

December 3

Character: Mary

Setting: Today's story takes place in the town of Nazareth. Nazareth was a village in Galilee. Although it was a long way from Jerusalem, it was located on a major trade route, which meant that the people of Nazareth frequently hosted visiting Gentile merchants and Roman soldiers. In this village was a young virgin named Mary. Mary was a respectable young lady, but she wasn't wealthy, or powerful or highly esteemed by the people of the village. Little did they know that God had chosen Mary for one of the most important tasks He's ever chosen a person for. The story begins with the same familiar angel we met in yesterday's story. His name is Gabriel, and he returned to share this message with Mary approximately six months after he appeared to Zechariah. Gabriel, once again, had a very important message from God to relay to Mary.

Scripture: Luke 1:26-39 (Read)

Application: Yesterday we discussed the interaction between the angel Gabriel and Zechariah. In today's passage, we read about Gabriel's visit to a young lady, named Mary. Gabriel's message to Mary was even more unbelievable than the words he spoke to Zechariah. Zechariah found it impossible to believe he and his wife, Elizabeth, could have a child in their old age when she had been barren throughout their marriage. But, Mary, was a virgin. Women who thought they were barren, or even who were barren for a significant amount of time have become pregnant. But never in the history of the world has a virgin conceived a child! Gabriel declared two very similar messages, but received two very opposite responses from Zechariah and Mary. Mary had a plan for her life. God had a different plan for Mary's life. Re-read with your family the words Mary spoke in Luke 1:38 when she was confronted with the fact that God's plan for her life was not at all what she expected. Discuss how she responded to the angel's news. Record her response in your family advent journal, as well as discussion highlights about how all of God's children should respond when we realize God's plan for our lives may be different than what we have planned for our lives.

Prayer: Thank God for His perfect plan for Mary's life. Praise Him for bringing our Savior, Jesus Christ, into the world in the most unusual way through a virgin girl named Mary. Pray together that God would help us to respond as Mary did to God's will for our lives, and that we would trust Him as she did, with courage, submission and perfect peace.

