



HOPE

Mary, *How Did You Know?*

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Jesus' coming meant everything to the world, but what did it mean to Mary? I have been reflecting on Jesus' long-anticipated arrival and the tension of longing and hope that people must have felt. Mary was given the grand assignment of waiting for the hope of the world to be born to her. It caused me to think of the hymn, 'Mary did you know?'

Take a moment and place yourself within the conversation this hymn is evoking. *Mary, did you know that your baby boy would one day rule the nations ... will give sight to a blind man... will calm the storm with his hand?* Imagine – especially if you have a child and you have great hopes for them – being told all of these incredible things about what your precious tiny baby would do, and those are just the minor leagues of things Jesus did! *Mary, did you know that your baby boy will one day walk on water... is heaven's perfect lamb... is Lord of all creation. When you kiss your little baby, you kiss the face of God.* No doubt a flood of emotions overwhelmed Mary when she thought of these promises as she held her baby in her hands. What great hope and trust you would have to have in the Lord to watch Him grow and believe every night He is highly anointed and will go on to do such incredible miracles.

While this is but a song, we do see a version of this playing out in the biblical narrative. In Luke 1:28 an angel comes to Mary and says, "Greeting, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" Here, Mary's reaction is said to be that she was, "greatly troubled," (v.29) understandably so. Seeing her alarmed reaction, the angel reaffirms her.

"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Luke 1:31-33

That's a specific and powerful word to receive. Mary logically follows and says, "How will this be?" (v.34). She asks a question. She is standing in the presence of an angel, and she asks a question. It feels like a wave of reality and a weight off of my mind to say, even Mary asked questions. We often live in doubt, but Mary responded in faith. The angel reminds her., "for nothing will be

impossible for God.” And do you know what she says? “Behold, I am your servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” (v.38). She trusts the word. She trusts the Lord. She chooses to participate in the waiting and the hope and the impossibilities of everything she does not know that lies before her.

When we return to what God has promised and see his faithfulness to Mary, we are reminded that we too can trust him. We can choose to live in the tension of the waiting and still know that there is hope to be had because it is a process to see the Word bear fruit in us. We live on the other side of Jesus’s arrival to know he really did do the impossible. He really did *walk where angels trod*, and therefore we can believe in what he said.

“And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20