



November 23, 2025

Title: Gabriel's Next Assignment: Mary and Joseph

Scripture: [Luke 1:26-38](#)

The timeline of salvation history:

1. 300 prophecies of the coming of the Messiah
2. The last one is about the forerunner of the Messiah in [Malachi 4:5](#)
3. 400 years of silence (the Intertestamental time)
4. From [Malachi](#) to [Matthew](#), [Mark](#), [Luke](#), and [John](#)
5. In eternity past, God the Father said to God the Son: **"Will you go?"**
6. It was a **rescue mission to save us** from eternal separation from God
7. The Son said, **"I will go."**
8. The 400 years of silence is broken: **God sends Gabriel to Zechariah**
9. A son named John is promised to Zechariah and Elizabeth in their old age
10. **The next part of the Christmas story continues:** Let's look at [Luke 1:26-38](#)

[Luke 1:26-27](#)

²⁶ *In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from 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. And the virgin's name was Mary.

- God sends Gabriel on his next assignment
- **Hebrews 1:14**
¹⁴ Are they not all ministering spirits sent out to serve for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation?
- Angels a) worship God and b) work for God
- Six months into Elizabeth's pregnancy, Gabriel appears to Mary
- She's probably 13-14 years of age and is poor
- She lives in a relatively small, obscure, backwater village called Nazareth
- The village is located 22 miles from the Mediterranean to the west and 25 miles to the Sea of Galilee to the east
- On a road to Samaria to the north but only one small well in the center of the town (water being essential for the growth of a city)
- Later a question about Jesus: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"
- If I'd been in charge, I would never have chosen Mary or Nazareth as his hometown (Jesus the Nazarene)
- (Fortunately, I'm not in charge)
- God's enormous grace is given to the humble. Obedient. Dependent.
- At this time, Mary is betrothed to a man named Joseph
- Here is the process for a Galilean wedding:
 1. Engagement
 2. Betrothal — where promises are made, if broken, an actual divorce is needed
 3. Marriage approximately one year later — bridegroom builds on to his father's house and, when the father says so, surprises his bride in coming for her

Luke 1:28–29

²⁸ And he came to her and said, "Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!" ²⁹ But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.

- Gabriel gives a greeting to Mary and says three things:
 1. She is favored/chosen by God - and so are we: **Ephesians 1:4**
⁴ *...Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world...*
 2. The Lord was with her - and the Lord is with us: **Matthew 28:20**
²⁰ *...And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*
 3. She was blessed - and so are we: **Ephesians 1:3**
³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places...*
- Mary is deeply troubled by these words and tries to understand what Gabriel is saying...

Luke 1:30–33

³⁰ *And 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 bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. ³² He 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, ³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end."*

- First, Gabriel tells her not to be afraid (she's human!)
- Gabriel reminds her again that she had found FAVOR with God
- She is a "favorite" of God, chosen by God for a purpose: to bear God in her womb
- Gabriel announces the birth of the Messiah, a son, from her womb
- This is the fulfillment of many of the 300 Old Testament prophecies!
- His name: Jesus, a common name, which means "Savior" (a common name, Jesus is for ALL people — especially the common person)
 1. He will be great
 2. He will be the Son of the Most High (higher than anything created or other false gods)
 3. He will sit on David's throne - given to him by The Father (David's son and David's Lord!)

4. He will reign over the house of Jacob/Israel forever (note the word “forever”) and
5. His kingdom will have no end.

How is God’s kingdom established?

- It begins when Jesus’s kingdom rule is IN us who believe in him, born again:

John 3:3

³ Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

- It will then grow from person to person, nation to nation
- It will continue to grow until Jesus returns and establishes his kingdom on this earth forever
- Then the 12 apostles will rule over the 12 tribes of Israel

Matthew 19:28

²⁸ Jesus said to them, “Truly, I say to you, in the new world, when the Son of Man will sit on his glorious throne, you who have followed him will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”

- Jesus will rule over the entire world from Jerusalem in the temple
- All this begins in the fulfillment of the prophecy in **Isaiah 7:14**

¹⁴ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Luke 1:34–37

³⁴ And Mary said to the angel, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” ³⁵ And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. ³⁷ For nothing will be impossible with God.”

- Mary’s question: “How can this be?”
- A logical question: She had known no man
- Mary was a virgin! In fulfillment of the prophecy in **Isaiah 7:14**
- Mary’s response is not like Zachariah’s response of unbelief when told he and Elizabeth will have a son
- Mary’s question was one of wonder, awe, and faith

- **Gabriel's answer:**

1. The power (dunamis) of the Holy Spirit will come upon you/overshadow/hover/brooded be over and in you
2. Like creation and its dark chaos
3. Like at the Tabernacle, the Temple, the Transfiguration — a cloud ('shekinah') glory suddenly appeared; God's presence
4. A word spoken and from nothing in creation by the Spirit came order, light, and life
5. From Mary's dark womb, the Holy Spirit speaks a word and life is conceived in her
6. This "power" now lives in you and me who believe in Jesus
7. This child is "holy"...different...like no other child ever birthed!
8. "The Son of God..." (who said "yes" to the Father to enter this world) has now come

9. See **John 5:18**

¹⁸ This was why the Jews were seeking all the more to kill him, because not only was he breaking the Sabbath, but he was even calling God his own Father, making himself equal with God.

10. Notice the Trinity here! The Father sends the Son who is placed in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit

- Gabriel continues his conversation with Mary:
- To help your faith grow, you should also know that your cousin Elizabeth is pregnant
- In her old age (maybe 80 years old?), being barren for many, many years
- She is now six months into her pregnancy
- Once called "barren" by all around her, now with child
- **Verse 37** from Gabriel: *"For nothing is impossible with God."*
- Like the words to Sarah (90 years old!) in **Genesis 18:14**

¹⁴ Is anything too hard for the Lord? At the appointed time I will return to you, about this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son."

- Nothing, absolutely nothing, is impossible with God **(everyone repeat)**

Luke 1:38

³⁸ And 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.

- **Mary’s reaction to all this information:**

1. “Behold” - Look, I hear what you’re saying
 2. “I am the servant of the Lord” - maidservant/kitchen slave of God
 3. Whatever he wills...
 4. “Let it be according to your word” (same imperative at creation: “Let there be light/earth/life...”)
 5. God spoke and the world was formed
 6. Did conception take place at that moment? When Mary said, “Let it be according to your word.” I wonder...
- And Gabriel departed and goes back to the Father in heaven for his next assignment
 - Which was now to go to Joseph
 - Imagine with me Mary getting the courage to tell Joseph what had just happened
 - Remember, it’s during the betrothal time period
 - Joseph is stunned, I’m sure
 - He imagines the shame, embarrassment, whispers in Nazareth
 - He’s contemplating divorcing Mary (is he a good bit older?)
 - Gabriel gets his next assignment from God:
 - God sends him to Joseph as he contemplates the divorce

This story is told in **Matthew 1:18-25**

¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit.

¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly.

²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet:

²³ “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us).

²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife,

²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

- Joseph is asleep. Restless? Struggling?
- Had the whispers begun? That he fathered the child before marriage? Was someone else the father? Oh, the gossip! The talk! Sadly, people love to do so
- Gabriel appears to him
- Most likely, Gabriel told the story of his appearance to Mary
- Joseph believes Gabriel (reluctantly?)
- He obeys and marries Mary (he surely loved her a lot!)
- He commits to be the father of this child
- Joseph too was a good and honorable man before God
- He too was chosen by God to be the earthly father of his Son
- With Mary, he is the central focal point of the Christmas story

Lessons for us all:

1. The Virgin Birth is an essential doctrine of the faith
2. Women: emulate Mary and her deep faith
3. Men: emulate Joseph and his deep faith (the importance of Godly fathers!)
4. Marriages: let crises drive you deeper into one another
5. When you think of all you want for your children, give them two Christ-centered parents!
6. Always pray to the Father in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit
7. What is your greatest need right now? Let's pray...for, as Gabriel said, nothing, absolutely nothing is impossible for God