

Favor To The Fearful

²⁶Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" ²⁹But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³²He 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. ³³And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" ³⁵And 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. ³⁶Now 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. ³⁷For with God nothing will be impossible." Luke 1:26-37 (NKJV)

What is Mary troubled at? His saying.

What part of what the Angel is saying troubles her?

His greeting.

Many misunderstand Mary due to misunderstanding what Mary frets over.

The Greeting

"Rejoice" – a common greeting.

The Latin Vulgate translated the greeting "Ave Maria."

"Highly Favored One" - an uncommon greeting.

The Context of Characters: Luke 1: 5, 27

The Context of the Encounters: Luke 1: 8-10; 26

Favor strikes fear in Mary. She is troubled before news of the birth to come.

The Hijacking of favor and what favor looks like.

Gabriel helps her with her "being troubled."

- He encourages her to not be afraid. Hear his tone. (vs. 30)
- He says her name. (vs. 30)
- He tells her what and how. (vs. 31-33, 35)
- He gives her a sign, even though she had not asked for one. (vs. 36)
- He gives her a truth that points back to another sign. (vs. 37)

"But let all who take refuge in you be glad; let them ever sing for joy. Spread your protection over them, that those who love your name may rejoice in you. ¹²Surely, LORD, you bless the righteous; you surround them with your favor as with a shield." Psalm 5:11-12 (NIV)

Favor – a shield and not a blanket.

Small Group Questions

1. Why does it matter when and why Mary is afraid in the story?
2. What is your understanding of the idea of "The Favor of God?"
3. Zechariah asks "how will I be sure?" (Luke 1:18) Mary asks "how will it be?" Are you more often a Zechariah or a Mary?
4. Has God ever given you a sign when you didn't even ask for one?