

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16  
 Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26  
 Romans 16:25-27  
 Luke 1:26-38



### THE LORD IS WITH YOU!

Luke 1:26-35. *In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup>to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup>And he came to her and said, "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" <sup>29</sup>But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup>And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. <sup>32</sup>He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, <sup>33</sup>and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end." <sup>34</sup>And Mary said to the angel, "How shall this be, since I have no husband?" <sup>35</sup>And the angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.*

*And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. <sup>37</sup>For with God nothing will be impossible." <sup>38</sup>And Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.<sup>1</sup>*

- *In the sixth month ... (v.26)*. This was the sixth month after Mary's cousin Elizabeth conceived. The preceding text (1:24-25) reads, "... Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she hid herself ..." In other words, three months before the birth of John the Baptist, the angel Gabriel was sent to Mary.
- *... the angel Gabriel was sent from God ... (v.26)*. The angel Gabriel appears first in Dan 8:16. He was sent to make Daniel understand a vision, and he appeared as a man to Daniel. Later Gabriel came again to Daniel "in swift flight" and encouraged him with words of wisdom and understanding (Dan 9:20-23).  
 The book of Enoch (not in the Bible) describes Gabriel as one of four archangels, the other three being Michael, Raphael, and Uriel. Moslems regard Gabriel with profound reverence. They believe he delivered the Quran to Mohammed beginning in 609 A.D. when Mohammed was 40 years old.  
 Before he came to Mary, Gabriel was sent to announce the birth of John the Baptist to his father Zechariah. Review Luke 1:8-23. What do you learn about Gabriel in this passage? Why did the angel visit the *father* of John, then visit the *mother* of Jesus? How was John to serve God when he grew to manhood?
- *... to a city of Galilee named Nazareth ... (v.26)*. Nazareth in those days was a small city, 14 miles west of the Sea of Galilee. A major trade route ran by the city, and the constant Gentile traffic gave the city a bad reputation among the Jews. "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Nathaniel asked (John 1:46). Later, after Jesus began his ministry, word of him spread far and wide over this same trade route.
- *... to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David ... (v.27)*. Believers have always assumed the truth of this – that Mary had not known a man until after Jesus was born. A few commentators say the birth stories in Luke and Matthew are made up to emphasize the divinity of Jesus, but Luke especially, who was a physician, would not be likely to do this. And if God was able to raise his Son from the dead, would he have a problem sending him into the world in the way he chose?

The Jews had always believed Messiah would fulfill prophesy and be a descendant of David. When

<sup>1</sup> Bible quotations are from the RSV unless otherwise noted.

Jesus healed a blind demoniac, the people asked, “*Can this be the Son of David?*” (Matt 12:23).

David was the son of Jesse. Long after David died, Isaiah prophesied, “*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him ...*” (Isa 11:1-2). Look at Isa 11:1-5 and note verses that describe Jesus Christ.

- “*Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!*” (v.28). This was something really new. The word of God came not to a great prophet like Daniel, but to a young peasant woman. What impression of Mary do you get from v.29, “*But she was greatly troubled at the saying ...*”? The NLT says “confused ... disturbed.”

- “*Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God*” (v.30). These are words anyone would be glad to hear. If you believe these scriptures, and open your heart to Christ for forgiveness and cleansing from sin, you also will know in your heart that you have *found favor with God* through faith in his Son.

Being in *favor with God* is like being adopted into the family of God. Mary was to suffer the disbelief of her own friends and family. Later, she had somehow to reconcile constantly in her heart the shadow of the cross with the words of Gabriel, “*He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; ... and of his kingdom there will be no end*” (v.32). You and I must come to terms with this, since we are responsible for the cross. Mary lived always with the knowledge that she was in the family of God forever, and so may you and I when we receive Christ and accept what he has done in giving his life for us.

- “*You will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus*” (v.31). Thus the name of our Lord was given from God to his mother, as John’s name was given to Zechariah his father (Luke 1:13). *Jesus* is the Greek version of the Hebrew *Joshua* (*Yeshua*), which means *Savior*. In Matthew’s gospel, the angel’s annunciation to *Joseph* (not Mary) contains these words: “*She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins*” (Matt 1:21).

- “*How shall this be, since I have no husband?*” (v.34). This is like Zechariah’s question, “*How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.*” (Luke 1:18). Gabriel’s response to Mary was certainly more forgiving here than his response to Zechariah in Luke 1:19-20, possibly because Mary was a woman. If so, all Christian men must consider this difference. Or perhaps it was because the event itself, “*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you ...*” was so sacred and profound that even Gabriel found himself speaking in softer tones. Women know the emotions of conception and birth, but men can only wonder about these things.

- “*Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God*” (v.35). It is as if Gabriel wanted to assure Mary that all this was real. In other words, the Son of God would be born as a human male. He would be human because Mary is his mother. He would be divine because God is his *Father*, but not in the sense that he is the father of Adam and Eve. Jesus would be the *incarnation* of God. The Son of God was destined for a task far beyond human capability. He was God, coming in person to redeem the human race.

- “*And behold, your kinswoman Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son ...*” (v.36). Here was added proof. Elizabeth’s conception was not in the same category with the virgin birth, but it was a miracle nevertheless, on a par with Sarah’s conception of Isaac. (Could it also have been helped by Zechariah’s imposed silence?) In any case, Mary soon went to check on Elizabeth, and rejoiced to see her condition. “*My soul magnifies the Lord,*” she exclaimed, “*And my spirit rejoices in God my Savior ...*” (Luke 1:46ff). Mary’s words of the Magnificat express her profound joy at being the chosen Mother of God.

- “*Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word*” (v.38). Although Mary is unique among women, this is a saying for all believers. It expresses resignation without fatalism.

In this life we resign ourselves to whatever the winds of fate bring, but always with the sure hope that God works everything for good with those who love him, who receive forgiveness and redemption through Jesus Christ. We rejoice as Mary did, in being called to serve God, and we rejoice in our adoption into God’s family. Even now, as Paul wrote to the Galatians (4:7-NLT), “*You are no longer a slave but God’s own child.*” As we celebrate our Lord’s birth this coming week, let us make the attitude of his Mother our own: “*Let it be to me according to your word.*”