



## **A Contemplative, Biblical Analysis of Mary, Mother of Christ**

### **What did Mary really know?**

By Kathy L. McFarland

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**Quiz 8 Answers – Birth of the Son of God and the son of Mary**

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**1** Why did Joseph take a very pregnant Mary to Bethlehem?

Choose one answer.

- a. To pay taxes
- b. To establish residence
- c. To find a midwife
- d. All of the above

(a) Correct. Each taxpayer was required to return to the place of family origination. In Joseph and Mary's families, the house of David, that location was Bethlehem. (Luke 2:1-3)

(b) Incorrect. After their tasks were completed at Bethlehem, they left the city to go to Jerusalem for the naming and circumcision of Jesus, and then onto their home in Galilee in the city of Nazareth. (Luke 2:22,39)

(c) Incorrect. Pregnant Mary did not have any assistance at her childbirth, and would not have traveled had it not been for the law requirement.

(d) Wrong.

**2** What Emperor set upon the throne during the time of the census that brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem?

Choose one answer.

- a. Gaius Caesar
- b. Lucius Caesar
- c. Augustus
- d. Tiberius

(a) Gaius and his brother Lucius were adopted by Roman Emperor Augustus. They were his favorite heirs. Gaius died at the age of 24, just two years after his brother Lucius died. This compelled Augustus to adopt his stepson, Tiberius, and his grandson Postumus Agrippa as his new heirs.

(b) Lucius and his brother Gaius, adopted sons of Augustus, died within two years of each other, which forced Augustus to adopt two new heirs to assume his throne upon his death.

(c) Correct. Augustus is the founder of the Roman Empire and as its first Emperor, ruled from 27 BC initiating a time of relative peace (Pax Romana) until his death in 14 AD. Tiberius, his son (adopted, step, and son-in-law), assumed the throne after his death.

(d) Incorrect. Tiberius, the son of Augustus (adopted, step, and son-in-law), assumed the throne after his father's death in 14 AD.

**3** The trip of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem recorded in Luke 2:2-5 happened exactly as the Bible states.

Answer:

True  False

(True) Correct! The Bible states that this happened specifically, and the Bible's inerrancy confirms this, regardless of humanist or liberal denials.

(False) Wrong. Liberal Christians who try to prove the Bible to be unreliable and filled with error try to discredit specific historical events that are recorded. Time after time, new archaeological and documentary evidence is discovered to confirm the Bible's inerrancy concerning these specific events.

**4** Why was there no room left at any inns in Bethlehem when Mary and Joseph arrived?

Choose one answer.

- a. The town was filled with other journeyers that had come to pay their taxes as well
- b. There were just a couple of inns in the town of Bethlehem, and normally filled quickly during holidays
- c. The inns were actually the bottom floor of houses that were packed full with household animals

d. All of the above

(a) Correct. Journeymen came from all parts of the land to complete the taxes according to the laws instituted by Caesar Augustus.

(b) Incorrect. Unlikely.

(c) Incorrect. Households often housed their animals in the bottom floor, and inns probably did also. But, it was not the bottom floor but the upper floors that all Jewish residents, including travelers, slept.

(d) Nope.

**5** Where did Mary and Joseph end up staying when they arrived in Bethlehem?

Choose one answer.

a. In a stall that was used as an enclosure for animals

b. Possibly inside a cave in a natural outcropping of rock

c. In a place that informed Mary that the birth of her son would not be celebrated as a prominent leader

d. All of the above

(a) Correct.

(b) Correct. Some scholars suggest that a cave is a possibility, since it was also a common place where animals were kept.

(c) Correct. There was little doubt to Mary that the birth of the Messiah was under conditions that would have been seriously understated, given the ideas that all Jews held concerning his coming. The animal stall was a far cry from a Roman Palace or a Jewish Temple, both of which would have made more sense for the Messiah's birth to most Jews.

(d) Correct.

6 Mary did not experience the usual pains of childbirth because of her virgin status.

Answer:

True  False

(True) Incorrect. Mary was like all other women, with the curse of painful childbirth in effect for her childbirth, as it was for every other woman that gives birth. (Genesis 3:16)

(False) Correct. If anything, her childbirth might have been a bit more difficult because of her virgin status. Regardless, Mary was under the same curse given to all women to experience sorrow during childbirth. (Genesis 3:16)

7 Mary gave birth to a baby boy that was both the Son of God and her human son.

Answer:

True  False

(True) Correct. Though the concept of the two natures of Christ, both Divine and human, are difficult to understand and that have caused many disagreements historically among Christian faithful, we can still be certain of two important facts. Christ is the Son of God and the son of Mary. Mary is not Mother to God. Once those two facts are understood, a deeper study of Mary can be undertaken.

(False) Incorrect. It is important to realize the differences when a study of Mary is initiated. Mary is not the Mother to God, and God's nature is not given to the human nature of Christ. Christian belief normally declares Christ to be of two natures equally, that of the Divine nature of God, and the human nature of Mary.

8 Who found the Christ child in the manger just after he was born?

Choose one answer.

- a. Wise men
- b. Shepherds
- c. King Herod
- d. All of the above

(a) Incorrect. By the time the wise men found Christ, he was a young child, no longer a baby.

(b) Correct. They hurried to Bethlehem when they heard the announcement of Christ's birth.

(c) Incorrect. He hears the birth announcement from the three wise men as they searched for the Christ child, and by that time, Jesus was a child, not a baby.

(d) Incorrect.

## 9 What supernatural event announced the arrival of the Messiah to the shepherds?

Choose one answer.

- a. A shining star in the east
- b. The bright glory of God illuminating the shepherds
- c. An Angel
- d. All of the above

(a) Not really. The star pointed the direction of the Messiah's presence to the shepherds, but it was not the official announcement of the Lord's arrival.

(b) Not fully. It is the product of the arrival of the messenger, but would not have been understood without the declaration made by him.

(c) Correct. The joy-filled angel announced the birth of the Saviour, Christ the Lord.

(d) Incorrect.

## 10 What direction did the star point towards to signal the location of the newborn King of the Jews to the shepherds? (Matthew 2:2)

Choose one answer.

- a. North
- b. South
- c. East
- d. West

(a) Incorrect.

(b) Nope.

(c) Correct. This direction is typologically significant, especially in connection to the second coming of the Lord. (Matthew 24:27)

(d) Wrong.

## 11 What caused the wise men to search for Christ?

Choose one answer.

- a. They also saw the star in the East
- b. King Herod summoned them
- c. They were traveling with the shepherds who had knowledge of the birth of Christ
- d. All of the above

(a) Correct. There is no evidence that an Angel also visited them to inform them of the meaning of the star's appearance. It is assumed that as "wise men" they are versed on the science of the "sky, familiar with its normal appearance and observant of abnormal changes. It is pretty apparent in Scripture accounts that they put the supernatural star of the east together with the probable arrival of the King of the Jews.

(b) Incorrect. King Herod only summoned them, and commissioned them to locate the Christ child after they first arrived in Jerusalem and were seeking the new arrival.

(c) Incorrect. They were a separate group of travelers. They were not locals, but from eastern places that were far away.

(d) Incorrect.

## 12 What were the wise men's intentions when they located Christ child? (Matthew 2:1-12)

Choose at least one answer.

- a. To help King Herod find the Christ child
- b. Worship him
- c. To bring gifts to the child to honor, bless and anoint him
- d. To become the first disciples of Jesus Christ

(a) Incorrect. That was certainly what King Herod wanted them to do. And they were wise men to not reject King Herod's request to find the Christ child. But they had started their searching journey a long time before Herod commissioned them to find the child.

(b) Correct. Their search was noble and spiritual, and their hearts readied to worship the arrival of the King of the Jews.

(c) Also Correct. Their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh offered their thanks to God with typologically significant treasures of anointing that will hold greater meaning later on in Christ's life.

(d) Incorrect. The wise men did not come to learn from Jesus; rather, they came to worship him.

**13** What did the Wise Men do after locating the young boy Jesus? (More than one answer possible)

Choose at least one answer.

- a. Gave gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh
- b. They were warned by God to avoid Herod
- c. They fall on their knees and worship Him
- d. They escorted Joseph, Mary, and Jesus to Egypt for their safety
- e. All of the above

(a) Correct. Though these gifts are usually commonly known by most Christians, the typological significance is often lost. The gift of gold honors the wealth deserved a king; frankincense is the common incense used by the Jews to worship God, and myrrh is a resin used by worshippers of God to purify and anoint the Holy Tabernacle of God.

(b) Correct. Their hearts were pure when searching the Christ child, but, their journey was manipulated by King Herod, unbeknownst to them. He had directed them to locate the child, and then bring back the location of the child to Him with intentions of killing Christ as soon as he was located. God warned the wise men of these evil intentions.

(c) Correct. (Matthew 2:9-11)

(d) Incorrect. After the wise men departed, God warns Joseph of the danger created by Herod is seeking the Christ child to kill him. Through this dream, Joseph was given instructions to remove his family from their pastoral homeland, and carry them to Egypt, where they could



find safety in the midst of the chaotic world that is populated by people and activities that could hide them from danger.

(e) Incorrect.

**14** What did King Herod do immediately after the wise men escaped from his assignment to find the Christ child and tell him the location?

Choose one answer.

- a. He orders the slaying of all the children under two years old in Bethlehem and the coastal cities
- b. He died
- c. He destroys the Temple of God
- d. All of the above

(a) Correct. It is often portrayed in Christmas celebrations that the wise men are present with the shepherds in the manger with the newborn baby. Biblical accounts show that Jesus was a young child by the time the wise men came to him; certainly no more than two-years-old, but much more than just a newborn baby.

(b) Incorrect. King Herod did not die until much later.

(c) Wrong. The Second Temple of the Intertestamental Period still stood when the family escaped to Egypt.

(d) Wrong.

**15** What happens to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus after Herod finally dies? (May be multiple answers)

Choose at least one answer.

- a. Joseph and his family remain in Egypt until Jesus grows into young adulthood
- b. Joseph returns his family to Bethlehem in the land of Israel
- c. None of the above
- d. Joseph settles his family in the city of Nazareth in the land of Israel

(a) Incorrect. The child Jesus grew up in the land of Israel.

(b) Wrong. He avoided Bethlehem because of the rule of another bad king named Archelaus.

(c) Wrong.

(d) Correct. Taking residence in Nazareth also fulfills another prophesy by the prophets of old that state the Messiah will be called a Nazarene (Matthew 2:19-22).

## 16 Who was the Prophet Simeon? (Multiple answers likely)

Choose at least one answer.

- a. He was a devout and just Jew
- b. He patiently waits at the Temple to see the arrival of the Messiah
- c. He is the husband to Prophetess Anna
- d. All of the above

(a) Correct. Simeon was righteous servant to his beloved LORD God.

(b) Correct. The Holy Ghost had revealed to this devout Jew that he would see the Messiah with his own eyes before he dies.

(c) Incorrect. Anna was a widow of 84 years.

(d) Incorrect.

## 17 What were some significant prophesy points proclaimed by Simeon at the Temple upon laying eyes upon the Messiah? (Luke 2:29-35) (Will be more than one answer)

Choose at least one answer.

- a. He linked the arrival of the Messiah with God's salvation
- b. He declares the arrival of the Messiah to bring glory to the people of Israel
- c. He proclaims both the fall, and the rising again of many in Israel
- d. He connects the arrival of the Messiah to the Gentiles
- e. He declares that the child's life will cut her soul with a heartbreaking piercing

(a) Correct. While many Jews looked to the coming Messiah for their freedom of oppression, the use of the word salvation holds great significance.

(b) Correct. Christ comes first to bring God's glory to Israel.

(c) Correct. Prophet Simeon reveals to Mary and Joseph that their son, the Son of God, will be fulfilling specific events that will involve a great deal of heartache and pain to him and them.

(d) Correct. He proclaimed the Messiah as a light to give light to the Gentiles, who dwelt in darkness before Christ's assumed human form.

(e) Correct. It is through this piercing, the death upon the cross by the Messiah, that reveals the thoughts of many hearts, and gives them eternal life when honest faith embraces the Truth of God.

**18** According to the traditional view advanced by John Damascene, the sorrow in Prophet Simeon's words speaks of the deep sorrow Mary's soul will feel with tremendous maternal grief as she stands at the foot of the crucified Son of God. (John 19:25-27)

Answer:

True  False

(True) Correct. Mary probably did not equate that prophecy with the mysteries of the death of her son in the future; but, one can imagine that there was a pause and a coldness that surely permeated her being in that one moment of Simeon's pronouncement.

(False) Incorrect. Though most thought the Messiah would bring glory and freedom upon His arrival, the Simeon's words pronounced a horrible piercing of the soul in times to come, especially to his mother's heart.

**19** What was the uniqueness of Prophetess Anna's life prior to seeing the Messiah arrive in human being form as she sat at the Temple?

Choose one answer.

- a. She was a widow for 84 years
- b. She had been married to her husband over 107 years
- c. Anna was of great faith and confident that she would see the Messiah with her own eyes in her lifetime
- d. All of the above

(a) Correct. Assuming she was young when she was married, to be a widow for 84 years speaks of her advanced age.

(b) Correct. She was widowed for 84 years, and had been married for over 107 years; thus, she was at least 191 years old before an allowance is added in to her marriage age.

(c) Correct. She served God with fastings and prayers day and night, and was given the privilege of seeing the Messiah through an increase of her days of life to make it happen.

(d) Correct. This answer encompasses them all.

**20** The child Jesus was smart, well-liked, wise, respected, and had favor with God and man; his advanced understanding and interest in the things of God caused some anxiousness to Mary and Joseph, who were probably not expecting these things until the child was grown to at least the age of accountability. (Luke 2:49-52)

Answer:

True  False

(True) Correct. Jesus the wise and well-respected child would tell his parents who had frantically searched for him when he became lost in the journey after the feast of the Passover in Jerusalem. "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49-52)

(False) Incorrect. The timing must have seen off concerning the young child's focused dedication to the things of God. Mary and Joseph were anxious for one reason; they had never known a child like him before. His special relationship to God was apparent at even a young age. Mary pondered it all, as the Son of God grew to assume his ministry (Luke 2:51)