



## Sermon Notes from 9 December

---

### Advent and the Virgin Who Would Not Laugh (*Luke 1:26-38*)

by Johanan Justin

The Advent, as traditionally observed, is a season prior to Christmas, for us to take time to remember and ponder over - re-enact vividly in our minds and hearts, the birth of Christ as shown in the scriptures.

#### The Unusual Story of Mary

##### I. Mary's Introduction (vv26-28)

#1. **Mary is a nobody** (vv26-27) More is said about Joseph than Mary.

##### #2. **This isn't a story about Mary**

No circumstances of hers or even her name mattered. But Mary suddenly becomes a Somebody (v28). God had chosen her for the extraordinary.

##### II. Mary's Fear (vv29-33)

Vv29,12 As compared to Zechariah, Mary found the angel's words more fearsome than his gloriously radiant appearance.

v30a The angel knew her name!

v31-33 Mary receives the overwhelming unfolding story of God himself!

Gen 17:15-19,18:9-15 Mary did not respond to the news with cynicism and unbelief. She took the angel's words seriously and responded with hope.

##### III. Mary's Hope (vv34-37)

v34 No skepticism but a need for clarity. v35a,35 The event was to be supernatural for mankind throughout history to recognise Jesus as holy - set apart and untouched by man's sin, and death, and be known as the Son of God.

Gen 18:14 To this question, God now answers through the angel (Lu 1:36-37).

##### IV. Mary's Faith (vv38-40)

v38 The 14-year old Mary's faith is seen in her submission to the authority of the word spoken to her and to the God who spoke it.

vv39-40,45 Mary believed what she heard. **Good news is so so good precisely because it is so so true.** Mary learns that she too is pregnant (v42).

#### 3 Questions for Reflection and 1 Challenge for this Advent Season

##### **1. Are you grateful to have received the good news of Jesus' birth?**

Today we receive God's word as it is in the Bible.

Rom 3:22b-23 As enemies of God, we were worse than Nobodies! *Is your name - your history of accomplishments - so precious to you that you would rather keep your name, and reject the good news that God has favoured you and is with you even though you are a sinner?* Resist pride! Let gratitude well up in you for Jesus has come, making Somebodies out of Nobodies like us.

##### **2. Are you filled with the laughter of cynicism?**

Mary did not laugh. Jesus -this one Man- single-handedly rocked the course of human history and is even today still radically making us into Somebodies. *Are you rejecting the reality of this Man because one or two areas of His coming to earth seems ridiculous to you?*

**3. How deep is your joy?** Enter into the upside-down world where a virgin gave birth, where God became a human baby, and where the most selfless servants find the deepest joy.

##### **4. Make this Christmas about Jesus**

2 Cor 8:9; Rev 21:4 With dead seriousness, submit yourselves to be part of His story, and come to share with Mary in the deep, strong, rolling, unobstructed laughter that only He can give.