

In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne His father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end." "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?" The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God." "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Luke 1:26-38 SS 12/18/11 2 Samuel 7:8-16 Romans 16:25-27 Psalm 91
Hymns: 711, 98, 76, 708

GABRIEL, GOD'S MESSENGER OF SALVATION

Dear Christian People,

I am the angel Gabriel. My name means "**Hero of God.**" You are told in the book of Psalms, "*(The Lord) shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways*" (91:11). "*The (Lord's)...angels...excel in strength,... (doing) His Word*" (103:20). The Lord has given us angels great intelligence, strength, and power, much more than you humans, but of course, less than almighty God. The book of Daniel (7:10) says there are "*thousand thousands...and ten thousand times ten thousand*" angels, and the book of Hebrews (12:22) simply says that there are "*an innumerable company of angels.*"

Scripture says that "*God completed His work which He had done...by the seventh day*" (Gen. 2:2), therefore God made us good angels during the six days of Creation. Our purpose is to praise Him and serve Him, as David said: "*Bless the Lord, you His angels, ... obeying the voice of His Word!*" (Ps. 103:20). The Lord God also made us to serve all of you who believe in His Son, again as the Bible says (He. 1:14): "*Are (the angels) not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?*"

"**Angel**" means "**messenger.**" We good angels are the Lord's messengers whom He has at times sent to deliver a message to mankind (Ps. 103:20-21). I, Gabriel, have had the high privilege of being sent by God on three different occasions recorded in the Scriptures. God sent me to Daniel to explain the heavenly visions he was given (Dan. 8:16; 9:21), to Zacharias to announce that he and his wife Elizabeth in their old age would be the parents of John the Baptist, Messiah's forerunner (Lk. 1:5-25), and to the virgin, Mary, to tell her that she would be the mother of the Son of God (Lk. 1:26-38).

Only God knows all things and knows what is in a person's heart and mind (1 Ki. 8:39). But we heavenly angels see and know many things. We are keenly interested in

the dealings between God and mankind. We marveled at the beauty and perfection of God's Creation in the beginning, and especially at you, the foremost and most glorious of God's creation. How beautiful paradise was! How wondrous was the harmony in the beginning between man and the creation, and between man and the Creator. But one of my fellow angels, Lucifer – Satan – foolishly led a rebellion in heaven against God. Satan and the angels who followed him thought they could overthrow the Almighty, but He defeated them and cast them out of heaven and down to hell. John writes of Satan in his Revelation (9:1), *"I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth, and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him."* Our Lord Jesus has told you that hell is *"the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels"* (Mt. 25:41). Satan saw he could not defeat God, so he sought to hurt Him another way. Satan entered a snake and tempted the man and woman God had created. How wrong, how terribly sad it was when Adam and Eve listened to Satan's lies and chose to disobey our Lord. There was no part of God's creation that was left unspoiled by sin. Adam and Eve destroyed mankind's unity with God. For the first time they felt the effects of sin and death. They, and all mankind after them until the end of time, were doomed to hell.

But God in His mercy and love gave all people a second chance. God told Satan, *"I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel"* (Gen. 3:15). Thus the Lord promised that Eve's Descendant, the Messiah, would one day do battle with Satan and crush him.

God kept that promise alive. He told His servant, Abraham that in his Descendant, that is, in the coming Messiah, the whole human race would be blessed (Gal. 3:16). God repeated that promise to His faithful people many times down through the years as they yearned for the day the Messiah would finally come. In this way He kept their faith and their hope burning brightly.

God in His Word gave His people many prophecies and types, or pictures, through which they could more fully know who the Messiah would be. God told them through His prophet, Isaiah, *"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel"* (7:14). What a wondrous sign that was! Miraculously, a virgin would be the mother of the Messiah – God with man in human form. God added more to His people's understanding through Isaiah who exclaimed, *"Unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given.... And His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"* (9:6). The Messiah who would defeat Satan was none other than God the Son Himself!

God gave His people many Scriptures and pictures to let them understand what the Messiah would do. God had warned Adam and Eve that should they sin and disobey Him, their punishment would be physical and eternal death (Gen. 2:16-17). Through the Passover and all the other sacrifices, God was showing His people that the Messiah would come to sacrifice Himself. The death of the Son of God would satisfy the Father's anger over mankind's sin. Isaiah (ch. 53) prophesied that the Messiah would be *"led as a lamb to the slaughter," "wounded for (man's) transgressions,"* Who *"bore [man's] griefs and carried [man's] sorrows,"* Whose *"chastisement (was) for (man's) 'peace with God.'"* Through Job God had caused to be written, *"I know that my Redeemer lives, and He shall stand at last on the earth; and after my skin is destroyed, this I know, that in my flesh I shall see God"* (19:25-26). In this way God let His people know that after the

Messiah had paid for the world's sins by His death, He would rise and live again. Everyone who believes in the Son of God does not have to die forever in hell. After his body dies, God will raise him bodily on the Last Day to live with God forever in heaven. Mankind did NOT belong to Satan. Through the promised Descendant of Adam and Eve, God's Son, Satan was crushed and defeated.

"In the sixth month" of Elizabeth's pregnancy with John the Baptist, "God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph The virgin's name was Mary." I, Gabriel, greeted her: "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." I remember how Mary was frightened by my presence and my words at first. But I explained to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give Him the name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. ... For nothing is impossible with God." Mary was the virgin Isaiah had spoken of so long before. She would give birth to the Messiah, God's Son! The Savior first promised to Adam and Eve would finally come. And what was Mary's reaction to this amazing news? "I am the Lord's servant. ... May it be to me as you have said." And it was. Christ was born, and He suffered and died and rose again to save you all from their sins.

Jesus has told you, *"They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other"* (Mt. 25:31-32). Dear Christian people, always believe in Jesus Christ as your Savior. In this way, you, too, will be among all those we angels gather one Day to be taken into heaven! Amen.