

MARY'S STORY 4 U

PART 2

MARY'S EASTER

STORY 4 U



INTRODUCTION

MARY'S STORY 4 U is a detailed Bible Study in 2 Parts with Lined and Full Versions in preparation for Christmas and Easter. Both parts relate to Mary's life as it really must have been - that of a humble, virtuous, Jewish young woman favoured by God for her simple faith and obedience; a wonderful example to us all, especially to women.



The life of the virgin mother of Jesus, over two thousand years ago, is an amazing story for all the world's people in every generations. Mary is worthy of honour and loving remembrance for her devotion, loyalty and faithfulness to Almighty God and His only begotten Son – her Firstborn.

PART 2 MARY'S EASTER STORY 4 U

MARY'S EASTER STORY 4 U began when Jesus, aged thirty, left home to begin His three year public ministry. Calling Himself the **Son of Man**, Jesus travelled mainly throughout the Holy Land with His twelve disciples. He taught the people by telling captivating stories in the form of Parables. Jesus showed His divine power and compassion, as God's only begotten Son and promised Messiah, by His wonderful miracles healing the sick, the lame and deaf, even those born blind, lepers and raising the dead!

Mary (Hebrew name Miriam) must have continued to store in her heart all these amazing reports she would have heard about her Son – and wondered and wondered! Only God can open eyes blind from birth, cure leprosy and raise the dead!

WATER INTO WINE AT THE WEDDING IN CANA

Read John 2:1-11

This, the first of His miracles Jesus performed in Cana of Galilee and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

John 2:11

Jesus and His mother had been invited to the wedding. Mary had always known Jesus lived His life for others, so it was not surprising His mother told Him that there was no wine left. A shameful situation at a wedding feast.

Jesus answered His Mother -

***Dear woman, what is that to you and to Me?
My time has not yet come.***

Even so, Mary told the servants –

Whatever He says to you, do it.

At these words, Jesus said –

Fill the water pots with water.

The servants then filled the six large stone pots with water right up to the brim. When the manager of the wedding feast tasted the *water turned to wine*, he remarked to the bridegroom that –

You have kept the best wine to the last!

But the servants knew it was the water Jesus had miraculously turned to wine!



JESUS' BRETHREN

Mary, her other sons and daughters must have felt isolated many times during these following years. His mother would only have seen Jesus at intervals and perhaps because of the crowds from a distance. Mary would have heard news about the exceptional events taking place in her Son's life. She must have constantly pondered in her trusting heart what God's plan would be for her special Firstborn Son –

the Carpenter, son of Mary.

Mark 6:3

During these few years –

* Jesus' kinsmen said - ***He is out of His mind!***

Mark 3:21

* ***His brethren did not believe in Him.***

John 7:5

Once, when His mother and family came looking for Him, Jesus spoke words that must have been difficult for them to understand.

On this occasion the crowd, sitting in a circle around Jesus, informed Him –

Your mother and Your brothers and Your sisters are outside asking for you.

Jesus replied – ***Who are My mother and My brothers?***

And looking and addressing the crowd before Him, Jesus added –

See! Here are my mother and my brothers; For whoever does the things God wills is My brother and sister and mother!

Mark 3:31-35

During these years before Christ's crucifixion, Mary must have continued to receive reports about her Son; and probably often from her own family. She had already heard Jesus say at the wedding -

My time has not yet come.

John 2:4

Inevitably, large crowds followed Jesus to see His miracles or signs, to hear His preaching and teaching. Multitudes from all over Israel and beyond listened with rapt attention to His parables and came in search of His healing touch. He became popular with ordinary people but many of the Scribes, Pharisees and Sadducees were jealous of His miraculous powers. To Israel's leaders and their status, Jesus was a threat causing them to plot to get rid of Him!

Jesus knew He would be betrayed and sentenced to death. He prophesied to His disciples that He would be condemned, handed over to the Gentiles to be crucified in Jerusalem - but that He would rise again from death on the third day! (Mark 10:32-34)

As Judas Iscariot departed from the Upper Room to betray Him, Jesus said to the other disciples –

Now is the Son of Man glorified!

John 13:31

What would Mary have thought on hearing such conflicting information about her Son's popularity with His followers but evil confrontation by the leaders of the land?

Was that sword prophesied by Simeon already piercing her heart?

THE CRUCIFIXION OF JESUS

The culmination of Christ's itinerant ministry demonstrating His divine authority, took place three years later in Jerusalem. Although throughout the Holy Land large numbers of people believed He was the sinless Son of God, the Messiah, the jealous leaders in Jerusalem succeeded in their plot to get rid of Him!

BUT GOD - sent Himself to die to save sinners! Jesus was the Passover Lamb *slain from the foundation of the world*; so in the capital city of Jerusalem, Jesus, the Nazarene, hung on Calvary's cross of wood between two thieves, the crucified King of the Jews -

A ransom for many.

Matthew 20:28



And Mary, His mother, was there silently watching.

She stood a little distance away in deep sorrow and painful anguish, at the sight of her Son's agony on the Cross –

His undeserved crucifixion.

The LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:6

Standing together with Mary, were other grief-stricken women who had loyally followed Jesus from Galilee and had ministered to Him –

Mary Magdalene, with Mary, (the wife of Clopas, and the mother of James the Less and Joses) and the mother of Zebedee's sons, probably called Salome.

John 19:25-26 (Matthew 27:55-56 Mark 15:40-41 Luke 23:49) (Luke 23:55-56)

What was going through Mary's mind?

Did Mary recall, even in her suffering watching His suffering, any of the events and words of promise given to her before and after the birth of Jesus. As Mary stood sorrowfully near the Cross, that sword had pierced her heart, just as Simeon had prophesied on the day of Jesus' dedication. Even in her deep sorrow, Mary knew her compassionate Son only thought of others, serving people as the *Son of Man* – thoughts soon verified in His next few words from the Cross. Yes, from the Cross Jesus thought of His mother when He saw her standing there and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby and said -

Dear Woman, See, here is your son!

*Then He said to the disciple, John - **See, here is your mother!***

And from that hour, the disciple took her into his own home.

John 19:26-27

Was His death on the Cross, on that dreadful Passover Friday, the end of Mary's hopes resting in God's unique promises about her Firstborn? No! Mary knew, by her personal trust in a loving and faithful God, there must be more than – Christ's undeserved death.

After Jesus died, the women who had faithfully ministered to Him saw the tomb where the body of Jesus was laid. How sadly they must have rested on the Sabbath and then in preparing spices and ointments to anoint His body!. They really believed Jesus, the One they loved, was dead!



Returning with John after Jesus' death, how black must have been the following hours of the next three days for Mary; and also for the women and the disciples! Yes, how bitter and bewildering those three days after Christ's crucifixion until - **His Resurrection!**

THE RESURRECTION

Read John 20:1-10 Mark 16:1-11

Yes, Mary's Easter Story 4 U would seem to have ended then on that Friday in bitter tragedy during the Jewish Passover Feast. BUT GOD - raised His sinless Son from the grave three days later. God's redemption plan to save sinful mankind had been accomplished and finished.

When Jesus yielded up His life His great cry was - ***It is finished!***

John 19:30

Jesus had indeed finished the saving work He was sent to do.

The Lord Jesus Christ had won the victory over evil. Satan was now a defeated foe. The Resurrection of Christ was God's seal; Jesus being alive for evermore and the kingdom of heaven open for all believers. And that's where Mary's Easter Story 4 U becomes awesome, joyous and glorious, as expressed in the words of this Easter Hymn in honour of the Risen Christ.

GLORIOUS MORNING

1.

O glorious, glorious morning,
The dawn of Easter Day;
Sin's darkness has retreated
And light has come to stay.
The Daystar is now shining,
In gold and bright array
To greet with joy and gladness,
The Risen Christ today.

2.

For lo, within a garden,
Beside an olive tree,
There lies an empty tomb now
For all the world to see.
Two angels stand proclaiming;
The stone has rolled away,
For Christ the only Saviour
Was raised this Holy Day.



3.

Lift up your hearts to praise Him,
Let joyful anthems ring;
For Christ the only Saviour,
He is our Lord and King.
Rejoice! Lift up your voices,
Adoring homage pay,
To greet with joy and gladness,
The Risen Christ today.

Tune: Cruger

GOOD NEWS! GOOD NEWS!



What stupendous news John had to give Mary on returning home after seeing the empty tomb!
What did Mary think - and perhaps say, on hearing John's wonderful and awesome, good news?

My soul magnifies and extols the Lord.

Luke 1:46

Did Mary tell *the beloved* disciple about the things she had always known - even before Jesus was born? (Mary's Christmas Story 4 U - Part 1)

Yes, Mary believed - as she had always believed God's promises to her about her Firstborn, the Messiah and her Saviour.

Yes, Mary's Story 4 U is recorded in all the four Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. All the wondrous events of His birth are told in Matthew and Luke's gospels – the promised fulfilment of Messiah's First Coming, for Mary had indeed kept all these precious things in her heart.

Furthermore, Mary could never forget the words the angel of the Lord said to Joseph -

You shall call His name Jesus, which means Saviour, for He will save His people from their sins.

Matthew 1:21

That's the heart of the Gospel – God business of forgiveness for each believer, both Jew and Gentile, through Christ's shed blood in His death on the Cross. Without Christ's death and resurrection to live forever, there is no Salvation for lost mankind, no forgiveness of Sin to save sinners – God's free gift of eternal life for each one who truly believes and receives Jesus into their life.

Yes, that sword prophesied by aged Simeon did pierce Mary's faithful heart when her Son was crucified.

But what blessing came to Mary when she heard the Good News

*He is
Risen!*

Furthermore, what blessing was to follow forty days after!

THE ASCENSION



Yes, blessing came again to Mary when the Risen Christ ascended into heaven forty days after Easter.

The Apostles saw Jesus rise heavenwards to disappear in the cloud and heard two angels speak these words to them –

Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing into heaven?

This same Jesus, Who was lifted up from among you into heaven, will return the same way in which you saw Him go into heaven. Acts 1:11

Leaving *the hill called Olivet*, the Eleven returned to the Upper Room in Jerusalem –

Peter and John and James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. Acts 1:13

It was in Jerusalem they had been told by the Lord to await the coming promise of the Holy Spirit. Daily in the Upper Room, the Eleven gathered for prayer –

with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers. Acts 1:14



Yes, Mary was there, together with her other sons, who also now believed that Jesus was the Lamb of God and Messiah.

THE FEAST OF PENTECOST



Read Acts Chapter 2

What abundant blessings to Mary; the ministering women, the eleven Apostles and the other believers in the Upper Room at Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, when the gift of the Holy Spirit was given! Altogether there were about 120 disciples - the beginning of the Church (Acts 1:15). How these early disciples must have loved and honoured Mary, for her example of loyalty and faith throughout her life!

With the Holy Spirit coming, as a mighty wind and fire, the disciples were no longer afraid and bewildered, but empowered to proclaim the good news of Christ's free gift of Salvation from the city of Jerusalem to the rest of the world!

How Mary must have rejoiced at that wonderful Feast of Pentecost - the day which marks the Birthday of the Church!

My spirit rejoices in God my Saviour

Luke 1:46

CONCLUSION

The Apostle John is known to have made his home at ancient Ephesus in Asia Minor because of persecution against Christ's followers of the Way. Mary would have lived in Ephesus with John, for she had been given into his care by Jesus' words from the Cross. It was in Ephesus and its region that John was under shepherd of the Church. It may have been in Ephesus that Mary met the Gentile Luke, who wrote by careful research the third Gospel; the Apostle John writing the fourth. In Luke's account, there are many details about Christ's birth (Part 1) that are not mentioned in the other Gospels. Such details most probably originated from Mary herself.

Today, the city of ancient Ephesus is a ruin. There is no archaeological evidence of the site where Mary and John may have lived; or even any ruins of the Church in Ephesus. (9th - 14th century when Ephesus finally became part of Ottoman Empire).

(See Ephesian letter written by St Paul. Also, John's vision of the glorified Christ during his imprisonment on the Isle of Patmos and His Message to the Ephesian Church in the Book of Revelation).
Revelation 2:1-7

MARY'S EASTER STORY 4 U concludes in holy waiting for Mary assuredly believed Jesus' words were true. She knew that one day in the End Times her Son would return to earth in His Second Coming, as He had promised -

I will come back again and will take you to Myself, that where I am you may be also.

John 14:3

On that Day, the Lord Jesus Christ would reign in glory and majesty as King of kings and Lord of lords. Almighty God will then indeed dwell in heaven with His people - the purpose and desire throughout the Bible of His loving heart!

How Mary's must have rejoiced in thankful –

HALLELUJAHS!

And for all Believers, first called *Christians in Antioch*, it is not the END of the STORY 4 U

but in possessing new life in Christ –

it is the BEGINNING!



MARY'S STORY 4 U

(Christmas and Easter Parts 1 and 2)

is dedicated to -

Elizabeth Archibald – who sowed the seed for this story 4 U.

(C.S.S.M missionary in India before and during W.W.2).

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