

A Poetic Sermon
based on Psalms 89:1-4 and Luke 1:26-38

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Let it be to me according to your Word; I am your servant
These are the words of the Mother of God
These are the words of Mary
The angel Gabriel appears with a word from the Lord
Just as the Angel Gabriel appeared before
to Zechariah
The unfolding of the most glorious plan of all eternity
Is about to kiss the earth
About to kiss the people
Giving the most magnificent presents
It has ever known

Let it be to me according to your word: these are the words of Mary

But can we understand her obedience
Can we understand her story
Can we grasp this reality
That lasted into eternity
Can we
2,000 years later understand the significance
Of this meeting
Of this news
Of what this angel Gabriel is saying to Mary
Can we
Understand that this news does not simply bring joy and anticipation
It brings fears
Uncertainty
To this favored one
As a young woman frightened and scared
Asks the question
How can this be? I am a virgin
But not only am I a virgin
I am human
And you are talking of the Creator of the heavens and earth
The One who commanded the mountains to be lifted up
And it was so
And The One who commanded the valleys to sink
And it was so
The One who threw the stars in the sky
And it was so

And The One who knows every hair of mine

So.... Lord, let it be to me according to your word.

You knitted me together in my mother's womb
And now you're telling me I am going to carry You inside my womb!
How can this be?
How can this be?
Your name is even too Holy to utter
And now your Angel is pronouncing a Word
That makes the foundation of the world shudder
That my womb will carry what the Temple could not hold
Pronouncing your promises of old
How can this be
I am yet a Virgin

But Lord, Let it be to me according to your word

Do you hear these words?
What this means...
For the Spirit hovers over Mary like the day of creation
Can we feel the weight of this anticipation
As she falls to her knees at this terrifying news
Of this proclamation
Of David's lineage to be established
Always and forever
Here and now
Despite our attempts at sabotage
Our attempts to break loose and blindly fall to our death
For we have all forsaken The Lord, choosing the forbidden fruit
We have forsaken the Lord
Yet, here is your message

And here kneels Mary
As she says, Lord let it be to me according to your word

Are we listening?
As Mary listened to the oppression of her people, her family
The cries of lament
Tears washing the wounds of Israel
Living in fear under a kingdom that was not their own
Being crushed by this weight of hopelessness
From those who claimed to be their King
Those who claimed to be their Lord
But these kings come from the wrong lineage
They are not from the line of David
And this is where their hope hangs on the string of these promises

Do we wonder in these words
Do we sense what this meant
And the long years that have been spent
Waiting for this day
The day of the Lord
The day when The One
Would come, and set the captives free
The One that was written about in the prophecies
The One who will make all things right, justice forever, shalom
Such wonder must have filled Mary as says

Let it be to me according to your word

I will carry this child
This savior
This one who will be called the Son of God
I am your servant
Let it be to me according to your word
And may your Word carrying me

Even as I carry Him inside my womb
Do we understand
that Mary's faithful response sank deep
Into the sea of obedience
As the King was born
And her love nourished the boy as he grew
The messiah
The Christ
The Anointed One
Do we feel this pull into our own obedience
To learn from Mary
For Her obedience sinks deeper than we often
Open our eyes to see
As she raised her son
Or should I say she watched the son
Rise daily
Even, even as she with the scrapes of her Son
Cleans the wounds of her child
That would one day clean her
That would one day clean us
Can we grasp this unfathomable love

But her obedience sinks deeper still
As she humbles herself
To obey the Son
Whom once she cradled to sleep
Is the same One
That reminds her after she speaks

That He is in his Father's house
The same One that she loves
Her Son who used to follow her
Is the One whom she now follows
As she humbly states:

Let it be to me according to your word

As Mary obeys her Son
Even as He caused all kinds of turmoil
He rebuked the religious leaders
He was usually found eating his dinners
With a table full of all sorts of sinners
He healed the blind
He set the captives free
But surely
He did not bring the kingdom
By the expectations of His Mother
By the expectations of Mary
By the expectations of us all
This inauguration of the Kingdom will burst through with force
But Mary did not know
As we do not know
What The Father has planned

But she still loves Him as she states:

Let it be to me according to your word

Do we open our hands to this reality
2,000 years later do we understand?

The significance of Mary's being favored
The significance of Mary's obedience
She teaches us what it means to obey
She learned through her life
That her plans did not prevail and she was still faithful
Will we walk in the same obedience of Mary
For as her son rides into Jerusalem

She breathes, *Let it be done to me according to your word*

Mary felt the ultimate presence of God in her womb
She also felt the ultimate pain
Of a mother watching her Son
Being beaten into bloody pulp
Can we feel their pain of this obedience
They drag Him along the stones of the streets

Where there is too much blood for her to clean
This desperate state of pain
As she watches her son
Carry the sins of the world
As she watches in the blur of her tears
Being smashed under this weight
But she makes the climb
Up Golgotha anyway
Even as she feels her being descending into the pit of despair
She watches her beloved Son
Being nailed to the cross
Being mocked and spit upon
Her lifeless son hangs on this tree

She kneels before the Word and says:

Let it be to me according to your word

Are we willing
To love our Lord as Mary
Are we willing to accept the plans of the King
To accept His Kingdom
And the way it breaks forth through humble obedience
Through faith
Are we willing to the climb the mountain
Are we willing to follow our Lord to the cross
Are we willing to count the cost

Because like Mary we all have our own expectations
We all have our plans
We all have told our Lord the way
That things are supposed to be
But have we, like Mary, said

Let it be to me according to your Word.

Are we willing to follow our Lord
In humble obedience
Are we willing to
Say let it be to me
Even when we see so much pain
In the world
In our being
In creation still
Do we obey
Are we willing to let The Word
Carry us, even if through an immeasurable amount of pain
Are we obedient

Are we willing to obey
If means sacrificial love
Are we willing to walk as Mary walked
Because she knew
What darkness felt like
She knew what it meant to wait for the Lord
She knew what it meant to feel hopelessness
She knew, but so did her Son

And as the Word
Peels back a slice of the revelation
We see the resurrection

We see hope renewed
We get wrapped up into the redemptive plan
And like Mary, we have a chance to participate in this kingdom
In this life, here and now
Through humble obedience

So will we, like Mary, say:

Let it be to me according to your Word.