

Mary and Joseph

Luke 1:26-38; Matt 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-6

1. Intro

1. Try to put yourself into the shoes of both Joseph and Mary in this scene.
2. How do you think Mary must have felt as she got up the courage to break the news of her pregnancy to Joseph? Had she rehearsed what she was going to say?
 1. Remember the story of the prodigal son? He rehearsed ([Luke 15:18-19](#))
3. What emotions must Joseph have been feeling when he found out Mary was pregnant? What questions raced through his mind in that moment?

2. The Story

1. Luke shares Mary's perspective, while Matthew conveys Joseph's vantage point.
2. Betrothal
 1. It was part one of a two part marriage process that included both the betrothal and the marriage ceremony.
 2. It was arranged by the families of the bride and groom.
 3. It establishes love as a commitment of the will more than any emotional or physical aspects that accompany love.
 1. Committed love - I love you because you are my wife/husband.
 2. Emotional/physical love - You are my wife/husband because I love you.
 4. This period of betrothal was viewed in that day as a time of testing for fidelity
 1. Mary became pregnant during the betrothal period, which was a cultural no-no.
 2. It would bring shame on her and Joseph as well as both of their families.
 5. However, Mary's pregnancy was not in violation of her betrothal fidelity, which we know because of her question to the angel of the Lord: "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" ([Luke 1:34](#)).
3. [Luke 1:26-38](#)
 1. When Mary hears the words from the angel she accepts what she hears no matter how frightening or difficult this will be.
 2. She then leaves and goes to the home of Elizabeth ([39](#))
 3. In all of these verses there is not a clue about how and when Joseph found out the news of Mary's pregnancy.
 4. The fact that the Bible states this pregnancy's origin was not from man but from the Holy Spirit is a response to rumors that swirled in that day and throughout Jesus' life ([John 8:41](#)).
 5. Both Luke and Matthew state that Mary's pregnancy was from divine origins rather than infidelity.
 1. Her question, "How can this be?", is answered by the angel's summary response: "For nothing will be impossible with God" ([Luke 1:37](#)).
 6. Mary by herself couldn't produce a son—but God could give her one whose name, Jesus, means "God saves."
 1. In essence, this is the gospel: humans cannot produce their own salvation, but God can and has chosen to accomplish it for all of humanity.

4. Matt 1:18-25

1. No clue as to when Joseph found out and how he initially reacted.
2. Once he processed the news he formulated a plan. (19)
 1. Divorce her quietly (not through public spectacle)
 1. The only logical conclusion to this pregnancy was that Mary had been unfaithful during the betrothal period.
 1. According to Jewish law, he not only had the right to divorce her with public shame, but he would also be permitted to stone her to death if he wished (cf. Deuteronomy 22:23-27; 24:1-4).
 2. Joseph's character was kind (Matt 1:19), giving us a clue at just how much Joseph really loved Mary.
3. Then through a dream, the angels tells him what God has instructed him to do.
 1. He goes against his formulated plan
 2. Faith is lived out.

3. The Inn (Luke 2:1-6)

1. Joseph and Mary go to Bethlehem because of the census. (1-3)
 1. Not by chance, but by the sovereignty of God.
2. Was there a conversation with the innkeeper?
 1. Innkeeper has a choice to make; open or close the door.
 2. What if the door had closed?
3. God brought all this about.
 1. God found favor in Mary and placed the Savior in her womb.
 2. God shifted Joseph's plans to quietly divorce a pregnant Mary who was not carrying his biological child and instead, helped him not be afraid to take Mary as his wife.
 3. God provided for all the needs of Joseph and Mary so that the Messiah could be born within busy Bethlehem.
 4. Fate did not lead Joseph and Mary to that crowded inn—the sovereignty of God did.

4. Conclusion

1. Obedience is key.
 1. Mary obeyed even though she didn't know all that would lie ahead.
 2. Joseph obeyed even though he may have know the shame that would come upon him and his family.
 3. The obedience of these two in the Christmas story all led to the fulfillment of God's sovereign and timely plan for salvation.
2. Fulfilled prophecy, both about Mary and about Bethlehem. (Isa 7:14; Isa 9:6-7)
 1. Matthew reminds us the meaning of the name of Immanuel: our God who is with us.
 2. He is Jesus, the God who saves us, and he is with us all the days of our lives.
 3. He is with us in every valley of the shadow of death as well as on the mountaintop of life.
3. Like the innkeeper, Immanuel is standing at the door knocking (Rev 3:20)