

January 2–8

Matthew 1; Luke 1

“Be It unto Me according to Thy Word”



Prophecies About Mary

Isaiah 7:14

14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

1 Nephi 11:13,20-21

13 And it came to pass that I looked and beheld the great city of Jerusalem, and also other cities. And I beheld the city of Nazareth; and in the city of Nazareth I beheld a virgin, and she was exceedingly fair and white.

20 And I looked and beheld the virgin again, bearing a child in her arms.

21 And the angel said unto me: Behold the Lamb of God, yea, even the Son of the Eternal Father!...

Mosiah 3:8

8 And he shall be called Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Father of heaven and earth, the Creator of all things from the beginning; and his mother shall be called Mary.

Angel Appears to Zacharias

Luke 1:5-10

What priesthood duty did Zacharias have to opportunity to perform at this time that allowed him to be in the temple?

James E. Talmage

"It was a very solemn occasion in the life of the humble Judean priest—this one day in his life on which the special and particularly sacred service was required of him.... As Zacharias ministered within the Holy Place, the people without bowed themselves in prayer, watching for the clouds of incense smoke to appear above the great partition which formed the barrier between the place of general assembly and the Holy Place, and awaiting the reappearance of the priest and his pronouncement of the benediction." (Jesus the Christ, pg. 76)

Angel Appears to Zacharias

Luke 1:11-17

What did the angel prophesy about John?

Carl W. Buehner

“John the Baptist was one of the most distinguished of God's servants. That he found favor with the Lord is emphasized in the Angel Gabriel's appearance in the temple to his father, Zacharias, promising him that he and his wife were to have a son who should 'be great in the sight of the Lord.'.... He was an Elias in that he was a forerunner of Jesus. He vigorously preached the gospel of repentance to the Jews....

“John faithfully prepared the way for Jesus' mission..... He stands with Adam, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Moses, and Joseph Smith as trusted and true servants to whom the Lord committed a dispensation of the gospel. He suffered death as a martyr and was beheaded through the trickery of the wicked Herodias. Like many of the servants of God, he sealed his testimony with his blood.” (CR, April 1960)

D&C 84:28

For he was baptized while he was yet in his childhood, and was ordained by the angel of God at the time he was eight days old unto this power, to overthrow the kingdom of the Jews, and to make straight the way of the Lord before the face of his people, to prepare them for the coming of the Lord, in whose hand is given all power

Angel Appears to Zacharias

Luke 1:18-20

Why was Zacharias struck dumb?

Who is the angel Gabriel?

Joseph Smith

“Noah, who is Gabriel,... stands next in authority to Adam in the Priesthood; he was called of God to this office.” (HC 3:386)

Angel Appears to Mary

Luke 1:26-33

What was Mary chosen to do?

Erastus Snow

“The New Testament tells us that God sent his angel to visit this beautiful Virgin Mary, and to make known unto her that she was chosen of the Lord to be the Mother of Jesus who should be the Savior of this people. And the messenger or the angel sent to her was designed to prepare her mind, her heart and her faith for this great work unto which the Lord had chosen her.” (JD, 19:266)

Bruce R. McConkie

“It was because of this... intermixture of the divine and the mortal in one person, that our Lord was able to work out the infinite and eternal atonement. Because God was his Father and Mary was his mother, he had power to live or to die, as he chose, and having laid down his life, he had power to take it again, and then, in a way incomprehensible to us, to pass on the effects of that resurrection to all men so that all shall rise from the tomb.” (The Promised Messiah, pg. 471)

Angel Appears to Mary

Luke 1:34-38

What was Mary's response to the message from the angel?

Why do you think Gabriel told Mary about Elisabeth?

Neal A. Maxwell

"The marvelous, spiritually submissive Mary likewise expressed it (true submissiveness) in few words. Though filled with wonderment about the miraculous impending birth of Jesus, she said, 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.'

"Her words can guide us when we too are puzzled by what is impending or unfolding in our lives." (Sermons Not Spoken, pg. 8-9)

L. Whitney Clayton

“Mary humbly responded that she would do what God asked, without demanding to know specifics and undoubtedly in spite of having countless questions about the implications for her life. She committed herself without exactly understanding why He was asking that of her or how things would work out. She accepted God’s word unconditionally and in advance, with little knowledge of what lay ahead. With simple trust in God, Mary said, ‘Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.’” (CR, April 2017)

James E. Talmage

"It was natural that Mary... should seek companionship... in whom she could confide, from whom she might hope to derive comfort and support.... Her heavenly visitant had indeed suggested all this in his mention of Elisabeth, Mary's cousin, herself a subject of unusual blessing, and a woman through whom another miracle of God had been wrought."
(Jesus the Christ, pg. 82)

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:39-45

What did Elisabeth experience as soon as she heard Mary's salutation?

James E. Talmage

"There was mutual joy in the meeting between Mary the youthful virgin, and Elisabeth, already well advanced in life. From what of Gabriel's words her husband had communicated, Elisabeth must have known that the approaching birth of her son would soon be followed by that of the Messiah.... When Mary's salutation fell upon her ears, the Holy Ghost bore witness that the chosen mother of the Lord stood before her in the person of her cousin." (Jesus the Christ, pg. 83)

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:46-50

What do we learn about Mary's humility from these verses?

What personal promise did Mary receive at this time?

Ezra Taft Benson

“Mary, the mother of our Savior, was of most modest circumstances, yet she knew well her responsibility and took joy in it. Remember her humble exclamation to her cousin Elisabeth: ‘He hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Her strength was inward, not from outward material things. (CR, Oct. 1981)

Bruce R. McConkie

“No woman has ever been held in higher esteem by the true saints than the mother of their Lord; and even among apostate peoples—false and delusive though it be—praise, reverence, adulation, and even supposed worship are bestowed upon her.” (“Doctrinal New Testament Commentary”, Volume 1)

Joseph's Vision

Matt 1:16-17

Why is it significant that Joseph was a direct decedent of king David?

James E. Talmage

"Two genealogical records purporting to give the lineage of Jesus are found in the New Testament, one in the first chapter of Matthew, the other in the third chapter of Luke....

"Luke's record is regarded by many, however, as the pedigree of Mary, while Matthew's is accepted as that of Joseph. The all important fact to be remembered is that [Jesus] would be born in the royal line....

"Had Judah been a free and independent nation, ruled by her rightful sovereign, Joseph the carpenter would have been her crowned king; and his lawful successor to the throne would have been Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." (Jesus the Christ, pg. 85-87)

Joseph's Vision

Matt 1:18-25

What did Joseph feel he must do before the angel appeared to him?

James E. Talmage

“Now the Jewish law provided for the annulment of a betrothal in either of two ways -- by public trial and judgment, or by private agreement attested by a written document signed in the presence of witnesses. Joseph was a just man, a strict observer of the law, yet no harsh extremist; moreover he loved Mary and would save her all unnecessary humiliation, whatever own sorrow and suffering. For Mary's sake he dreaded the thought of publicity; and therefore determined to have the espousal annulled with such privacy as the law allowed. He was troubled and thought much of his duty in the matter.” (Jesus the Christ, pg. 79)

John's Mission

Luke 1:76-80

What would John accomplish?

What was John given in abundance so that he could complete his great mission?

Robert J. Matthews

"As John grew to maturity, the Holy Ghost prepared the young man's mind for his ministry. John received the Holy Ghost while he was in his mother's womb, and no one can receive the Holy Ghost without receiving revelation.... Later [he] received the full keys of the Aaronic Priesthood, including the keys of the ministering of angels. It follows that he would have received the visitation of angels during these preparatory years....

"The training of this great Elias required the finest spiritual education possible and included study of the scriptures, lessons in Israel's history, the workings and revelations of the Holy Ghost, and the ministry of angels. When John came forth preaching at the age of thirty, he was ready. He knew what his mission was and what he was to do, and he had the authority to go about it." ("The Ministry of John the Baptist," Ensign, Jan. 1991)

Next Week:

January 9–15

Matthew 2; Luke 2

We Have Come to Worship Him

