

Mary Did You Know?

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[0 : 00] So, one of my favourite Christmas songs is Mary, Did You Know? You've probably heard it, I'm guessing, quite a modern song. The idea of the song is that someone is asking Mary, the mother of our Lord, if she knew what would become of her son.

Did she know at the time of his birth what her son would do later on? And so, a couple of lines into the song, it says, Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water? Mary, did you know that your baby boy will give sight to a blind man? And so on and so on. It's not a bad song. It uses the poetic format of addressing Mary and asking her about her baby to highlight what the Christ child would go on to do and why he came.

But the song as it stands raises a question of what Mary actually did know at the time when Jesus was born. In other words, what did Mary know and when did she know it?

And that's where our text that we've just had today comes in, from the Gospel of Luke 1. The text tells us what Mary knew, even from the time it was announced to her, that she would give birth to the Christ child.

[1 : 15] And with that, we'll be able to answer the song's question and find some answers for ourselves. Mary, what did you know? The portion of Luke 1 is the account of the Annunciation, that occasion nine months before Christ's birth, when the angel Gabriel came and announced to Mary what was going to take place.

It says, That refers to the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, she who was pregnant with John the Baptist.

And note that Mary is betrothed to a man named Joseph, but the marriage has not yet been consummated. She's a virgin. Also, the reference to the house of David.

David having been Israel's great king from a thousand years earlier, the one to whom the promise of the Messiah had been made, and the great end time deliver a king who would come from the house of David.

So the angel Gabriel came from heaven, and he addresses this humble virgin, Greetings, O favoured one, the Lord is with you. Well, that's a wonderful greeting.

[2 : 33] It's really great to know that the Lord is with you when an angel appears. Otherwise, I'm sure it will be really scary indeed. At other points during the Bible, it's always a scary thing, and the humans need to be calmed down by the angel.

Mary is no different. She is greatly troubled, our text says, and she doesn't know what to make of this. So the angel reassures her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God. Well, again, this is good to know. And so here we have the first thing that Mary knows. She knows that the Lord is with her, and she knows that she's found favour with God. And now the angel Gabriel gets to the big news.

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Highest, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of this kingdom there will be no end.

Now that is really big news. This son that Mary will bear, this Jesus, he will be the Son of the Most High God. How can that be? And what's more, he will be a king, not just any king, the king, the great messianic king, coming out of the line of David.

[3 : 52] The promised end-time deliverer sent by God who will usher in an everlasting kingdom. You can't get any more big news than that. But wait a minute, Mary is thinking.

How am I supposed to give birth to a son when I'm not even married yet, Mr. Angel? You're sounding like this conceiving in my womb business is going to happen right away. Or to put it

simply, as our text says, how will this be since I'm a virgin?

If what Mary had been told a moment ago was not amazing and astounding enough, now Gabriel increases the wonderment. He says, Yes, this will be the most unique birth in the whole history of the universe, for the most unique child ever to be born, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary.

Just like we say in the Creed, true God and true man. In this one person, Jesus Christ, the Holy Son of God, to be born in human flesh. This too is what Mary knows.

And Gabriel goes on, And behold, your relative Elizabeth, in her old age, has also conceived a son. And this is a sixth month with her who was called barren, for nothing will be impossible with God.

[5 : 14] If God can cause an old lady who can't conceive like Elizabeth to become pregnant, he can also do this for a young virgin Mary, for nothing will be impossible with God.

So Mary, what did you know? She knew that the angel told her that the Lord is with her and she has his favour, that she will conceive as a virgin by the Holy Spirit and will bear a son, to be named Jesus.

She knows that this son will be no ordinary child. He will be the son of God, born in human flesh, our own flesh and blood. And she knows that this boy will be a king, the great messianic king coming out of the line of David.

She knew all this because the angel told her, but did she believe it? Well, Mary answers that question in the positive. Behold, I am the servant of the Lord.

Let it be to me according to your word. That is ultimate faith right there. Faith generated by that Holy Spirit working through the word of God, Mary believes.

[6 : 20] And perhaps that is the greatest miracle of all in this story. But with God, nothing is impossible, even faith to believe the impossible. And what about all of us sat here today?

What do you know? What do you believe? Did you know that this baby Jesus will be born for you? Yes, you. He came to be your saviour, just as he is a saviour for Mary and for all of us sinners who need a saviour.

The messianic king would bring in his kingdom of grace and blessing precisely by being born in the flesh. To quote another oldie but goldie song, What If God Was One Of Us?

Well, that's already happened in the person of this baby born of Mary Jesus Christ. Jesus kept the law that we couldn't keep. He fulfilled God's law for us and then he bore our sins in his body on the cross, paying the price that needed to be paid in our place and as our substitute.

This is how his kingdom happens. Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, with a sign hanging over his head as he suffers and dies for all of us. And because he is the Holy Son of God, death cannot hold him.

[7 : 34] Jesus rises from the dead, the guarantee that all who trust in him will likewise live forever in his kingdom. Now, did Mary know all of this in this detail at this point?

No, but she would know it later on. As it says in the Bible a bit further on in Luke, that a sword will pierce her heart as one day she will watch her son be rejected and crucified.

But at this point, she does know that the son she will bear will be the son and the Messiah. How will that play out? She'd come to find out later. But what she knows is enough for now.

And God gives her the grace to believe it. And that is what God does for all of us too. He tells us what we need to know and what we need to know about this Jesus, the Saviour of ours.

And he gives us the grace to believe. Miracles all round. So what did Mary know? And when did she know? Yes, Mary, what did you know?

[8 : 37] Mary, did you know that your baby boy will save our sons and daughters? Did you know that your baby boy has come to make you new? The child that you've delivered will soon deliver you.

Oh yes, Mary did know this. And we know it too. Thanks be to God. There's a conoche. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God. Thank you. Go to God.