



A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ

What did Mary really know?

By Kathy L. McFarland

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Becker Bible Scholar Data Archive
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beckerbible@gmail.com

A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ
Lesson 1: What did Mary really know from her Jewish worldview?

I. Mary's Life

A. Introduction - The controversies of Mary in theological debates and Roman tradition and cults pale in importance when her actual sentient knowledge is examined through her eyes as the blessed mother of the Lord Jesus Christ. The journey to discover what Mary really knows during the most supernatural times of mankind's history adds depth and awe to spiritual understanding of Christ as seen through His mother's life. The purpose of these lessons is to examine the clear accounts and spiritual expressions of Mary through the Gospels of her Son, to encourage the same pondering of God's will and ways as Mary quietly considers during her extraordinary life.

Our first lesson will analyze Mary's probable knowledge concerning her life as it unfolds through the moving of God, with a review of the historical lifestyles and ideas surrounding the coming Messiah to the Jewish community to which she belongs. Our study begins in the period that is reflected between the Old and New Testaments in our Bible. This period is sometimes called the "Intertestamental Period." It is a significant time that we must examine if we are to understand the ponderings that come to Mary throughout her life.

B. Daily life in Israel during Mary's time –

1. Houses –
 - a. Architecture¹
 - b. Courtyard²
 - c. Interior³

¹ Katharina Galor, *Domestic Dwellings in Roman Palestine*, The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 549.

² Jacob Neusner, *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary*, vol. 3 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), 350-351.

³ *Ibid.*, 347-348.

- d. Upper room⁴
- 2. Political/Legal –
 - a. Colonial status⁵
 - b. Messiah watch⁶
 - c. Political Party loyalties⁷
- 3. Family –
 - a. Units⁸
 - b. Basic survival⁹
 - c. Wives' status¹⁰
- 4. Religion –
 - a. Torah¹¹
 - b. Fasting¹²
- 5. Towns/Cities –
 - a. Walled cities¹³
 - b. Darkened streets¹⁴

C. Jewish belief in the Intertestamental Period -

- 1. Pharisees –
 - a. Rabbinic literature¹⁵
 - b. Bells and garlands¹⁶
 - c. Boast in the Law¹⁷
- 2. Sadducees –
 - a. The so-called righteous ones¹⁸
 - b. Religious and ideological world¹⁹

⁴ Thomas John Dobrena, "Questions of the Upper Room," *Springfielder* 37, no. 2 (1973).

⁵ Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, The New American Commentary, vol. 25B (Nashville: Broadman & Holmon Publishers, 2003), 226.

⁶ Julius J. Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995), 235-238.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 238.

⁸ Alexei Sivertsev, *Family Religion*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 633.

⁹ Scott, 234.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 249.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 251.

¹² Noah Hacham, *Fasting*, ed. John J. Collins and Daniel C. Harlow, The Eerdmans Dictionary of Early Judaism (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2010), 635.

¹³ Scott, 240.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 241.

¹⁵ Anthony J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society: A Sociological Approach* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.; Livonia, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; Dove Booksellers, 2001), 9.

¹⁶ John Bunyan, *A Discourse Upon the Pharisee and Publican*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2006), 219.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 221-222.

¹⁸ Saldarini, 3.

3. Essenes –
 - a. Separatists²⁰
 - b. Taxpayers²¹
 - c. John the Baptist²²

D. Messianic Expectations reflected in titles –

1. Messiah²³ (Leader set aside)²⁴
2. Levitic Messiah²⁵ (effective altar)²⁶
3. Son of Man²⁷
4. The Servant of the Lord²⁸
5. The Prophet like Moses²⁹
6. Elijah³⁰
 - a. Evidence³¹
 - b. Must come first³²
7. Savior³³
8. Judge³⁴
 - a. Prominent³⁵
 - b. Commendation and condemnation³⁶
9. Deliverer³⁷
 - a. Prominent³⁸
 - b. Esther³⁹

¹⁹ Eyal Regev, "The Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Sacred: Meaning and Ideology in the Halakhic Controversies between the Sadducees and Pharisees," *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 9, (2006): 129-135.

²⁰ Scott, 214.

²¹ Saldarini, 6.

²² John C. Hutchison, "Was John the Baptist an Essene from Qumran?," *Bibliotheca sacra* 159, no. 634 (2002): 187-200.

²³ Scott, 309.

²⁴ F.L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1082.

²⁵ Scott, 311.

²⁶ Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck et al., *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, vol. 2 (Brill, 2000), 877-878.

²⁷ Scott, 311.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 314-317.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 318.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 318-319.

³¹ Morris M. Faierstein, "Why Do the Scribes Say That Elijah Must Come First," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100, (1981): 20.

³² Dale C. Allison, "Elijah Must Come First," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, (1984): 258.

³³ Scott, 319.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Simon J. Kistemaker, and William Hendriksen, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Book of Revelation*, New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953-2001).

³⁷ Scott, 319.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

10. Shepherd⁴⁰
11. Word⁴¹
12. Righteous or Just One⁴²
13. Branch⁴³
14. Elect or Chosen One⁴⁴
14. Son of God or Son of David⁴⁵
15. Stone⁴⁶

E. The ancestry of Mary and Joseph

1. Luke 3:23-38- Genealogy – Traces Mary’s lineage from her son Jesus to the Son of God.
2. Matthew 1:1-17 – Genealogy – Traces Joseph’s lineage from Abraham through David to Jesus, in fulfillment of the OT promises.

Illustrations: None

Conclusion: We cannot understand the deep pondering of Mary if we do not consider the things upon her heart and mind in the time she lived. The Intertestamental Period was a specific time with a great deal of political and religious changes that became important issues during the time of Christ. And, the ideas concerning the coming Messiah reflect the worldview that was present in the time of Mary, allowing us to consider her thoughts on his identity, before contact with Gabriel occurs that announces the coming birth of Christ. Our next Lesson 2, “What did Mary know through her virginity and the conception of our Lord?” will examine some of the most intimate parts of Mary’s inner being and outer belief, helping us to discover the things of God emulated through Mary.

³⁹ Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England, et al., *Holmon Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 411.

⁴⁰ Scott, 319.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 320.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

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A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ
Lesson 2: What did Mary know through her virginity and the conception of our Lord?

II. Mary's Virginity – This lesson we will discuss Mary's life, and contemplate what she really knows concerning the events surrounding her young life, with a detailed look at her virginity, conception, and pregnancy.

A. Proof

1. Luke 1:26-38 – Declared by Luke
2. Matthew 1:18-25 – Declared by Matthew
3. Matthew 1:25 – Joseph has not had sexual relations with Mary
4. Luke 1:26-27 – Gabriel is sent by God to Virgin Mary
5. A discussion of the Greek word for “Virgin” and the confusion this brings⁴⁷
6. The role of Mary as mother of Jesus through His conception⁴⁸

B. Conception

1. Luke 1:28-29 - Mary ponders Gabriel's message
2. Luke 1:34-35 – Mary asks Gabriel how pregnancy can happen without intercourse with man
3. Luke 1:35, 37 - Gabriel explains conception
4. Luke 1:38 – Mary accepts God's will
5. Matthew 1:18-25 - Angel informs Joseph of Mary's pregnancy⁴⁹

III. Mary's Kin

A. Shared pregnancy⁵⁰

1. Luke 1:36 – Mary learns of Elisabeth's pregnancy from Angel Gabriel⁵¹
2. Luke 1:39-41a – Cousin Elisabeth greets Mary, and the babe leaps in her womb⁵²
3. Luke 1:43-44 - Elisabeth recognizes Mary's role, and that the babe in Mary's womb is her Lord⁵³

⁴⁷ Sarah Jane Boss, "Blessed One: Protestant Perspectives on Mary," *Theology Today* 62, no. 1 (2005).

⁴⁸ John Nolland, *Word Biblical Commentary : Luke 1:1-9:20*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 45.

⁴⁹ Irven M. Resnick, "Marriage in Medieval Culture : Consent Theory and the Case of Joseph and Mary," *Church History* 69, no. 2 (2000): 350-371.

⁵⁰ Stephen J. Shoemaker, "The Virgin Mary in the Ministry of Jesus and the Early Church According to the Earliest Life of the Virgin," *Harvard Theological Review* 98, no. 4 (2005).

⁵¹ Nolland, 74-75.

⁵² J.P. Lange, Dods, Marcus, *The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ: A Complete Critical Examination of the Origin, Contents, and Connection of the Gospels*, 4 vols., vol. 1 (Edinburgh, London; Dublin: T&T Clark, 1872), 295.

4. Luke 1:56 – Mary stays with Elisabeth for three months

B. Cousin Elisabeth gives birth to John the future Baptizer that prepares the way for his second-cousin, the Lord Jesus Christ

1. Luke 1:58-59 - Miraculous conception and birth known by neighbors and cousins (Mary)
2. Luke 1:59-63 - John named according to Angel's instructions
3. Luke 1:64 – Zacharias praises God
4. Luke 1:65-66 – Word spreads about the miraculous child

IV. Bonus Lesson: The Development of Marian Theology in History

A. Historical Mary⁵⁴

1. Gnostics
2. Early Church Fathers
3. Council of Ephesus
4. Medieval Period
5. Byzantine
6. Reformation
7. Modern Period

Illustrations: None.

Conclusion: Mary ponders. She receives information from Gabriel that she had never heard before. She takes it all in, with her Cousin Elisabeth's support in a very supernatural time in her life. But, Mary is not supernatural, she is neither a pretend hyper-spiritual nor a perverse hyper-sexual; she is not superhuman. She is a young virgin girl that found favor with God, and was chosen by Him to conceive His Son through the process of miraculous conception. To suggest that Mary is more than what she is corrupts faith and the Word of God, giving false power to

⁵³ Lyn Holness, "Mary's Womb as the 'Space within Our Space for the Gestating Son of God'," *Religion & Theology* 16, no. 1-2 (2009).

⁵⁴ Jim Ernest Hunter, "Blessed Art Thou among Women : Mary in the History of Christian Thought," *Review & Expositor* 83, no. 1 (1986).

people rather than expressing the full omnipotence of the LORD God that expresses his will perfectly.

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A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ
Lesson 3: What did Mary know through Holy Ghost exaltations?

V. Holy Ghost Exaltations Before Christ's Birth – This lesson we will examine the deep Scripture revelations captured in the Holy Ghost exaltations through Elisabeth, Mary, and Zacharias.

A. Elisabeth is filled with the Holy Ghost⁵⁵

1. Luke 1:42a - Blessed art thou among women
2. Luke 1:42b - Blessed is the fruit of thy womb
3. Luke 1:45 - Blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord

B. Mary praises God in her the Magnificat⁵⁶ prayer⁵⁷

1. Luke 1:46 – “My soul doth magnify the Lord”
2. Luke 1:47-48a - “And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:
3. Luke 1:48b – “For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.”
4. Luke 1:49 – “For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.”
5. Luke 1:50 – “And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.”
6. Luke 1:51a - “He hath shewed strength with his arm”
7. Luke 1:51b – “He hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.”
8. Luke 1:52 – “He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree”
9. Luke 1:53- “He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away”
10. Luke 1:54-55 – “He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; as he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and his seed for ever.”

C. A family affair

1. Luke 1: 67 - Filled with the Holy Ghost, Zacharias begins to prophesy after John's birth⁵⁸
2. Luke 1:68-80 - Prophecy adds to the declaration of blessing made earlier by Mary⁵⁹
3. Luke 1:68-75 - The salvation of the Lord is revealed while he is yet unborn

⁵⁵ Nolland, 75.

⁵⁶ Sylvester Joseph Hunter, *Outlines of Dogmatic Theology* (New York: Benzinger Brothers, 1896).

⁵⁷ Lange, 292-294.

⁵⁸ Shoemaker.

⁵⁹ Lange, 294.

4. Luke 1:76-77 – Baby John’s role in his Savior’s life declared
5. Luke 1:80 – John grows strong without attention until the time God chooses

VI. Extra Bonus Lesson - Evangelical and Catholic beliefs contrasted – We will examine the things concerning Mary that both Evangelicals and Catholics agree upon, with a brief discussion on the disagreements. This lesson will equip you with understanding an answers should you be called upon to explain your Evangelical belief.⁶⁰

A. Agreement

1. Historicity of virginal conception of Jesus
2. Mary is blessed by all Christians
3. There is a place for a biblical honor of Mary
4. Mary’s Magnificat proclaims the message of salvation for everyone
5. Marian Devotion⁶¹ and Honor⁶²

B. Disagreement

1. Perpetual Virginity
2. Immaculate Conception⁶³
3. Bodily Assumption
4. Invocation of Mary
5. Adoration and Veneration⁶⁴
6. Intercessory Role⁶⁵

Illustrations: None.

Conclusion: The revelation of Mary through God's Word magnifies her special nature that pleases God so much, that He chooses her to be the mother of the Son of God. There is no need to make Mary a co-god with the false teachings of perpetual virginity, immaculate conception, bodily assumption, invocation of Mary, adoration and veneration, or tasking her with an intercessory role. God did not choose a goddess to bear the Son of God. He chose a young, pure, virgin girl who ponders when facing spiritual

⁶⁰ "Do Whatever He Tells You: The Blessed Virgin Mary in Christian Faith and Life: A Statement of Evangelicals and Catholics Together," *First Things*, no. 197 (2009).

⁶¹ Alban Carroll, "International Conference of the Ecumenical Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 17, no. 3 (1980).

⁶² Timothy George, "The Blessed Evangelical Mary: Why We Shouldn't Ignore Her Any Longer," *Christianity Today* 47, no. 12 (2003): 38.

⁶³ Mary B. Cunningham, "'All-Holy Infant': Byzantine and Western Views on the Conception of the Virgin Mary," *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 50, no. 1-2 (2006).

⁶⁴ Michael Joncas, "The 'Visitation' Formulary in the Collection of Masses of the Blessed Virgin Mary : An Exercise in Liturgical Exegesis," *Worship* 64, no. 3 (1990).

⁶⁵ George.

things she does not fully understand, and trusts that whether she understood or not, God is good and faithful, and she has nothing to fear.

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A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ
Lesson 4: What did Mary really know from the birth of our Lord,
their exile to Egypt, and the prophets at the Temple?

VII. Mary's Deliverance – This lesson we will ponder what Mary really knows concerning the events of the birth of our Lord, their exile to Egypt, and the prophets at the Temple.

A. The Savior is Born

1. Luke 2:2-5 - Joseph and Mary travel to Bethlehem to be taxed
2. Matthew 2:2 – Born in Bethlehem
3. Luke 2:6-7 – Baby Jesus laid in a manger

B. Birth Announcement

1. Luke 2:8-12 – Shepherds told by Angel
2. Luke 2:13-14 – Multitude of Angels praise God

C. Seeks Jesus

1. Luke 2:15-18 – Shepherds seek and find baby Jesus in manger with Joseph and Mary
2. Luke 2:19 - Mary Ponders
3. Luke 2:20 – Shepherds praise God for what they were told about Jesus

C. Political Threat

1. Matthew 2:2-9 – Herod tricks wise men to find the newly born King of the Jews⁶⁶
2. Matthew 2:9-11 - Wise men locate Mary and the young child, giving gifts and worshipping the young child.
3. Matthew 2:12 – God warns wise men to flee from Herod
4. Matthew 2:13-15 – God warns Joseph of danger to Mary and Jesus, sending them into Egypt for protection that also fulfills prophecy about calling God's Son from Egypt
5. Matthew 2:16- Herod slays children two-years-old and under fulfilling another prophesy spoken by Prophet Jeremiah about the great mourning of Rachel
6. Matthew 2:19a - Herod dies
7. Matthew 2:19b-21 – Joseph told by God to return to land of Israel after the death of Herod
8. Matthew 2:22-23 – Joseph settles in the city of Nazareth, rather than Bethlehem to avoid ruler Archelaus, which fulfills another prophesy of the prophets that the Messiah will be called a Nazarene.

⁶⁶ Donald A. Hagner, *Word Biblical Commentary: Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002).

VIII. Temple Blessings and Prophecy after Christ's birth

A. Simeon⁶⁷

1. Luke 2:25-26 - Is promised to see Christ before death
2. Luke 2:28 - Recognizes Christ, raised him to God, and offered blessings
3. Luke 2:29-32 - Proclaims salvation role of Christ
4. Luke 2:34a – Simeon blesses Joseph and Mary
5. Luke 2:34b-35 – Simeon gives prophecy to Mary

B. Anna

1. Luke 2:36-38 - Widow and Prophetess Anna sits at Temple in devotion of God
2. Luke 2:38 - Gives thanks to God for sending the Redeemer of Jerusalem
3. Joseph and Mary marvel

Illustrations: None.

Conclusion: Mary, Joseph and Jesus were delivered first in the setting of natural birth. Mary was the first disciple of Jesus Christ, because she accepted him as the Son of God before He was placed within her womb. Joseph, in his support, showed strength of faith in God in a situation that would bring most men doubt of faith. The family was delivered from evil intentions through an escape route that led to the center of the carnal world. It was not in the Temple of the Jews nor in the Court of Romans that God sent the family for protection. Rather, they went to a place of unfamiliar life, trusting that God would look after them, and summon them in His time when it was safe. When they return to safety once again in Israel, they are amazed to hear the blessings and prophesy from Simeon and Anna. Though their time with the worldly affairs in Egypt protect them, their place was in Israel, where the Son of God can fulfill prophecy and do the things of His Father.

⁶⁷ Gary Culpepper, "'A Sword Will Pierce through Your Own Soul Also': The Sanctification, Conversion, and Exemplary Witness of the Blessed Mary," *Pro Ecclesia* 19, no. 1 (2010): 28-45.

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A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ
Lesson 5: What did Mary really know from her family relationships, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord, His Ascension, and the Holy Ghost?

IX. Mary's Motherhood – This lesson will exam what Mary really knows from her family relationships, the Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord, His Ascension, and the Holy Ghost.

A. Familial Relationships

1. Matthew 1:25 – Joseph did not know her until after the birth of Jesus, implying that he did have carnal relations afterwards
2. Matthew 1:25 – Jesus was her firstborn son which implies that she physically gave birth to other children
3. Matthew 13:55-56 – Jesus had four brothers and at least two sisters
4. Galatians 1:19 – One of the brothers names was James

B. Mary and the child Jesus

1. Luke 2:21 - Names Jesus after eight days
2. Luke 2:22-24 – Jesus offered to the Lord with sacrifice
3. Luke 2:39-40 – Returns to Nazareth where Jesus grows strong
4. Luke 2:41-51 –Misplaces Jesus while he was doing his Father's business at the Temple
5. Luke 2:50 – Mary does not understand Jesus's explanation for doing his Father's business
6. Luke 2:51 - Mary ponders and keeps Christ's sayings in her heart
7. Luke 2:52 - Jesus increases in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man

X. Mary's Heartbreak and Joy

A. Christ's Crucifixion

1. John 19:16-42 – Mary stood by the cross as the Son of God was crucified⁶⁸
2. John 19:25 – The sister of the mother of Jesus⁶⁹
3. Synoptic discrepancy explained⁷⁰
4. John 19:25-27 - Jesus gives his Mother to his beloved Disciple⁷¹

B. Christ's Resurrection

⁶⁸ John M. Howard, "The Significance of Minor Characters in the Gospel of John," *Bibliotheca sacra* 163, no. 649 (2006): 67-69.

⁶⁹ Benjamin B. Devan, "Science and Religion around the World Edited by John Hedley Brooke and Ronald L. Numbers Darwin's Pious Idea: Why the Ultra-Darwinists and Creationists Both Get It Wrong by Conor Cunningham," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 50, no. 4 (2011).

⁷⁰ Joseph L. Lilly, "Jesus and His Mother During the Public Life. Iii," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 8, no. 3 (1946).

⁷¹ George R. Beasley-Murray, *Word Biblical Commentary: John*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 36 (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), 349.

1. John 2:18-25 - Following Temple rebuke, Jesus speaks in parables concerning Resurrection, possibly witnessed by Mary since she was present with him in Capernaum

XI. Mary's Discipleship

A. Christ's Ministry

1. John 2:2-11 – Mary initiates Jesus' miracle ministry⁷² at the marriage feast of Cana.⁷³ (Some difficulty with interpretation)⁷⁴
2. Matthew 13:53-58; Mark 6:1-6 - A witness from afar⁷⁵
3. Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-45 – Mary desires to speak to Jesus;⁷⁶ physical vs. spiritual⁷⁷
4. John 2:12-17 – Passover trip to Capernaum that brings Jesus to angry rebuke at Temple, witnessed by Mary
5. John 6:22-59 – Though there is no evidence of Mary's presence, Jesus spoke to the people that knew Mary, and she was in Capernaum with him so there is some chance of these teachings reaching her
6. "Mary was a disciple of Christ before she was his mother, for had she not believed she would not have conceived."⁷⁸

B. Acts 1: Jesus taken up to Heaven

1. Acts 1:7-8 – Christ tells the disciples about the coming Holy Ghost
2. Acts 1:9 - Disciples witness Christ's Ascension
3. Acts 1:10-12 – Two men in white apparel tell Disciples of Christ's second coming
4. Acts 1:14 - Disciples return to an upper room in Jerusalem and Mary and Christ's brethren are present
5. Acts 1:15 – Peter speaks of recent events

Illustrations: None

Conclusion: Mary ponders. She has a love for God, a faith in His Providence, and a conviction that the Son she bore for Him is Her Savior. She is the first disciple of Christ, and the witness to His continuing ministry through the Holy Spirit following His Resurrection and Crucifixion. In

⁷² Howard: 65-67.

⁷³ Joseph L. Lilly, "Jesus and His Mother During the Public Life. I," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 8, no. 1 (1946).

⁷⁴ Ritva H. Williams, "The Mother of Jesus at Cana : A Social-Science Interpretation of John 2:1-12," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 59, no. 4 (1997).

⁷⁵ Judith Lieu, "The Mother of the Son in the Fourth Gospel," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117, no. 1 (1998).

⁷⁶ Ronald Alan Kittel, "The Mother of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark," *Living Pulpit* 10, no. 4 (2001).

⁷⁷ Joseph L. Lilly, "Jesus and His Mother During the Public Life. Ii," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 8, no. 2 (1946).

⁷⁸ George: 37.

final analysis, it is not about her, but God. That is Mary's pondering focus always. Her commitment to God and trust in Him brought His favor to bear upon her, and as a result, she is known by all faithful Christians as Mary, mother of Christ, and blessed above all women.

Thanks be to God for her faith.

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