

**Introduction:** Video Clip

**Luke 1:26-38 (NIV)**

<sup>26</sup> *In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. <sup>28</sup> The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."*

<sup>29</sup> *Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. <sup>30</sup> But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. <sup>31</sup> You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> 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, <sup>33</sup> and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."*

<sup>34</sup> *"How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"*

<sup>35</sup> *The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on 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. <sup>36</sup> Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. <sup>37</sup> For no word from God will ever fail."*

<sup>38</sup> *"I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.*

**1. The story of Christmas is a problem.**

A teenage girl finds herself pregnant—and she's not married. She's ashamed, worried and scared. No one understands what she's going through.

- (a) **In my culture**, a pregnancy like this is a matter of huge shame! It's a very scary thing! Men and women can't live together before they get married, and it's forbidden to get pregnant as well. If they do, they will bring huge discredit to the families on both sides. So, they need to hide their shame – the parents or family need to give money to the people of the village.

Sometimes, they are punished by their families too. It is so shameful and so scary! That pregnant woman then has no dignity for her entire life, even if she later marries another man.

- (b) **If this story is a problem in my culture**, it's a problem in western culture too. But for a different reason. In western culture many people find it difficult to believe that a virgin can become pregnant.

**For example**, in a last year interview on talkback radio, Prime Minister John key was asked, "Do you believe that the Virgin Mary was Virgin?" "Probably not!" he replied.

Pregnancy without marriage is not just a problem in my culture? or in modern day western culture. It's a problem for Mary at the very beginning.

*"How will this be?"* she says.

*"I am a virgin?"*

At the human level, this is a difficult story for everyone. Mary included. She is worried, scared and fearful.

## **2. God is at work.**

But the truth is  
it's not difficult at all. This is God at work.  
Look at what Mary is told.  
First of all, there's God's favour.

When angel Gabriel greets her,  
he says she is *"highly favoured"*.

And again **in verse 30:**

*"Don't be afraid Mary,  
you have found favour with God."*

Then look at **verse 35.**

*The Holy Spirit will come on you,  
and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.*

The Holy Spirit will come, the power of God will overshadow. The word used here for **"overshadow"** is the same word used for the visible presence of God in the Old Testament tabernacle.

From beginning to end, this pregnancy, the coming of this child, is God at work— his favour, his Spirit, his power and his presence. The whole event is God, so much so that hundreds of years before God had already announced that this is how it would be.

*"Behold, says Isaiah 7.14,  
a virgin will be with child and bear a son."*

And as **verse 37** explains:

*No word from God will ever fail,*

which means that everything is possible with God.

What is difficult for humans, scary for humans but is no problem for God!

## **3. Jesus is fully human and fully God.**

Clearly, Jesus is a fully human child. He's conceived in Virgin Mary's womb, and born nine months later in exactly the same way you and I have been born. But, on the other hand, Jesus is no ordinary child. Look at what is said about him **in verse 32.**

*He is to be great.*

*He is to be called the Son of the Most High  
He is to have the throne of his father David,  
and rule over the people of God,  
in a kingdom that will never end.*

**(a) He will be great.**

Jesus is born in the lowliest of circumstances. His mother is a peasant girl, living in a small village, in a backwater district, of a distant province, in the great Roman Empire.

Today it would be like his being born in the village of somewhere in India or in the backblocks of Kachin state in Myanmar (the poorest place in the world)

Yet Jesus, this son of a nobody is to be great and famous.

And so *he is*.

*Of all the great and famous people in human history, Jesus is the most famous.*

*Of all the names in the world his is the biggest, the most well-known, the greatest.*

**(b) He will be a king in the line of king David.**

Back in the Old Testament (**2 Sam 7.14**)

God promised David a son.

*He also said*

*that the kingdom of this son*

*would be established for ever.*

And here it is taking place.

This son of Mary in the line of David is to be the king of Jacob.

That is, king of Israel, the people of God. And he is to be king for ever.

**(c) But how can someone be king for ever?**

We human beings do not live as we know. Only God lives for ever.

This child can be king for ever because he is the Son of God, the Son of the Most High.

As God had already said in **Psalm 2**

*“On Zion, my holy hill,*

*I have established my king.*

*You are my Son,*

*today I have become your father.”*

Here, then is the glory of this pregnancy. Jesus, son of Mary, fully human, fully one of us. Jesus, Son of God, fully God and King for ever.

As the prophet Isaiah proclaimed: *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).*

**4. So how do we respond to this fact that Jesus is fully human and fully God?**

Look at the response of Mary in **verse 38**,

*“I am the Lord’s servant.*

*May your word to me be fulfilled.”*

In another version of the Bible,

*“I am the Lord’s servant.*

*May it happen to me as you have said.”*

Here, we can see Mary's humble character. She says yes!  
She doesn't worry about herself and taking a risk with her life.  
She believes that God is sending his Messiah through her.  
She also believes that God keeps his promises and that he will remain faithful to the end.

Mary responds to God with humility and courage.  
As the servant of the Lord, she believes God's power, God's holiness, and mercy, and these things give her confidence, strength and peace!

**Brothers and sisters**, we "West Baptist Church" you and I are just like Mary.

If we trust God and believe his promises, we can have peace even when we walk in fearful situation. With Jesus we have no need to worry because his story promises our story peace.

His peace will conquer our fear. Here in *John 14:27*, as Jesus promised,

*"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.  
I do not give to you as the world gives.  
Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."*

But, we need to respond like Mary in humble trust!

**Conclusion:** At the beginning, we saw a video clip of a young girl who is pregnant and wrestling with her life. She is worried, scared and ashamed. But, the story of Christmas transformed her life and gave her peace.

-Maybe you feel like this today. Perhaps over the last year unexpected things have happened and you find yourself not where you expected to be.

-Maybe this year has been tough and you approach the end of the year with sorrow.

-Maybe you have been worried about something in your life – your health or your relationship or your future.

-Perhaps it's been a good year – the kids behaved, you did well at school, you got a promotion, but somehow life is still just a little hollow.

Let's grab hold of the knowledge that Jesus is the Son of God, who is our "**Prince of Peace**", and let that remind us that no matter how dark the day maybe there is always peace and hope for tomorrow with God.

If you want this peace that I talked about, let's bow our heads and let me pray for us!