

THE ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

Luke 1:26-56

In the sixth month after Elizabeth had become pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee. He was sent to a virgin. The girl was engaged to a man named Joseph. He came from the family line of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel greeted her and said, "The Lord has given you special favor. He is with you."

Mary was very upset because of his words. She wondered what kind of greeting this could be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary. God is very pleased with you. You will become pregnant and give birth to a son. You must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. The Lord God will make him a king like his father David of long ago. He will rule forever over his people, who came from Jacob's family. His kingdom will never end."

How can this happen?" Mary asked the angel. "I am a virgin."

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come to you. The power of the Most High God will cover you. So the holy one that is born will be called the Son of God. Your relative Elizabeth is old. And even she is going to have a child. People thought she could not have children. But she has been pregnant for six months now. Nothing is impossible with God."

"I serve the Lord," Mary answered. "May it happen to me just as you said it would." Then the angel left her.

Mary's Song

Mary said, "My soul gives glory to the Lord.

My spirit delights in God my Savior.

He has taken note of me, even though I am not important.

From now on all people will call me blessed.

The Mighty One has done great things for me.

His name is holy.

He shows his mercy to those who have respect for him,
from parent to child down through the years.

He has done mighty things with his arm.

He has scattered those who are proud in their deepest thoughts.

He has brought down rulers from their thrones.

But he has lifted up people who are not important.

He has filled those who are hungry with good things.
But he has sent those who are rich away empty.
He has helped the people of Israel, who serve him.
He has always remembered to be kind to
Abraham and his children down through the years.
He has done it just as he said to our people of long ago.”

Jesus Is Born (Luke 2:20)

In those days, Caesar Augustus made a law. It required that a list be made of everyone in the whole Roman world. It was the first time a list was made of the people while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be listed.

So Joseph went also. He went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea. That is where Bethlehem, the town of David, was. Joseph went there because he belonged to the family line of David. He went there with Mary to be listed. Mary was engaged to him. She was expecting a baby.

While Joseph and Mary were there, the time came for the child to be born. She gave birth to her first baby. It was a boy. She wrapped him in large strips of cloth. Then she placed him in a manger. There was no room for them in the inn.

THE BIRTH OF JESUS (MATTHEW 1:18-25)

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about. His mother Mary and Joseph had promised to get married. But before they started to live together, it became clear that she was going to have a baby. She became pregnant by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph was a godly man. He did not want to put her to shame in public. So he planned to divorce her quietly.

But as Joseph was thinking about this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. The angel said, “Joseph, son of David, don’t be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. The baby inside her is from the Holy Spirit. She is going to have a son. You must give him the name Jesus. That is because he will save his people from their sins.”

All of this took place to bring about what the Lord had said would happen. He had said through the prophet, “The virgin is going to have a baby. She will give birth to a son. And he will be called Immanuel.” ([Isaiah 7:14](#)) The name Immanuel means “God with us.”

Joseph woke up. He did what the angel of the Lord commanded him to do. He took Mary home as his wife. But he did not make love to her until after she gave birth to a son. And Joseph gave him the name Jesus.

Angels Appear to the Shepherds

There were shepherds living out in the fields nearby. It was night, and they were looking after their sheep. An angel of the Lord appeared to them. And the glory of the Lord shone around them. They were terrified.

But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy. It is for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. Here is how you will know I am telling you the truth. You will find a baby wrapped in strips of cloth and lying in a manger.”

Suddenly a large group of angels from heaven also appeared. They were praising God. They said,

“May glory be given to God in the highest heaven!

And may peace be given to those he is pleased with on earth!”

The angels left and went into heaven. Then the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem. Let’s see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby. The baby was lying in the manger. After the shepherds had seen him, they told everyone. They reported what the angel had said about this child. All who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

But Mary kept all these things like a secret treasure in her heart. She thought about them over and over.

The shepherds returned. They gave glory and praise to God. Everything they had seen and heard was just as they had been told.