



A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ

What did Mary really know?

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Lesson 1: What did Mary really know from her Jewish worldview?

By Kathy L. McFarland

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 concerning the things of God that are revealed to Mary throughout her life.

Daily life in Israel during Mary's time

The daily life of 1st century Jewish women living in Israel is filled with tradition, religion, and laws of God and community that form duties and expectations for their lives. We cannot

understand Mary fully, without first examining her daily environment to discover how she lives.

Cities are built haphazardly in 1st century Palestine, and the size is determined by the importance of the city. Water, police, toilet and sewage disposal are provided by some of the larger cities like Jerusalem. It is these larger walled cities that offer protection to the smaller towns, whose people would run for protection to escape approaching dangers.¹ Life is crowded, noisy, dangerous, and probably stinky. People lock their doors and shutter their windows, even emptying their chamber pots through the windows at night to prevent walking in the darkened streets.²

Houses in Israel during the 1st century are mostly stone dwellings with square or rectangular rooms, and one or more courtyards that are dependent upon the topography of the ground. Those houses on flat grounds have a central courtyard, but those located next to hills place their courtyard in marginal locations. The flat roofs, surrounded by a parapet, are the center of activity for Jewish families. The lower levels of their dwelling places are often windowless, and the upper level contained windows to allow light and air. Usually these windows are placed adjacent to the courtyard to allow light in the rear rooms.

The smooth plaster walls have some fresco and stucco decorations which become more prevalent in the 2nd century, with full embellishment of fresco occurring in the lavish houses of well-to-do Palestinians. Lower economic houses have simple dirt or rock floors; upper-class dwellings are made of polished, hewn stones and mosaics with rugs and mats fastened to the

¹ Julius J. Scott, *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1995), 240.

² *Ibid.*, 241.

floors with nails. The level of decoration in the homes is determined by economic considerations and the amount of exposure to the Greco-Roman culture.

Roofs are used frequently for eating, praying, keeping fruits and vegetables, drying olives, and keeping animals. The courtyard is used for similar purposes and contain wells, drinking troughs, and baking vessels; cooking, wheat grinding, washing clothes and eating were some of the activities at this location.³ Bathtubs and bath houses have been found in only the most luxurious dwellings. Usually, the courtyard was shared by tenants of two dwelling units.⁴ The interior rooms are used for family dinners and special celebrations. These rooms are called the *traklin*, and considered the most important room in the house.⁵ Furniture is often used to divide the rooms; sometimes plastered jars are used. Jars, chamber pots and outside watering places were the common places for bodily relief; few latrines are present in common Jewish homes in the 1st century.

An upper room is often referred to in the Bible, and different ones are important locations several times in the life of Mary and her Son Jesus. There are many houses in the 1st century Jerusalem which have upper rooms for gatherings and celebrations. Today, many churches, especially those of Syrian connection, claim to know the location of these important upper rooms; one church even has an ancient dedication written in stone proclaiming that:

This is the house of Mary [the] mother of John [who is] called Mark. The Apostles consecrated this as a church in the name of Mary the Mother of

³ 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.

⁴ Jacob Neusner, *The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary*, vol. 3 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), 350-351.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 347-348.

God, after the Ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ to heaven. [This house was] rebuilt in 73 after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.⁶

This inscription suggests that this is the house of Mark that the Upper Room gathering immediately following Christ's Ascension, in the presence of many witnesses, including Mary (Acts 1:13-14). A Syrian translation of the Gospels, specifically concerning the upper room in Acts 1:13, mistakenly uses the word *élità* that connects the upper room of Pentecost in Acts to that of the Last Supper of Christ in Luke 22:12.⁷ This mistake is muddled by the imitation of the Syrian Gospel translation in Saint Jerome's Vulgate even though Jerome indicates that "only the descent of the spirit occurred on Zion" making this idea of only one Upper Room unsupported.⁸

It is important to note that there are few historically confirmed, authentic sites in Jerusalem; only the Temple Mount, the Pools of Bethesda, the Antonia Fortress with its Praetorium, and Herod's Palace are known for certain.⁹ Other site identifications are based mostly upon specific denominational belief, with the Catholics and the Protestants declaring their own interests in the identification of many disputed sites.¹⁰ Thus, in our evaluation of Mary's life, it is not profitable for us to search archaeological evidence of her presence; it is simply too misleading.

The Roman government is in charge of Palestine during the time of Mary's life. Colonial status is given to the Jewish people, and they receive the same privileges in Roman law that are

⁶ Thomas John Dobrena, "Questions of the Upper Room," *Springfielder* 37, no. 2 (1973): 102-103.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 98.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

given to Roman citizens.¹¹ Of course, the Jewish people liked to keep the law, respect the Pharisees, pay their taxes, and observe festivals, as they keep a constant watch out for the Messiah to come as their prophets have spoken.¹² Often, they are tricked by one or another of the false Messiah's because their zeal for religion has no theological grounding. They are politically separated by their differences; some follow the Romans and some were known as "Nationalists." Many are loyal to a ruling family such as Herodians or the priestly family of Annas; some support the Pharisees, and some the Sadducees.¹³

During the time of Second Temple Judaism, Palestinian society moves away from family-centered units, which are replaced with association-type connections. Families are able to maintain their religious status, but societal religious life becomes prevalent.¹⁴ The vast majority of Jews belongs to no group during the 1st century, and most are concerned only with meeting basic survival needs, and unable to participate in society functions that form specific interest groups.¹⁵

The Jewish family unit of 1st century Jerusalem is a patriarchy, ruled by the head male of the home with full authority over wife, children, and property. The wife is inferior to the

¹¹ Gerald L. Borchert, *John 12-21*, The New American Commentary, vol. 25B (Nashville: Broadman & Holmon Publishers, 2003), 226.

¹² Scott, 235-238.

¹³ Ibid., 238.

¹⁴ 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.

¹⁵ Scott, 234.

husband; however, she is respected for her contributions to the family as she keeps the home and blesses her husband with new babies.¹⁶

Jewish belief in the Intertestamental Period

The Torah is the Holy Book of the Jews, and it regulates every aspect of their lives, including the food they eat, the clothes they wear, and focuses their attention in their religious and prayer practices through direct placement of Scripture that connects their lives to God.¹⁷ There is an increased participation in private religious activities during the Second Temple period, and fasting becomes increasingly practiced by individual devout Jews in non-public places.¹⁸

Judaism is actually a diverse culture in the 1st century. The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes are just three of many dominant groups that are part of the social structure of the Roman Empire in various degrees of association.

Pharisees – Though there are scant Second Temple evidences in rabbinic literature of Pharisees,¹⁹ Scripture is highly reflective of the Pharisees' nature. The Pharisees are self-focused men that give impression that they think themselves better than all other men, especially the vile publicans. They easily identify the sin of other men, while extolling their own self-perceived righteousness as they give public religious offerings to God and bless the world with

¹⁶ Ibid., 249.

¹⁷ Ibid., 251.

¹⁸ 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.

¹⁹ 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.

their presence (Luke 18:10-13). They oppose Christ and want to destroy Him (Matthew 12:14), entrap His words (Matthew 22:15), and test Him (Mark 8:11). Christ warns His followers of the leaven that is dispersed by them into matters of faith, changing the Truth of God into tainted false belief (Matthew 23:13-29). These public conflicts with her son must surely have distressed mother Mary who seems at times listening to her son from the outskirts in a probable pondering posture, as is common to her nature.

The Pharisees sew tiny bells into their garments and wear garlands in their showy religious attire that raises them above all other sects.²⁰ They are the strictest in religious interpretations (Acts 23:6) that show bias by elevating their faulty beliefs over others and against the Word of God.²¹ They are often characterized as a middle-class group; but, there is no middle-class in antiquity.²²

Unlike the Publican Jews who are notorious and wretched sinners, the Pharisees are notoriously righteous men; though both go to pray at the temple, each have different results.²³ While the Publicans forsake God with sinners' hearts, the Pharisees boast in the law of God. Yet, when examined by His Law, the Publicans are found dirty on their outsides with hardened hearts and confessing humbleness while the Pharisees are found filthy on their insides, though

²⁰ John Bunyan, *A Discourse Upon the Pharisee and Publican*, vol. 2 (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2006), 219.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Saldarini, 12.

²³ Bunyan, 221-222.

exalted in their own minds.²⁴ They take sides with the Herodians because they are spiritually blind to righteousness (Matthew 23:26).

Sadducees – Sadducees (also known as the Righteous Ones) are “sad you see” because they do not believe in the mysteries or supernatural events expressed by our LORD God and Lord Jesus Christ.²⁵ Their belief rejects the Resurrection of Jesus Christ (Matthew 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27), and the resurrections of spirit and angels (Acts 23:8). Josephus describes Sadducees as originating from the upper class of society; however, there is no evidence that all Sadducees are from this higher economic level. Their social presence is superior to most Jews and through the scattered references in the writings of Josephus, Scripture, and Rabbinic literature, we are able to classify them as arrogant know-it-all’s who demand reasoned and visible proof before belief is validated.

The Sadducees are the least known of the influential religious groups in Second Temple Judaism; their views are not described in detail by contemporary sources. The richest detail of their religious outlook and position are found in the rabbinic corpus, especially in the Mishnah with support from the Tosefta, and the Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds.²⁶ Unfortunately, this evidence is not as reliable or accurate because the material was edited by rabbinic Clerics centuries after the destruction of the Temple, when their sect was no longer present. Also,

²⁴ Ibid., 222.

²⁵ Saldarini, 3.

²⁶ 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.

Pharisaic superiority is reflected in the Clerics opinions, thus possibly corrupting the knowledge we have concerning the Sadducees sect.

However, to understand Mary's mindset, we must include an evaluation of the Sadducees presence in her world. The Sadducees hold the strictest views of the laws concerning Sabbath, the penal code, and ritual purity. Their strict adherences to purity restrictions, unlike the Pharisees who maintain a moderate interpretation of God's laws, emphasize purity laws involving gender and sexual taboos.²⁷ Their strict pronouncements prohibiting sexual intercourse before marriage, and the possible punishment of stoning for the guilty maiden woman that is deflowered, must surely have been in her thoughts as her belly swelled with our Lord's presence within her.

Essenes – Unmentioned in Scripture, though accounted by Josephus, Philo, and Gentile Pliny the Elder and made famous by the special writings they possibly stored in jars in the Dead Sea area, the Essenes separate themselves from normal Jewish society.²⁸ They are a Jewish sect in a Qumran community that withdraw themselves from the world and focus solely upon the things of God. However, they are never completely cut off from the Jewish society and remain a part of Judaism, taxpayers to Hasmoneans and Romans, and a known influence outside their society.²⁹

Mary's second cousin, known later in his ministry as John the Baptist, is thought to be part of this group at one time in his life, because his separatist preaching seems attached to the

²⁷ Ibid., 135.

²⁸ Scott, 214.

²⁹ Saldarini, 6.

Essenes ideology.³⁰ While proof of John's association is historically non-existent, his geographical proximity in the desert of Judea and his ministry in the Jordan Valley (Mat 3:1; Luke 1:80) is close to Qumran. Because John's voice makes the path of the Lord straight as he cries the message in the wilderness, many think it to be a fulfillment of Isaiah 40:3, a common theme of the Essenes. Further, John's teaching of repentance and the participation in the water ritual is similar to the Essenes' practices at Qumran.³¹ So, the young babe that leaps in Elisabeth's womb upon coming close to Mary's womb that swaddles the Son of God might well have been trained by the Essenes sect to prepare him for his important ministry work to prepare sinners to meet the Lord.

Messianic expectations reflected in titles

Mary is the first disciple of Jesus Christ, because she submits to the will of God in her acceptance of Christ; in that assent, she accepts within her the promised Messiah that all devout Jewish people long to come. Mary's pondering must surely have included the weighing of the different messianic expectations that were present in the Intertestamental Period between the Old and New Testament times. An examination of these different expectations of the coming Messiah allows us to consider the same things that Mary might have considered in her own mind, as she awaits the birth of the Messiah to come forth.

³⁰ John C. Hutchison, "Was John the Baptist an Essene from Qumran?," *Bibliotheca sacra* 159, no. 634 (2002): 187-200.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 191.

Messiah³² - The Messiah could be any person given special powers by God, especially those set aside as priest or king through anointment; all of these are called Messiah in 1st Century Judaism. The title of Messiah, which means anointed, develops into the word Christ in the New Testament. In the New Testament King James AV translations, Messiah is used when the Greek has a definite article and Christ when there is no article. The absolute form without the definite article denoting Christ is not found in early Judaism; but, the idea of a leader set aside, anointed and placed in position with special powers by God is identified in the Intertestamental period.³³

Levitic Messiah³⁴ - Some long for a Messiah that originates from the tribe of Levi during the Intertestamental period and this Levitic Messiah is expected to be at a higher rank over the political Davidic Messiah.³⁵ However, for most religious Jews there is no need for a messiah as long as the altar is effective; there is absolutely nothing a religious messiah could do that the altar could not accomplish.³⁶ So while the promise of eternal priesthood as reward for Phinehas' zealotry for God (Num. 25:10-13) is considered by the Jews to be a matter of fact, the Levitic Messiah was more a high priest concept that conducts proper sacrifice at the altar.

³² Scott, 309.

³³ F.L. Cross, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 1082.

³⁴ Scott, 311.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Jacob Neusner, Alan J. Avery-Peck et al., *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, vol. 2 (Brill, 2000), 877-878.

Son of Man³⁷ - Daniel 7:13-14, 2 Esdras, and 1 Enoch (37-71) all mention a son of man that has attributes so similar they are often thought to be same person.³⁸ The Son of Man is revealed in these combined writings to be preexistent, heavenly, majestic, possessing dominion, and one day judging mankind and angels. But, there is some debate among scholars whether the Son of Man and Messiah are the same being before Jesus Christ in the thoughts of Jews.³⁹ In the fourth Gospel of John the Son of God virtually merges with the Son of Man, first introducing Him as mediator of the redemptive powers of heaven (John 3:14-15; 12:31) which harmonizes Christology doctrine in John's gospel of the Father and the Son, and brings the Son of Man in Daniel 7 into full revelation.⁴⁰

The Servant of the Lord⁴¹ - The Servant Songs in Isaiah 42:1-4; 49:1-7; 50:4-11; and 52:13-53:12 speak of the Servant of the LORD (Hebrew: 'ebed YHWH). There is no clear identity to this servant, whether he is idealized or a real being, and there are separate attributes dependent upon perspective.⁴² For instance, God's perspective of the Servant is that he is chosen by Him and brings Him pleasure. God promises to anoint him with the Spirit (which is fully revealed in Isaiah 11:1-5 in the Messianic verses attached later to Christ), and rise up in his defense of the Servant at some point. However, the perspective of humans shows the Servant of the LORD to

³⁷ Scott, 311.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid., 313.

⁴⁰ Neusner, *The Encyclopedia of Judaism*, lxxxiii.

⁴¹ Scott, 314-317.

⁴² Ibid., 314.

be rejected, mocked, tortured, and killed in the place of many who should have suffered, making them righteous before God (Isaiah 53).

Intertestamental Judaism has both collective and individual understandings of the term; however, Hellenistic Judaism characterizes the Servant of the Lord as a servant that is persecuted and suffers as a just man. Thus, there are some scholars that argue for the possibility that some Intertestamental Jews expect a suffering Messiah, especially with reference to Isaiah 53:11.⁴³ However, Emil Schüer argues in *History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ* that it is not the idea of a suffering Messiah, but rather, the idea of a suffering Messiah that had atonement value, that should be questioned.⁴⁴ This raises the same point as the Levitic Messiah who is basically unneeded if the altar is properly used. It was probably only in learned circles on the periphery of Judaism in the Intertestamental period that expects some sort of suffering eschatological figure before the Christian era.⁴⁵

The Prophet like Moses⁴⁶ - Deuteronomy 18:9-22 promises to raise up a Prophet like Moses to speak to them about their worship of idols and using magic for divine revelation and guidance. During the Intertestamental period, some Jews thought another Moses would come to them to lead them on a new exodus from bondage, renew the covenant between them and God, give new revelation of the things of God, and become their new national founder.⁴⁷ This

⁴³ Ibid., 316.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 317.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 318.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

idea of a Prophet like Moses is said to be parodied in the book of Jonah as a reverse Moses, enforcing some Jewish messianic expectations of a Prophet like Moses to one day come, easily to discern the differences between the parodied Jonah vs. the real presence of a Moses-like prophet.⁴⁸

Elijah⁴⁹ - At every Passover Seder Meal an extra glass of wine is poured to tempt Elijah to return, even today. Some Intertestamental Jews think that Elijah will come once again, but this time to prepare the path for the Messiah. Others claim Elijah to be the actual Messiah, who will one day be resurrected to lead them.⁵⁰

Scholar Morris M. Faienstein surveys the leading scholar citations concerning Jewish Messianic ideas of Elijah's coming, and examines common evidences presented in defense of Intertestamental period belief. If Justinian's reference in *Dial. 8.3; 49.1* is excluded, there is no evidence of the concept of Elijah as forerunner of the Messiah as widely known during the first century C.E.⁵¹ Scholar Dale C. Allison gives Faienstein credit for raising the question of scholars generalizing the universality of belief that Elijah would appear shortly before the Messiah; however, he cautions scholars to avoid the suggestion that Christians are responsible for the idea.⁵² Since Christ addresses this issue, and the Scribes are speaking specifically about this in

⁴⁸ Duane L. Christensen, *Word Biblical Commentary: Deuteronomy 1-21:9*, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002), Deuteronomy 18:21-22.

⁴⁹ Scott, 318-319.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 319.

⁵¹ Morris M. Faienstein, "Why Do the Scribes Say That Elijah Must Come First," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100, (1981): 85.

⁵² Dale C. Allison, "Elijah Must Come First," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 103, (1984): 258.

Scripture references Mark and Matthew, it reliably reveals the thoughts during Christ's presence; however, there is scant evidence of when this thought of Elijah proceeding Christ develops and no solid proof that it is thought during the Intertestamental period.

Savior⁵³ - This concept is prominent in Old Testament, Intertestamental writings and Hellenism.⁵⁴ This title is almost exclusively applied to God and Jesus Christ,⁵⁵ and represents the idea of rescue and deliverance that is fully developed into theological truths throughout Scripture.

Judge⁵⁶ - This concept is also prominent in Old Testament, Intertestamental writings and Hellenism.⁵⁷ It reflects the both the position and the work of Old Testament Judges as well as bring forth the expanded idea of a rescuer of people from dangerous situations or rejection by God. Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel, and Jewish apocalyptic writers apply the Judge name for the name or description of the Messiah liberally. 4 Ezra [= 2 Esdras], written after the Domitian reign and destruction of Jerusalem, depicts the Messiah gathering the tribes of Israel, destroying enemies and bringing judgment. 2 Baruch, written after Jerusalem's destruction, looks for the rule of the Messiah to bring commendation to the righteous and condemnation to the wicked through his judgment.⁵⁸

⁵³ Scott, 319.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Walter A. Elwell, Barry J. Beitzel, *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1988), 1911.

⁵⁶ Scott, 319.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ 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), 49-50.

Deliverer⁵⁹ - This concept is also prominent in Old Testament, Intertestamental writings and Hellenism.⁶⁰ The idea that God, the deliverer of His people from danger or exile, will use a human agent such as the Messiah is partially supported in Scripture, though the OT tends to stress that God acts alone; Joseph was God's agent to deliver the Chosen people from famine (Genesis 45:7), Esther was warned by Mordecai that God would provide another if she failed to deliver (Esther 4:14), and Othniel and Ehud are deliverers in battle (Judges 3:9, 15).⁶¹ The Messianic prophecies in the Book of Isaiah announce the coming Deliverer who will bring an everlasting deliverance (Isaiah 9:1-9:7), giving full support to Jews in the Intertestamental period of one part of the nature of the Messiah.

Shepherd⁶² - Ezekiel 34:11-16 presents an image of a shepherd gathering together God's scattered people. There are also a messianic terms in the context of Zechariah 11:4-17 and Zechariah 13:7. The Lord Jesus Christ completes these messianic shadows by teaching parables such as the parable of the lost sheep found in Luke 15:1-7.

Word⁶³ - The powerful title of Word is firmly established in John 1:1-5, and gives Christian's confidence that Scripture reflects the inerrant Word of God. However, author Scott makes a point that "Wisdom" is so close in meaning to the way "Word" is used in the title

⁵⁹ Scott, 319.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Chad Brand, Charles Draper, Archie England, et al., *Holmon Illustrated Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2003), 411.

⁶² Scott, 319.

⁶³ Ibid.

reflecting Christ, and both of these words are assumed to come from a Hellenistic environment, with possible Hebrew roots.⁶⁴ Psalm 119, an acrostic song in praise of the Scriptures, typologically reflects the depth of love for Scripture that is often expressed by believers toward their Lord as an expression of the Word of God.

Righteous or Just One⁶⁵ - 2 Samuel, the Septuagint of Isaiah 3:10, Isaiah 32:1 and Isaiah 53:11 are just some of many references to the coming Messiah using these titles. This title is confirmed by Stephen in Acts 7:52.

Branch⁶⁶ - The branch or shoot used as coming from the offspring of David can be found in Isaiah 11:1, Jeremiah 23:5, Jeremiah 33:15, Zechariah 3:8, and Zechariah 6:12. This title is of great typological significance later on as the Lord teaches his followers about doing works to glorify Him by bringing them to fruition through the parable of the sower (Matthew 13) and recognizing the corrupt fruit of the wicked (Matthew 7:15-20).

Elect or Chosen One⁶⁷ - Scripture reflects these titles, which confirms the knowledge of the 1st century Jew, in Isaiah 42:1, 43:10, and 44:1 with connection to Israel. 1 Enoch makes several references to this title also (45:3-5; 49:2; 51:3-4; 52:6,9; 53:6; 55:4; 61:8; 62:1).

Son of God or Son of David⁶⁸ - Isaiah 9:6-7, 1 Enoch 105:2; 2 Esdras 7:28-29; 13:32, 37, 52; 14:9 all make reference to either the Son of God or the Son of David. This provides ample proof that 1st century Jews connected the Messiah to these titles.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 320.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Stone⁶⁹ - The stone as becomes the foundation (Isaiah 28:16) placed by the LORD God, as a sanctuary for believers (Psalm 118:22) and a stumbling block for the disobedient Jews (Isaiah 8:14); that stone is later revealed to be the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 21:42).

Many different meanings were attached to the coming messiah, and most referenced in the Old Testament. But, there is more for Mary to consider, because the probable lineage of the Messiah was well-known by Jews who studied the writings of the prophets of God. The revelations that Messiah will originate from the Tribe of David make the lineage of messianic claims to be of crucial importance.

The ancestry of Mary and Joseph

Luke 3:23-38 traces Mary's lineage backwards from her son Jesus to the Son of God from the beginning of time. This genealogical record gives absolute, irrefutable proof from the Word of God that the babe from Mary's womb is in fact the Son of God in human form.

Matthew 1:1-17 traces Joseph's (Mary's husband) lineage from Abraham through David to Jesus. This genealogy confirms the fulfillment of OT that Jesus would come from the throne of David. His legal father Joseph is shown to come from the lineage of Solomon and his descendants. The genealogy of Christ in both Luke and Matthew confirm that the Son of God, the Messiah, the Christ come to save sinners, fulfilled the OT prophesy perfectly.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

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 become 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, allow 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.

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