

# Mary's Story

Based on Luke 2, Matthew 1.

There was an honorable young woman named Mary. Mary's parents had arranged for her to marry a man named Joseph, but the wedding had not yet occurred. One day, God sent an angel to Mary. The angel said, "Greetings. . . Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will be pregnant and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great."

Mary was surprised: "How will this be, since I am a virgin?"

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. In this way, the holy One to be born from you will be called the Son of God."

She replied, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be as you have said."

When Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant, he didn't know what to do! He thought about breaking off the engagement quietly. Then an angel appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." So Joseph took pregnant Mary into his home as his wife, but he didn't have sex with her until after Jesus was born.

In your culture, what do people think about a young woman who becomes pregnant when she isn't married? Surely everyone in Mary and Joseph's hometown scorned them for the dishonor they brought on their families with this pregnancy!

Because the Roman ruler demanded that everyone in the country be registered, Mary and Joseph had to go to another town, called Bethlehem, at the same time that Mary's baby was due. The town was very crowded because of all the people coming to register with the government. Even when Mary went into labor, Mary and Joseph couldn't find a place to rest. Finally, someone allowed them to stay in the area with the farm animals. After Mary gave birth to Jesus, she wrapped him up and laid him in an animals' feeding box. Meanwhile, God put a special star in the sky to mark this important event.

That same night, angels appeared to shepherds who were working in the fields. The angels announced that a Savior had been born and told the shepherds where to find Him. They went, they saw Him, and they worshipped Him. Later, wise men came, following the star from the east, to visit Jesus as well. The Scriptures say, "Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."

Clearly, the baby Jesus was very special. God organized his birth, gave him a star, and sent special visitors to him. Does it surprise you that God allowed him to be born among animals, far away from his extended family, instead of in a palace? Does it surprise you that his mother wasn't married when she became pregnant? All of these things were foretold by the prophets and show us that Jesus was specially sent by God. Would you like to know why?

**"Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"** John 1:29



