

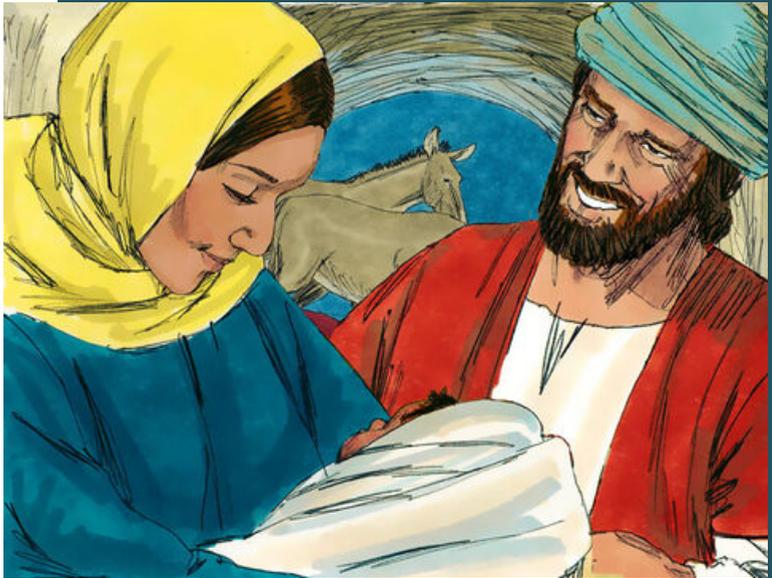
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**EDITED AND  
ABRIDGED  
DRAMATIZED  
STORY**

**FROM A SERMON  
OF  
REV. WILLIAM  
BRANHAM**

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# MARY



PICTURE CREDIT: SWEET PUBLISHING

## Mary's Belief

The morning sun was just coming up over the hill as she was making her way along the little familiar street, coming down off the hill where she lived. As she walked along with the waterpot under her arm, she was perhaps thinking, meditating, as young women usually about that age, can walk along thinking. She was on her road to the city well to get the daily supply of water.

We're told that her mother was dead, so she just kind of kept home there by herself with her aged father.

It must have been on the first day of the week, after they had had the Sabbath service,

and the sun was getting pretty well up and climbing into the Palestinian blue skies.

As she made her way down along the path, I believe that she was thinking about what had happened the day before. After they'd come from church, it was customary that her engaged husband, Joseph, was to come home with her that day for dinner.

They'd had their dinner, and as usual, they set out on the porch, looking across the little valley over on the other side of the hill. Joseph was a carpenter, and knowing that he was fixing to marry this beautiful young Jewish maiden, he was building their future home over on the other hill.

I'd imagine it had to have that little special touch to it, because he was going to bring his pretty young bride into this home. The doors had to fit just right, and he was taking his time about doing it, because he didn't want a 'hurry-up job' on this one. The windows must fit just right, and the doors just right. I'd imagine when he went in the gate it might

have been a big heart shape with roses all around the house. They'd planned this for some time, since their engagement.

So they would go out there on, say, a Sunday afternoon, and sit down on the porch, and just look across to where their future home would be. As a custom they'd speak about the Lord, because they were both great believers in God.

This Sunday was a special one. As they hurried dinner and got the dishes washed, Joseph was already setting on the porch when Mary joined him. It must have been a conversation something like this, as they usually talked about the way the house was shaped, and how it would look, and the rabbis would come home with them for dinner. But instead they fell on the subject of the morning's message that they'd heard from the rabbi - the notable, honourable one.

Perhaps it was Mary that said, "Joseph, wasn't that a striking message this morning that the rabbi preached, our beloved pastor?"

“Oh,” Joseph must have said, “That was an outstanding message. I loved it so much when he spoke of that great Jehovah God Who led our people out of Egypt. Did it not thrill you when he read the scrolls of Exodus when they were brought out, and how Jehovah led them by a Pillar of Fire? They had no compass, but they went by the leading of the Spirit. Oh, Mary, wouldn’t it be wonderful if we could live all of our lives watching that Pillar of Fire and being led like they were?”

When they needed food He rained the manna out of heaven; they had bread. And then when they needed flesh, He blew in quails from the coast, filling the ground. And when they needed water, He had a smitten rock. When they were sick, He had a brass serpent for an atonement. Oh, how great it was. But,” he said, “Sweetheart, I believe he spoiled the whole thing when he said, ‘But alas, Jehovah doesn’t do that anymore.’ Somehow or another I have always believed that Jehovah always remains the same. He

just can't fail, and I believe that the reason that we are living in the days that we are, is because our people have lost faith in Jehovah.

I believe that He is immortal, and He doesn't get old and fade away. He's just simply the same Jehovah. I don't think that I would disregard or disrespect the honourable rabbi, but when he said this morning in his message that Jehovah performed no more miracles, and that the only thing that He wanted us to do was to come to church, and pay our tithes, and live a good life as we could, and He'd take us up home in glory, I can't hardly believe that, Mary. I believe that Jehovah wants us to walk with Him like they did in that day."

Then it must have been that Mary said, "Oh, dear, do you know, we should read the Scriptures first."

Well, if you've ever been in a Palestinian home, the books of the Bible were kept in a container like a waste basket and they just stick them down in this container. Each book

was called a scroll, rolled up on like a stick. The scroll of Isaiah, the scroll of Jeremiah, and all those prophets were in the container. It didn't make any difference which one they read, because they knew it was all ordained of God, because it was their prophet.

So Joseph said, "Well, my dear, would you go in and get one of the scrolls." She just by chance reached in to get the scroll and brought it out.

She said, "Well, dear, today it seems like we read from the book of Isaiah."

So he pulled open the scroll, and Joseph began to read, and his eyes fell upon this portion: "A virgin shall conceive, and shall bring forth a Son...They shall call His name Counsellor, Mighty God, Prince of Peace, Everlasting Father."

When he got down to the end, the little virgin lady setting by the side said, "Just a moment, Joseph, dear. What does the prophet mean by a virgin conceiving?"

Well, Joseph might have said this: “Dear, that’s just a little too deep for me. I do not understand it, but I believe it. It’s just what the Bible said. I don’t know how it will ever happen, but we know this, dear, we know that Isaiah was Jehovah’s prophet. Therefore, being anointed with the Holy Spirit of God upon him, he could not prophesy wrong, because he was born a prophet and we know that his words are true. When he said, ‘A virgin shall conceive,’ that was not Isaiah, that was our Jehovah, and Jehovah is able to do anything that He says that He will do.”

And so they spoke about it—and on down, how His name would be called Counsellor, Prince of Peace, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and the government shall be upon His shoulders and there would be no end to His Kingdom, and so forth.

She said, “It must be the same One that the prophet Moses promised to us: ‘The Lord your God shall raise up a prophet liken unto me.’ Therefore it must be the Messiah.”

Joseph said, “I believe the Scribes interpret it that way - that this would be the Messiah that was to come.”

As the evening passed on, the night service drew near and they went on back to church.

The next morning, as she was going along for the water, she could hear the hammer across the way, where Joseph was building on their house. She had got up and had her breakfast, and stuck the little pitcher under her arm, and started down to the city public well.

So as she was going along with her head down, thinking, she couldn't get it off her mind. She said, “That remark that Joseph made to me when I stopped him on that Scripture of Isaiah 9:6 - he said to me, ‘Dear, you know, I always thought you were the most beautiful woman I've ever seen, but somehow in the last few minutes you've been more beautiful than ever. Your big brown eyes sparkle, and just when we mentioned this Scripture. Did it thrill you? Or what was taking place?’”

She wondered, “What was that when he said, ‘A child is born, a Son is given’? I wonder what made me feel the way I did?”

Just then, as the little maiden was walking, she noticed something flicker. She looked around. “It must have been the sun,” she said, “that shined against a rock up on the desert hill there somewhere.”

She went on her way, thinking about what was taking place, and what they had been talking about. She turned a corner that went up to the city well, where the ladies meet out there early in the morning and let their buckets down, or its more like a crock or a jug. It has a long neck and two handles. They had a hook that they hooked under it, and a windle. They let the jug down and because it was made out of clay, it sank. They’d windle the water back up, then set it up on top of their heads, and walk right on back home; maybe holding five or six gallons of water - enough for the day unless they were washing,

and then usually they went to the places to wash.

When she turned the corner, she saw that Light flicker again. As she looked, when she had to pass through a little narrow place, where just one person could pass, there stood Gabriel, the Archangel.

It wasn't the sun she had seen reflecting. He was following her, and He met her. He got her in a place where she'd have to look to Him. She looked, and He was all a glow of light around Him. Frightened, the little virgin no doubt grabbed her water pot, and her big eyes stared out and looked at the Archangel.

He said, "Hail, Mary (or stop), you're highly favoured before God."

That little woman in the meanest city there was in the world at that time - known the meanest city, anyhow, in Palestine, and in that place she had lived such a life until God

chose her for a certain work that He was going to do.

She looked into His face, and it startled her.

*You know, it's usually as we are thinking on those things. The Bible said, "If there be any praise, if there be any virtue, think on these things." I think the reason we don't see any more of it than we do, is because we've got our minds on too many other things. I think the Angels would still appear to us if we only kept our minds upon them: but we're thinking about something else like where we're going, a certain program we've got to look at, or certain shopping we've got to do. But our Scriptures tell us, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added unto you."*

That's the way it was with Mary that morning. Something must have taken place when she was thinking about Him, and there He appeared into her presence.

He said, “You are going to conceive in your womb and bear a child.” Now, she knew the Angel’s message was Scriptural.

*I don’t care what kind of an angel it was that appeared, if that angel’s message is not Scriptural and a promise of God, let it alone. There have been all kinds of angels appearing, and they bring all kinds of messages. If the Angel of the Lord, whose servant I am, would come, no matter how much it looked like the Pillar of Fire, how much it looked like the light, if his message didn’t bear record with this Word, I’d let it alone and let him be accursed. It has to be in this.*

Mary knew that she’d just read the day before, Isaiah 9:6, that something was about to happen and she knew it was on its way then. She saw it was absolutely Scriptural.

*I tell you, it pays to read God’s Word daily. Jesus said, “Search ye the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.” He said, “If I do not the works of My Father (that was*

*supposed to be done when He came), then believe Me not. But if I do the works, though you don't believe Me, believe the works, because they are the ones that's sent of God."*

*We are looking for a heavenly Visitor in this day. It's a promise of God. But the only way that we'll know this heavenly Visitor is because He'll bear record of the Word.*

She knew that that Angel was from God when she saw His action. She looked at Him. It must be an Angel.

He said, "I'm Gabriel, standing at the right hand of God."

*Now, when God gets ready to do something, He sends a messenger. Always has, He always will. Gabriel announced the first coming of Christ. Gabriel will announce the second coming of Christ. Something major is fixing to happen. And we notice this Angel, when He said "Hail, Mary," and told her what was going to take place, she didn't doubt Him, because*

*she knew He was perfectly Scriptural, that it was supposed to be that way.*

“Hail, Mary, blessed art thou amongst women. Thou hast found favour with God.”

*Oh, church, hail. Blessed are you among the people, for you've found favour with God. You've believed for eternal life, and God's given you the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This Messenger will be a true Messenger of God, the Holy Spirit, which is God's message.*

Notice, Mary, as soon as she saw it was Scriptural, she didn't say, “I'll go over and see whether Dr. Jones says it's right or not.” She didn't go by to see if Rabbi Kabinski thought it was right or not. Do you know what she said?

She said, “Behold, the handmaid of the Lord; Be it unto me according to Your word.” For she knew that Word was God's Word, that Messenger was God's Messenger, and that Angel was God's Angel, because it stayed with God's Word.

“Behold, the handmaid of the Lord,” she said.  
“How will it be?”

“The Holy Ghost shall overshadow you, and this Holy thing that’ll be born to you shall be called the Son of God.”

She said, “Here I am. I don’t know how it’s going to happen. It doesn’t make any difference. You said so, it’s Scriptural, I believe it. I accept it.” She started right out praising God, before she felt life, before she felt any sign of anything. She didn’t want any more signs. She had His Word and that was all that was necessary.

Once she had seen Him, and knew it was God because it was Scriptural, she took His word and went around testifying of something that didn’t even show one evidence of ever being. She testified of something that never had happened before. Never had a virgin conceived. But she had the Angel’s word, and the Angel was Scriptural, so she knew it was promised. The

Angel had the Word of the Lord and had promised it.

She thought herself humble and lowly, yet God had chosen her, so she was just happy about it. She went forth with her message, telling everybody she was going to have a baby before she even had the first sign of a baby. She didn't wait and say, "Now wait, let me feel and see if I feel any better or not."

*Oh, God, give us more Marys! By taking God at His Word, it changed the whole natural course of life for her. It'll do the same thing for you. It'll take you sinners, and wash you as white as snow. It'll take you, critics, and make you one of us. It sure will. It'll take you that's sick and make you well. It'll take you that's on your road to hell and change you around and start you up to heaven. Just take Him at His Word, and believe it, and start rejoicing.*

Mary didn't wait. She didn't care about critics. She didn't care what anybody said. She had met an Angel. She had seen His

presence and she knew that He'd told her the truth, because it was Scriptural.

When you hit something like that you can't keep still about it. The Angel told her that her cousin Elisabeth (up in the hilly country of Judaea) was old, about seventy years old, and she had conceived and was going to have a son. It was already six months with her as a mother. The little baby, little John, hadn't had any life yet. They were kind of worried about it.

Zechariah, her husband, was a priest. He was at the temple about six months before this happened. Look at Zechariah. Now, the Angel Gabriel came to him. He was in the temple ministering, and when he did, burning incense was his lot, standing at the altar. He happened to look at the right-hand side of the altar, and there stood an Angel, who told him that after the days of his ministration there, he would be going home and be with his wife, and she'd conceive and bear a son. That preacher doubted that

Word. He had some examples in the Bible. Look at Sarah. Look at Hannah at the temple - many examples like that, and still he doubted.

How much difference it was from that calloused teacher of philosophy, from that seminary minister, than there was from that little virgin. She never questioned. She said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." That's all. She took Him at His Word and that settled it. But this man couldn't believe it.

The Angel said, "I'm Gabriel that stands in the presence of God. My Word shall be fulfilled." He knew what He was talking about. He said, "Because you've doubted Me, you'll be dumb until the day the baby's born."

Zechariah went home. His wife conceived and hid herself six months.

Mary thought, "Oh, isn't that wonderful? It's going to be wonderful, because Elisabeth, my cousin (Jesus and John were second cousins), is going to have a baby, and I'm going to have

a baby. I just can't hold it any longer. I'm going right up to tell her."

Right up to the mountain she went, hard as she could go. I can just see her pretty little face shining—she was just about eighteen years old, I imagine—and her black hair blowing back like that, and she was on her road, her little robe wrapped around her.

You know, Elisabeth had hid herself. I can imagine her setting back there, kind of snubbing a little, knitting some little booties, you know, getting them all ready like that, and knitting a little blanket.

They were righteous, the Bible said, her and Zechariah, keeping all the commandments of God. That's where Angels appear - they always appear in a righteous family, somewhere where God can use something, and have something to work with.

So she was making these little booties, and I imagine there was a little window - like it is in Palestine sometimes, no window light in

it, but just a little shade hanging down. And she heard something. She raised up and looked, and she said, “You know, I believe that looks like my cousin Mary. Look at her little face shine. Why, she’s grown up. I hear she’s going to get married. Well, she’s a young woman, but that’s Mary.”

So she slips her little robe on, you know, and runs out to meet her. Women in those days are not like they are now, you know. They ran and threw their arms around one another and hugged one another. You know, I like friendliness, don’t you?

She said, “You know, Mary, I’m to be a mother.”

“Yes, yes,” said Mary, her little eyes sparkling—you know, half full of tears of joy. “Yes, yes, I know all about it.”

“You know all about it?”

“Yeah, yeah, I know all about it.”

“But, Mary, I’m bothered. It’s six months with me as mother now, and the baby’s never moved.” Now, you know, that’s all unnatural. About three months is about right, but this is six months, and little John hadn’t ever moved yet.

So she said, “I’m just a little bit worried about it and everything.”

She said, “Yeah, I understand it,” and she said, “You know, I’m going to have a baby too.”

“Oh, I see. You and Joseph are already married.”

“No, we’re not married.”

“What, Mary? You’re not married, and going to have a baby?”

“Yes, that’s right.”

“Oh, Honey, what do you mean?”

“Well, the same way I knew that you were going to have a baby. The Angel Gabriel met

me, and He told me about your case, and He said the Holy Ghost would come upon me, and It's already done it. And the Baby that I'll have will be the Son of God. He even told me what to name it. I shall call His name Jesus."

And I can see Elisabeth's face brighten up. She said, "Whence cometh the mother of my Lord? For as soon as your salutation came into my ears, my baby leaped in the womb for joy."

*I want to ask you something, friends. If the first time that the name of Jesus Christ was ever spoken by mortal lips brought a dead baby in the womb of a mother to life, what ought it to do to a born again congregation, that claims to be filled with the Holy Ghost? It ought to heal the cancer, open the blind eyes, set the captive free, fill with the Holy Ghost, and all kinds of things in that precious name of the Lord Jesus, and make the sinner weep for his sins.*

61-0121 - Mary's Belief