

THE HANDMAID OF THE LORD

Luke 1:26-56

Six months after Elisabeth became pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to a city of Galilee, named Nazareth. He was sent to a pure young maiden who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

The angel came to her and said, "Hail, thou art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

When she saw the angel, Mary was confused at what he said, and tried to understand in her mind what he could be talking about.

The angel then said to her, "Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end."

Then Mary answered the angel, "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?"

And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age. This is already the sixth month of her pregnancy, the one who was called barren. FOR WITH GOD NOTHING SHALL BE IMPOSSIBLE."

Then Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word." Then the angel left Mary.

Mary quickly prepared, and went to the city of Juda, to the house of Zacharias, to see her cousin Elisabeth. As soon as Elisabeth heard the greeting of Mary's voice, the child in her womb jumped and she was filled with the Holy Ghost: She spoke with a loud voice, and said, "Blessed are you among women. Blessed is the fruit of your womb. How can it be that the mother of my Lord should come to visit me? For the minute I heard your voice, my baby leaped for joy in my womb. You are blessed because you believed: for the Lord will perform that which he promised."

Then Mary said, "My soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour. For he has taken notice of the lowliness of this handmaid, and from now on all people will call me blessed. For he has done mighty things to me: Holy is his name. He has helped Israel and kept his promise that he made to our fathers, Abraham, and his decedents."

Mary stayed with Elisabeth about three months, and then returned to her home.

When Gabriel came to Mary he made some prophecies that have not yet come to pass. For though the Messiah was born to Mary as the angel said, he certainly was not considered great by most of the world, in fact, he was rejected by his own people. He has not yet ruled the nation of Israel as her king, and so far the world has not known his everlasting rule of perfect justice. Throughout history and up until this time, those who rule the kingdoms of this world, most often care not at all for truth, and not at all for those they rule, but only for themselves.

We praise God that Jesus came the first time to be our Saviour, and we look forward to the day when he will rule all the earth in majesty and splendor, and perfect justice, from David's throne. We know this will happen, because God keeps every one of his promises, and he promised this to David. What a wonderful day that will be!

LEARN: He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.

And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Luke 1:32