

WORD

²⁶In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" **LUKE 1:26-28**

(Read also **LUKE 1:29-38**.)

Mary was just a young girl, maybe still a teenager, who was engaged to be married to the carpenter Joseph. In that time and culture, an engagement was as strong a promise as marriage. For a girl, marriage meant a secure future. However, the angel told Mary she would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit, as a virgin. Mary knew what could happen—she could be stoned to death for adultery. She chose to put her trust in God, and submitted to His instructions. The story of Mary shows us three reasons we can trust God.

1 God gives favor.

²⁹But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. ³⁰And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

LUKE 1:29,30

Mary must have wondered if she had done anything so wrong that an angel would have to visit her. But the angel assured her twice that she had found favor with the Lord, and because of that, she should not be afraid. The Greek word for "favor" is *charis*, which also means grace. In Zechariah's story, we learned that God hears our prayers, and cares for us. Because He cares for us, we can become recipients of God's favor. What do you think it means to "find favor with God"?

2 God holds our future.

³¹"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³²He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David . . ." **LUKE 1:31,32**

The angel did not just tell Mary what would happen to her, like a doctor talking about a procedure. Instead, God took time to let Mary know her part in His plan, assuring her of her future. The words God used spoke directly about a promise made to King David, the long-ago ancestor of both Mary and Joseph. God was assuring Mary that she has a future and that she is secured in it, because she is part of His great plan to fulfill a promise made to Israel. Do you believe that God holds your future? How has this truth changed your life?

3 God can be trusted.

³⁷"For nothing will be impossible with God." ³⁸And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. **LUKE 1:37,38**

In this part of the story, we see how much Mary placed her trust in God. Faced with the possible loss of future provision and security that marriage would give her, it would have been easy to be afraid, and to doubt God. However, when the angel told Mary that *nothing will be impossible with God*, she knew it applied even to her situation. She knew He held her future, that she was favored, and that nothing was impossible for God. How can Mary's response help you respond to your situation and trust God more?