

O my precious child.

How wonderful it is to finally be holding you and looking down at your face as you peacefully sleep.

For nine months you were safe in my womb. My wait for you was short compared to all those who came before me –our ancestors who were anticipating your arrival.

14 generations from our father Abraham to King David – waited for you.

14 generations from the reign of King David until our people were taken captive in Babylon – and still they waited for you.

14 generations from those held captive in Babylon until now --- patiently awaiting the day of your birth.

And now you are here.

I wish I could just hold you in my arms – protect you from all the harmful and hateful things waiting for you out in the world – specifically within this part of the Roman Empire.

I wish you could grow up safely and quietly in Nazareth – be a carpenter like your father, marry Ezra and Naomi's daughter, Rachel, from down the lane – have children – allow me to bake cookies for my grandchildren.

I want for you what any mother wants for their child – I want you to be happy and have a fulfilling life.

But my plans for you are not to be your destiny. Months ago, when the angel Gabriel appeared to me – I was told that you would be great and will be called the Son of the Most High God. That our Lord will make you a king, as was our ancestor David – but your kingdom will have no end!

And then when your father and I took you to the Temple on the day of your dedication – we met Simeon – a righteous and devout man who was awaiting the consolation of Israel. He was moved by the Holy Spirit – snatched you up in his arms and said: “this child is destined for the fall and rise of many in Israel. And your heart will be pierced by all that will happen to him.”

So for the second time in my life – and I'm sure it won't be the last time – I must say – must pray -- once again: “I am the servant of the Lord – may it be done to me according to your will.”

O my precious child – God willed it and you came into being – for I was told nothing is impossible for God!

So I just need to turn my worries and cares and concerns – my hopes and my dreams for you and about you – all over to God. This is all any mother can do. . .

but of course we all hold on to the false notion that we are in charge – rather than God – some mothers clinging to this notion more than others.

You would think it would somehow be easier for me to understand this – but it's not – so strong are those maternal instincts!

So as I hold you, and now kiss the crown of your sweet head – I pray as any mother does – pray as our ancestors prayed long before us:

May the Lord bless and keep you. May the lord let his light shine down upon you.

May God keep you now, and forever, in His loving arms and grant you peace.

You will be happy – and I know you will have a fulfilling life – but it will be according to God's plan – not mine. Just know that I will always be with you – no matter how things unfold.