

**Can We Express Our Doubts to God?**  
**Luke 1:25-55**  
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*"And Mary said to the angel, 'How will this be, since I am a virgin?'" - Luke 1:34, ESV*

Do you ever doubt God? You may not be comfortable with that question. Maybe you're afraid to answer it honestly, so let me ask different questions:

- Do you ever wonder why something has happened in your life?
- Do you every wonder how you're going to make it through something?
- Do you ever doubt whether or not you're going to be able to handle something?

We may direct our doubts toward our circumstances or toward our own ability, but if we understand the character and promises of God, we know that all such doubts are forms of doubting God.

In today's passage, Mary expresses some doubt, some question about the promise of God given to her through the angel Gabriel. She is unsure of how God will fulfill this word to her. She knows that she has never slept with a man, and so she knows it is impossible, humanly speaking, for her to have a child. So, she asks, "How will this be?"

Mary's question is very similar to the question Zechariah asked in yesterday's passage, "How shall I know this?" Interestingly, Mary's question is answered by Gabriel with an explanation, but Zechariah's question is answered with a rebuke and a punishment. He is struck dumb and unable to speak until after John is born. So, why is Mary given an answer to her question while Zechariah is rebuked for a lack of faith?

Even though their questions sound similar, there are some key differences: Mary asks, "How will this be?" She is expressing uncertainty as to *how* God will do what He is promising to do. Zechariah asks, "How shall I know this?" He is expressing doubt of the truthfulness of Gabriel's promise. In other words, Mary is asking *how* and Zechariah is asking *how* he can know for sure that Gabriel is not lying. Also, Zechariah is a mature priest ministering in the Temple, while Mary is a very young woman at home in her simple village.

Mary and Zachariah are both children of God. They are both believers. They both receive the fulfillment of God's promise in their lives. Yet the way they express their doubts or questions is profoundly different: Mary expresses uncertainty about the process. Zechariah expresses unbelief in the promise itself.

Doubting the truthfulness of God's promises is doubting the very character of God Himself. Questioning the process is an expression of our limited human understanding and of our desire to better understand the ways of God. Some people like to say, "God is not afraid of our doubts." That's true, of course, and the language of the Psalms often gives us words to express doubt, fear, uncertainty and even complaint to God.

However, while God is not afraid of our doubts, sometimes we should be. When we start doubting the truthfulness of God's word, we are moving onto shaky ground, stepping off the rock into the quicksand. When we feel ourselves moving in this direction, we need to take our doubts to God and confess them, asking Him for help: "I believe. Help my unbelief!"

Can we express our doubts to God? Yes! If we are feeling doubts, we'd better confess them to the Lord. Go to Him in prayer and then open His word for answers. We may or may not be rebuked, but if we are children of God, we will be strengthened and comforted in the end.