

Heaven and Earth Overlap – Luke 1:26-38

²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"

²⁹ But when she saw *him*, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³ And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "*The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.* ³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible."

³⁸ Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Open: When you think of the birth of Jesus, what's the first thing that comes to your mind?

→What words in the passage need to be explained for you?

1. Write down the different people mentioned in this passage.
2. When does this take place? Where does this take place? (v. 26)
3. How does the angel greet Mary? (v.28)
4. What is Mary's reaction to the angel? (v. 29)
5. How is Mary's son described? (vv. 32-33)
6. What is Mary's question? (v. 34)
7. How does the angel answer the question? (v. 35)
8. What does the angel tell Mary about her relative? (v. 36)
9. How does Mary respond to the angel? (v. 38)

Apply

- Mary is troubled when she first sees the angel. Do you think that is a normal response?
- Mary "found favor with God." What do you think this means?
- Mary seems convinced that this angel is from God. How can anyone be sure they are hearing from God?
- Mary submits to what the angel tells her. What might be the consequences of this? Are there times when we don't like the consequences of submitting to God?

[I]t has been central to Christian experience...that in Jesus of Nazareth heaven and earth have come together once and for all.

N T Wright