

By Mary Isaacs

“ I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered, “May it be to me as you have said” (Luke 1:38 NIV)

When the angel Gabriel told her that even though she was a virgin she was going to be the mother of Emmanuel, Mary must have been very young. According to the biblical times she was a young teenager and could not have been more than fourteen years of age.

However, Mary in her faith and humility accepted the immense responsibility that she was given. This is despite the risk of rejection that she faced in her culture as an unmarried mother. She freely submitted to the will of God in her life.

We are not told about Mary’s parents and their reaction. However a few people supported Mary at this critical time of her life. One of them was her cousin Elizabeth who in her old age was miraculously expecting a baby; John the Baptist who would be the forerunner of Christ

The Importance of Support

When Mary went to stay with her for three months, Elizabeth reaffirmed her story through the guidance of the Holy Spirit and told her how the child in her womb had leapt, obviously in praise of Christ who was within Mary. This led Mary to sing the song of praise referred to as “The magnificent”. Mary sang *“My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in my saviour*” (Luke 1:46-55). In the song she pictured God as a champion for the poor, oppressed and the

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despised and felt honoured that God would fulfil His promises to His people through her.

Joseph was a good righteous man but after discovering that his fiancée was pregnant, he must have been greatly disappointed. In his discretion and sensitivity he planned to divorce her quietly and not expose her to public disgrace. According to the law of the times she could have been stoned. After the intervention of the angel Gabriel accepted to marry Mary even though he was not the biological father of her baby.

This saved her from the cultural stigma of the society they lived in and gave Jesus an earthly father.

A blessed but difficult life

Even with the support of Joseph, Mary did not have a comfortable time delivering Jesus to the world. They had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem to register for a census while Mary was heavily pregnant. While there Mary give birth and had to place her child in a manger because there was no room at the inn. There were no royal surroundings for the promised Messiah. However even her discomfort was in God's plan since the Saviour was meant to be born in Bethlehem as prophesied.

Family Life

Mary and her husband brought up Jesus well, including taking Him through the Jewish rites according to the Law and consecrating Him in the Temple. She must have been proud of Him as He grew up physically, mentally, socially and spiritually, gaining favour with God and men. However, there must have been a lot of pain for her especially after He started His active

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Ministry. She must have suffered greatly through His rejection and crucifixion. However, He was a good son and ensured that she was looked after by the disciple John. Even at the cross he had her in mind.

Mary also had other children including James, Judas and Simon and several daughters.

Lessons from her life.

The baby Elizabeth was carrying rejoiced in meeting the Christ in Mary. Do people you meet rejoice at the Christ in you?

Mary was young poor and female. We learn that God can use anybody irrespective of their status.

From Mary's life we learn that when called, we should humbly submit to the will of God in our lives. We should trust and obey and be willing servants no matter the cost.

God will provide support and confirmation for our calling. God provided Mary with the Angel Gabriel who informed and explained her mission; she had comfort from Elizabeth and Joseph; and the shepherds, the Wise Men, Prophet Simon and the Prophetess Anna at the Temple also confirmed that Jesus was Christ.

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