. Her song is often called the Magnificat.

[46] *And Mary said,*

***My soul** doth magnify the Lord,*

[47] *And **my spirit** hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.*

[48] *For **he hath** regarded the **low estate of his handmaiden**:*

*for, behold, from henceforth **all generations shall call me blessed.***

[49] *For **he** that is **mighty hath** done **great things** [to me];
and **holy** is his name.*

[50] *And his **mercy** is on them that fear him
from generation to generation.*

[51] ***He hath** sh[o]wed **strength** with his arm;
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

[52] ***He hath** put down the mighty from their [thrones],
and exalted them of low degree.*

[53] ***He hath** filled the hungry with good things;
and the rich he hath sent [] away [empty].*

[54] ***He hath** [helped] his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy;*

[55] *As he sp[o]ke to our fathers,
to Abraham,
and to his seed for ever.*

So what do we learn about Mary from this song?

She is thankful to the Lord.

She sees God is her Savior.

She knows the scripture.

She says she is of *low estate*. (I Corinthians 1:28)

And contrasts that with her **new** position of being seen by future generations as blessed.

She goes on to praise God for His:

- might
- greatness
- holiness
- mercy
- strength
- justice

It's worth noting that this song is similar to Hanna's song of praise in 1 Samuel 2:1–10.

[56] *And Mary abode with her about three months, and returned to her own house.*

That indicates to me, she likely was there for John's birth. She then returned home. Keep in mind returning home would have been a journey of four to seven days while beginning her second trimester of pregnancy. Of course, unknown to her she would go back to Bethlehem six months later to give birth.

In the next scene, we find exactly that. Mary, about to give birth traveled to Bethlehem to be taxed. They find no room available in the inn and end up staying with the animals. Mary gives birth to her Son there and is visited by rejoicing shepherds. When Mary heard of the miracles that the shepherds told her, the Bible says:

Luke 2

[19] But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

There's that cognitive Mary again.

The little family made their way six miles up to Jerusalem and went to the temple eight days after Jesus' birth as prescribed in the law for their purification and the circumcision of their Son. There Mary and Joseph marveled (v. 32) as, an elderly man Simeon prophesied (vv. 25-31; 36-38) and elderly woman Anna (vv. 34-35) both praised Him and rejoiced at his birth.

After they returned home to Nazareth, Magi from the east came to their house to worship Jesus and give Him precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:11). To this point, everything except perhaps the issue of giving birth in a stable was pretty positive in what the Bible records about Mary's experience.

Then Joseph is told in a dream to **flee to Egypt** to prevent their Son from **being killed by the wicked King Herod** (Matthew 2:13). They **fled by night** and stayed in that **strange land** until King Herod died. They then returned to Nazareth (vv. 14-15). So we're beginning to see some **ups and downs** in Mary's life. That's the way life is. Isn't it?

Let's recap to highlight the ups and downs.

Chosen to be the mother of the Savior

Travel to Bethlehem while about to deliver a child

No room in the inn

Birth of her Son

Shepherds rejoiced to see Him

Eight days later elderly man and elderly woman rejoiced to see Him

Return home to Nazareth

Magi come, worship Him and give Him precious gifts

Flee to Egypt in the night

Live in Egypt until Herod died

Return home to Nazareth

But then what happened? Another difficulty.

Luke 2

[41] Now **his parents** [Mary and Joseph] went to Jerusalem every year at the feast of the passover.

[42] And when he [Jesus] was twelve years old, they went up to Jerusalem after the custom of the feast.

[43] And when [the feast was over], as they [headed home], the child Jesus [stayed] behind in Jerusalem; and Joseph and his mother [did not realize] it.

Oh-oh! It's tough to lose track of your child.

[44] But they, supposing him to have been in the [caravan], went a day's journey; and they sought him among their kinsfolk and [people they knew].

[45] And when they [did not find him], they [returned] to Jerusalem, seeking him.

[46] And it came to pass, that **after three days**

Remember that number.

they found him

Imagine being Mary and Joseph – three days! I'm sure those were some hard days and sleepless nights.

in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

[47] And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers.

[48] And when they saw him, they were amazed: and **his mother** said unto him,

Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us?
behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.

[51] And he went down with them, ... to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: **but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.**

There's Mary the thinker again.

Jesus then grew up with His family.

When Jesus was about thirty years old, He left home, began his ministry, was baptized, and picked his disciples. Next we find Mary at a wedding feast.

John 2

[1] And ... there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:

[2]Jesus ... and his disciples [also, were invited and came], to the marriage.
[3] And when they wanted wine,
the mother of Jesus sai[d] unto him,
They have no wine.
4] Jesus sai[d] unto her,
Woman, what have I to do with thee?
mine hour is not yet come.
[5] His mother sai[d] []to the servants,
Whatsoever he sa[ys] []to you, do it.

Those are the last words of Mary in scripture.
We will now proceed with our recap of key events.

She then witnessed Him turn water into wine
They parted as Jesus continued with His ministry
Rejected by Him at Capernaum
She suffered the death of her husband
Heard of His miracles and popularity

Then, during Jesus' ministry, we learn that fake news is nothing new. It was alive and well even then. The source was the same as it is today – Satan the father of lies (John 8:44). They did not accept Jesus' virgin birth. Instead, the Pharisees said that He was a product of fornication (v. 41). That was a terrible slander of His mother that she carried with her her whole life.

Witnessed or heard of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem
Except, He was beaten to a pulp and crucified. She witnessed it. (John 19:25)
Witnessed His resurrection
Finally, she was honored to be numbered with the 120 disciples (Acts 1:14-15) thus ending the Bible record of Mary.

Application

The morning of May 6th, less than one week ago, a very famous and much anticipated British royal birth occurred. The new mom, Meghan Markle, described the experience of becoming a mom as magical. As we saw with the life of Mary, motherhood is an experience like no other.

I'm thankful for Mary the mother of Jesus, my mom, and all of the godly moms who pour their heart and soul into their children. In the case of Mary, we can all be grateful for the sacrifices she made to nurture the child who was the Son of God and Savior of all mankind. She experienced some incredible highs and devastating lows. How did she do it?

Isaiah 43

[1] But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, ...
Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, ...
thou art mine.

*[2] When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee;
and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee:
when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned;
neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.*

*[3] For I am the LORD thy God,
the Holy One of Israel,
thy Saviour:*

Jesus said to Nicodemus, “Ye must be **born** again.” Think of it! Jesus, who sacrificed all to give **eternal life** to transform fallen men into children of God, described His great work with the metaphor of a **mother** who gives **physical life** to her children. Clearly, motherhood is a **very** high calling.

Benediction

[24] The LORD bless thee, and keep thee:

[25] The LORD make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee:

[26] The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace. (Numbers 6:24-26)