

## Mary

My name is Mary. When I was pledged to be married to Joseph, an angel came to me and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."

I was greatly troubled at these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to me, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

"How will this be," I asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." "I am the Lord's servant," I answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left me.

At that time I got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where I entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard my greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and she was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!"

And then I said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me -- holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers."

I am only a humble hand maid and cannot understand the great things of which the angel spoke. I knew that I was unworthy of such an honor and unequal to the great responsibility. I also knew that there would be hardship, gossip and even, perhaps, persecution. For in small town Nazareth, everyone's business was discussed in the greatest of detail, and many would not believe that an angel had spoken to me. Yet, how could I choose any other path but to obey the Lord God of Israel, because He had chosen me to bear and rear the one called the Son of the Most High.

Luke 1:26 - 38