

Mary, Did You Know?

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**THE JOURNEY: WALKING
THE ROAD TO
BETHLEHEM**

What's coming:

- Today: Mary of Nazareth
- Week 2: Joseph of Bethlehem
- Week 3: Mary's Visit to Elizabeth
- Week 4: From Nazareth to Bethlehem
- Week 5: The Manger

Mary and Joseph on the Way to Bethlehem.
Hugo van der Goes , 1475.



Mary of Nazareth

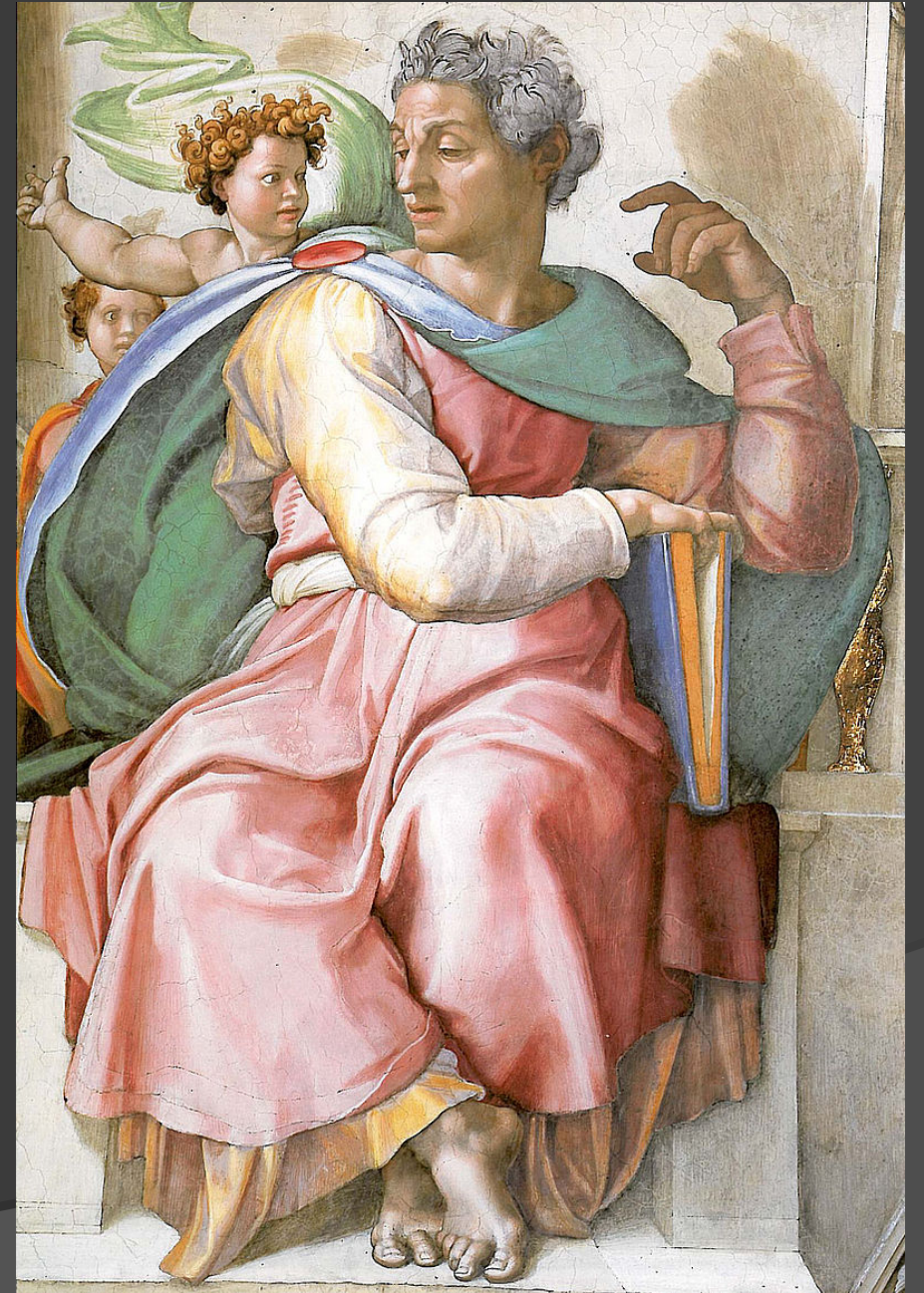
Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel. Isaiah 7:14

Immaculate Conception of Mary. Murillo, 1678.



Merciful God,
You sent your messengers, the prophets,
to preach repentance and prepare the way
for our salvation.
Give us grace to heed their warnings and forsake
our sins, that we may celebrate aright the
commemoration of the Nativity,
And may await with joy the coming in
Glory of Jesus Christ our Redeemer;
Who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
One God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

The Prophet Isaiah. Michelangelo, 1508-12.



The Biblical Foundation: The Annunciation

- 26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,
- 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.
- 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, **“Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”**
- 29 But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.
- 30 Then the angel said to her, **“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.**
- 31 **And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS.**
- 32 **He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**
- 33 **And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”**

³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, “**How can this be, since I do not know a man?**”

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, “**The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.**

³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible.”

³⁸ Then Mary said, “**Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.**” And the angel departed from her.



Annunciation. Fra Angelico, c. 1450.

Think About...

- Did you have a “hometown”?
- Was there a right and wrong side of the tracks?
- How did your hometown help define you?



The Journey video...

- Listen for the description of Nazareth during the time of Mary and Joseph...
- the importance of fresh water...
- the meaning of the name Nazareth...
- the possible living conditions of Mary.



INSIGHTS, KNOWLEDGE, QUESTIONS...

- WHAT DID GOD DEMONSTRATE IN THE CHOICE OF MARY TO GIVE BIRTH TO THE MESSIAH?
- WHY DIDN'T GOD CHOOSE A PERSON OF HIGH RANK FROM SOME PLACE LIKE JERUSALEM?
- THAT MARY WAS "FULL OF GRACE" MAY SUGGEST HER IMMACULATE CONCEPTION... BORN WITH NO ORIGINAL SIN...
 - WHAT DOES THIS PHRASE MEAN TO YOU?
 - ARE **ALL** PEOPLE RECIPIENTS OF GOD'S GRACE? EXPLAIN.

HARD QUESTIONS...MAYBE NO ANSWERS...

- WHY DO YOU THINK THE VIRGIN BIRTH IS NOT MENTIONED IN MARK AND JOHN?
- SHOULD BELIEF IN AND ACCEPTANCE OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH BE THE “LITMUS TEST” OF ONE’S FAITH IN CHRIST? WITHOUT THIS BELIEF CAN ONE BE A CHRISTIAN?
- HOW DOES THE ANNUNCIATION SET THE STAGE FOR THE MESSAGE OF ADVENT AND THE CHRISTMAS STORY?
- HOW DOES MARY’S ABSOLUTE OBEDIENCE TO THE ANGEL’S WORDS REFLECT ON YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

Lord God, I want my prayer to be,

“Let it be with me according to your word,” but so often my own wants and desires get in the way.

I have not been the Christ-bearer you have called me to be.

I have not loved my sisters and brothers as you have instructed me to love.

I have not forgiven, I have not reconciled, I have not worked for peace.

But still you have filled me with your grace, and you continually demonstrate your love for me.

May I experience your forgiveness, Lord, as I make my way through this time preparation, so that I may fully commit myself to the Prince of Peace, our Savior, Christ Jesus our Lord.

It is in His name that I pray. Amen.