



## Advent 2: The Angel Visits Gabriel and Mary

Luke 1:28-31

Cody wandered aimlessly around deck, deep in thought about the events of the past week. His uncle, the great Captain Billy Ocean, had been teaching him about the Advent season. Cody learned that Advent was the time to prepare for Jesus' birthday. He helped his uncle set up the Advent wreath and light the first candle as he learned about Zechariah. He was amazed at how the angel Gabriel had appeared to this Zechariah and made him not say a word for nine months until his son John was born. "I wonder what this week's story will be," he wondered aloud to no one in particular as he stopped to stare at the Advent wreath.

"Well, why wonder? All you have to do is open the Bible and find out." A voice behind him said. Cody jumped in surprise. He turned to see the voice belonged to his uncle who was standing behind him, a big grin on his face. "I've got arrrr Traysure Map right here!" Captain Billy said as he held up his Bible. "Today's Bible story is about how the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary!"

Cody smiled as he turned over a nearby crate and sat down, ready to listen. "Another angel story! That is such a miracle! Angels were popping up all over the place."

"That's because angels are God's special messengers and God had a very special message to deliver to the world!" Captain Billy explained.

"I know what it was! It was the 'Good News' that Jesus was coming!" Cody said proudly.

"Aye, very good!" the captain replied and then opened his Bible to read from Luke 1. "The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.'"

"Wow, what did Mary do? I can't even imagine what I'd do if an angel popped up on the Caribbean Queen," Cody exclaimed.

"Well, Mary was a good Jewish girl. She must have learned many stories of angels appearing to people like Abraham, Jacob and Moses. Although, she probably never thought an angel would appear to a simple girl like her," Captain Billy replied.

"Do you think an angel might visit me some day?" Cody asked.

The captain nodded. "That certainly could happen. Mary was a teenager when God sent an angel to come near to her. God could send angels to anyone he wants to, even us." The captain thought for a moment and then said, "You know, I'm sure Joseph never expected to meet one, either."

Cody leaned forward. "Whoa! Joseph met an angel, too?" he asked.

**"Aye, an angel told Joseph what to name the baby!"**

**"Radical! So, what did Gabriel say to Mary?"**

**"He told her not to be afraid." Captain Billy looked down at his Bible and continued reading. "You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus."**

**"Wow! God's messengers were everywhere," Cody said with a sweep of his hands through the air.**

**"Aye, well God is everywhere," the captain replied.**

**Cody agreed, "Yeah, God totally came near to Joseph and Mary..."**

**"And God came near to all of mankind when He sent His Son Jesus to live among us," Captain Billy finished.**

**"God totally rocks the house," Cody exclaimed. "We should do something special to remember the awesome miracle when God came near to us through His angels!"**

**"We could light the Advent candle," Captain Billy suggested.**

**"That's an awesome idea!" Cody agreed as he jumped up to gather the ship's crew to watch the candle lighting together.**

**"Remember the word Advent means 'coming' because Advent is the season when we look forward to the coming of Jesus," Captain Billy reminded the crew after everyone had gathered around the Advent wreath. "God sent the angel Gabriel to tell Mary about God's plan to send His Son Jesus to save the world."**

**Cody lit the candle from the week before. Then he lit the second candle.**

**"Now, as you watch the flame, think about Mary's visit from the angel," Captain Billy Ocean told his crew in a hushed voice.**

**Cody laid the matchbook on the table and stared into the glow of the candle flames. "Wow, it's such a miracle that God comes near to us at Christmas time," he pondered.**

**"Oh, God is near us all the time! Christmas is just a special time when we remember the Savior who came nearer than ever before," said the captain.**

**"I can't wait to hear more about God's coming to earth," Cody said softly.**

**"Next week, son, we will light the next candle," Captain Billy said with an understanding tone in his voice. He knew how hard it was to wait to hear the next part of the story of Jesus' birth. He turned to the crew. "Until then, let's all go munch on some of those Christmas cookies we picked up at the last port."**

**Cody smiled at the idea and followed his uncle and the entire Caribbean Queen crew into the galley for some milk and cookies.**