

### 3] A Mighty Angel and a Godly Young Women (Sunday, October 3, 2021)

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**Scripture:** 10 Commandments; Luke 1:26-38

#### INTRODUCTION

I am so blessed to study and preach this text from Luke outside of the normal time we usually turn to this text.

This account is incredibly familiar, but we must do our best to never lose sight of just how amazing God's plan of redemption is.

It is perfectly logical once you understand the message of salvation.

And yet we also keep in mind that to the world, this is a foolish, completely ridiculous story.

Some want to say the account here in Luke 1 is just a retelling of some ancient myth common in the cultures of the day.

The words of 1 Cor. 1 are important as we continue to bring witness to God's work and plan of salvation.

**1 Cor. 1:22** For Jews request a sign, and Greeks seek after wisdom; **23** but we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness, **24** but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. **25** Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

As we read this marvelous account we should be led to the praise and worship of our great God.

What an amazing way that the Triune God chose to save sinners!

**With God nothing will be impossible!**

As we continue in Luke 1, we will consider in two parts, verses 26-38.

1] A Powerful Angel and Message and a Humble Young Women, vv. 26-33

2] God's Incredible Power and Beautiful Submission, vv. 34-38

### **1] A POWERFUL ANGEL AND MESSAGE AND A HUMBLE YOUNG WOMEN, VV. 26-33**

If you remember listening to Rush Limbaugh, he would often poke fun at the town of Rio Linda, CA.

It must have not been the most upscale or sophisticated place to be.

The town of Nazareth in Galilee was also not a notable or desirable place to be.

Recall the words of Nathanael hearing that Jesus was from Nazareth.

**John 1:46** And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

What adds to this amazing account is that Joseph was of the line of David.

By all rights, Joseph should have been living in splendor in Jerusalem rather than living as a carpenter in a backwoods town far from the center of action in Israel.

Luke has written this chapter so that we compare and contrast the accounts of John and Jesus.

The fact that Zacharias and Elizabeth were able to have the child is amazing, miraculous we can say.

But absolutely **nothing** can compare to Mary giving birth to the Son of God.

The account of Gabriel, Elizabeth, and Zacharias provides the timing for verse 26.

We are now in the 6<sup>th</sup> month of Elizabeth's pregnancy with John.

The four hundred years of silence was broken. But much more was to come as the mighty angel Gabriel was sent by God to lowly Nazareth.

Luke has provided all that we need to know in verse 27 concerning Mary, though we might like to know more.

We assume that Mary was young, but we are not given her age.

What we do know is that she was betrothed, promised in marriage, to Joseph who was of the line of David.

Today we have the concept of engagement. Betrothal was much more binding than engagement, such that divorce was the only way to break a betrothal.<sup>1</sup>

Mary in verse 27 is described as a virgin.

This word is found over 50 times in the Greek Old Testament.

**Is. 7:14** Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel.

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<sup>1</sup> Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3 of Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. IVP/Accordance electronic ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 89.

Sometimes the word *parthenos* is translated as just a young woman. **But here and in other places it means a virgin.**

When Gabriel met with Zacharias we know exactly where that encounter happened.

Here we are not given the exact spot, because truly it doesn't matter.

We assume Mary was in her parent's home in Nazareth when the mighty angel Gabriel made an appearance.

**Rejoice! Highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!**

Verse 28 as you know is used in Roman Catholic tradition called the Hail Mary.

Jerome translating this verse into Latin gives us the phrase *gratia plena*- full of grace!

It is important to understand that Mary is not the **reservoir** or **source** of grace, but rather that God in His amazing wisdom chose to bless Mary in an incredible way through a calling no one ever would be given!

She would serve like no other woman in history, but this does not mean that she is a **source of salvation or grace.**

**Gen. 6:8** But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

**Judg. 5:24** "Most blessed among women is Jael,  
The wife of Heber the Kenite;  
Blessed is she among women in tents.

Look ahead also to verse 42.

**Luke 1:42** Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, “Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb!

Verse 29 says that Mary was troubled or perplexed by the words of Gabriel.

Further, she tried to make sense of this incredible greeting that Gabriel brought.

An even more incredible message was to come, but Luke has given us sufficient detail to help us appreciate this awesome moment in redemptive history.

Gabriel told Mary just like he told Zacharias, **do not be afraid!**

You have found favor or grace with God.

**Acts 7:46** who [David] found favor before God and asked to find a dwelling for the God of Jacob.

In Exodus 33 and 34, Moses several times uses the expression, “found grace.”

All these expressions speak of God’s special calling and choice to use a sinner as part of His plan of redemption.

Mary’s role in this plan would be unlike anyone else in history.

Mary would play an important, very needed role, but we see the focus in verses 31-33 is on the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Behold!** verse 31 begins. Pay close attention to something amazing.

Mary would conceive in her womb and bring forth a Son that she would name *Yeshua* or Jesus.

The same verb **conceive** is used for Elizabeth in verse 24 and 36 and also in Luke 2:21.

The words **bring forth a Son** also are found in the angelic message that was later brought to Joseph as recorded in Matthew 1:21.

So, verse 31 is amazing, but then we get to verses 32 and 33 which describe Jesus the Son of God.

Four descriptions are given.

**1] He will be great!**

The same word is used in verse 15 for John. The greatness of Jesus would be far, far more!

**2] He will be called the Son of the Highest;**

The word Highest is used 13 times in the NT to speak of the true God in distinction from all the false gods that were worshipped.

Here is the first time chronologically in the NT that we have the doctrine of the incarnation described.

**Mark 5:7** And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."

**3] and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.**

There is so much OT Scripture connected with these amazing statements.

The central chapter in the OT is **2 Sam. 7** [along with its parallel in 1 Chron. 17.]

**2Sam. 7:12** “When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom.

As I stated earlier, Joseph was not living in Jerusalem given his lineage.

Why was Joseph not part of the legitimate rule over Israel?

This goes back to the story of Rome and the family of Herod the Great, a usurper of the throne of David.

**4] And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.**

This is our greatest confidence even though it does not seem like the Lord Jesus Christ rules over all things.

We do not yet see the fulness of His rule manifested on the earth, but we do have great assurance that what was revealed to Mary over 2000 years ago will be fulfilled.

The message of salvation in Jesus Christ is being spread throughout all the earth.

**Rev. 11:15** Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdoms of this world have become *the kingdoms* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”

## **2] GOD’S INCREDIBLE POWER AND BEAUTIFUL SUBMISSION, vv. 34-38**

Some commentators have wondered why Mary asked the question, how can this be, since I do not know a man?

She was soon to be married, so why would she ask how this could be?

Here is where we see how foolish the “experts” sometimes or often can be.

Mary correctly understood that Gabriel was telling her that she would have a child **but without the intervention of any man.**<sup>2</sup>

This is another place where we compare Mary’s response to Zacharias’s.

Zacharias’s response was one of unbelief because he knew very well other similar stories in Scripture.

There was nothing like this in Mary’s case.

And we see clearly from the text that although Gabriel brings a needed explanation, there is absolutely no rebuke given to Mary.

Look again at verse 35.

This verse gives answer to Mary’s question and gives insight into the mystery of the Triune nature of God.

**1] The Holy Spirit will come upon you,**

The Holy Spirit is mentioned at least 8 times in Luke’s gospel.

The language speaks indeed of a special working of the Holy Spirit’s power.

Matthew records the same glorious truth in his gospel.

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<sup>2</sup> Leon Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary*, vol. 3 of Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. IVP/ Accordance electronic ed. (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988), 90.



**Matt. 1:18** Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

**2] and the power of the Highest will overshadow you;**

The verb overshadow is not a common verb in the NT.

Three of the five times it is used occurs in the accounts of the Transfiguration.

**Matt. 17:5** While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!"

**3] therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.**

Here we have witness both to the Triune nature and work of God and the doctrine of the incarnation.

**Truly God and truly man.**

**Like unto us in all things yet without sin.**

**1John 1:1** That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, concerning the Word of life— **2** the life was manifested, and we have seen, and bear witness, and declare to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us—

If you have studied the doctrine of the Trinity seriously you can say, there is no end to this great study!

It is not like learning your multiplication facts where you memorize and master them and then move on.

But the doctrine of the Trinity, the heart of the Christian faith, is something that we come back to time and time again.

And part of what we do is simply marvel in the nature and work of God!

And yet it is not just a mystery or something that we don't just fully grasp, it is at the heart of all that we are called to do as God's people.

Colin Gunton in his book on the Trinity writes:

Without the doctrine of the Trinity we might have a God of power, or a God in some way identical with the world, but not the God of the Bible, who is a God of love, and whose love takes shape in the story of creation and redemption.<sup>3</sup>

**Phil. 2:5** Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of* death, even the death of the cross.

In verse 36 we learn that Elizabeth and Mary were related. They were *kin*.

The word relative does not tell us how close, just the fact that they were part of the same extended family or clan.<sup>4</sup>

Apparently, Mary had not yet heard the news concerning her relative Elizabeth.

Is that surprising?

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<sup>3</sup> Colin Gunton, *Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*, 18.

<sup>4</sup> BDAG, s.v. "συγγενής," 950.

Not at all, especially when you keep in mind that Elizabeth hid herself for five months.

Elizabeth was not posting things on Facebook or Instagram in that that time.

Elizabeth's conception was not the same miracle as Mary's conception, but what they have in common is the power of God!

**For with God nothing will be impossible.**

There is in the Children's Catechism a fantastic question about the power of God.

What do we mean by God's omnipotence?

We have to be careful.

The Children's Catechism asks the question, "Can God do all things?"

The answer is quite profound.

It is not simply, "Yes."

The answer is, "God can do all His holy will."

R. C. Sproul talked about what it means that God can do anything in his commentary.

He gave a similar explanation to what we find in the Children's Catechism.

"He can do anything that He purposes to do, anything that accords with His character as God. That's the theological lesson that the angel is reiterating here to Mary: "With God, nothing is impossible; all things are possible. That is, He has power over everything in His creation, including your empty womb."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Excerpt From: R.C. Sproul. "Luke: An Expositional Commentary." Apple Books.

Verse 37 is not a verse that is about the power of positive thinking or that all your dreams can come true if you just believe.

Luke is not writing Disney Theology.

What comfort we find in verse 37 in light of all that God has promised and what He then also calls us to do.

This is a concept easily perverted; we don't want to do that.

We also don't want to neglect the comfort of this verse.

**With God nothing will be impossible!**

R. C. Sproul also in his commentary provides some of the sad history of the Roman Catholic Church in terms of its teachings about Mary that are relatively recent in terms of 2000 years of church history.

1854 - Immaculate Conception - meaning that Mary was born sinless; that is, she did not inherit the effects of original sin.

1950 - Bodily Assumption of Mary - meaning that she did not die but went bodily to heaven.

1954 - Coronation of Mary as queen of heaven - meaning that God chose her to be the mother of Christ because He willed her to have a unique and exceptional role in salvation as the second Eve associated with the second Adam.<sup>6</sup>

These are very dangerous doctrines because they do not represent the truth of Scripture and lead people to trust and pray in Mary more than Jesus Christ.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

We reject these doctrines.

We do, however, consider the amazing response of Mary in verse 38.

Again, this is very familiar, but let us not lose sight of her response of faith as described here and the incredible challenge that she would face in being called by the Lord.

We see that Mary calls herself a female slave of the Lord.

This is the exact same language that the Apostle Paul frequently used – a slave of Christ.

Mary knew she was nothing in herself; her identity would be found in submission to the Lord and his will.

Listen to the American Standard Version's translation of verse 37 that is more literal:

**Luke 1:37** For no **word from God** shall be void of power.

Mary uses the same word **word** in verse 38.

**Let it be to me according to your word!**

What a response of deep humility and faith!

Leon Morris wrote:

We are apt to take this as the most natural thing and accordingly we miss Mary's quiet heroism. She was not yet married to Joseph. His reaction to her pregnancy might have been expected to be a strong one and Matthew tells us that he did in fact think of divorcing her (Matt. 1:19). Again, while the death penalty for adultery (Deut. 22:23f.) does not seem to have been carried out often, it was still there. Mary could not be sure

that she would not have to suffer, perhaps even die. But she recognized the will of God and accepted it.<sup>7</sup>

## CONCLUSION

**With God nothing will be impossible.**

**For no word from God shall be void of power.**

1] Comfort

2] Calling

3] Communion

**Prayer**

**Hymn 357**

## BENEDICTION - HEBREWS 12:1-3

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares *us*, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

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<sup>7</sup> Leon Morris, 91.