

“The Incarnation”

Luke 1:26-38

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Teaching Aim: To examine the circumstances surrounding “*the incarnation*” of Jesus Christ and to understand the importance of the virgin birth to us today. To see the unwavering faith Mary had as a young teenager and to appreciate the rock solid trust she had in the Lord even at that early age.

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (*BIBLE STUDY*)

Part I: The angel Gabriel appears to a young virgin named Mary (Luke 1:26-27)

1. Some have claimed that the angel Gabriel is an archangel along with the archangel Michael, but scripture never specifically says so. The angel Gabriel does seem to have a special mission however from God, what is it (vs. 26)? (See Dan. 8:15-17; 9:21; Matt. 1:20-21; Luke 1:11-20; 26-38) What city did Gabriel appear to Mary in? What is “*the sixth month*” a reference to in verse 26? (See vv. 24-25, 36)

2. What does it mean for a couple to be “*betrothed*” (vs. 27)? (See Bible Commentaries) How is “*betrothal*” different than engagement today? Who was Mary betrothed to? What can we learn about this young man’s background from Matt. 1:1-18?

Part II: Gabriel’s remarkable message about the coming birth of Jesus (Luke 1:28-33)

1. What announcement does the angel Gabriel give to Mary in verse 28? The description “*highly favored one*” means literally, “*full of grace*”? Is Mary simply the recipient of God’s grace, or the dispenser of it as so many believe today? What is the difference? Although some modern Bible translations omit the last part of verse 28, other translations end with the statement, “*blessed are you among women!*” In what way was Mary blessed? How is Mary unique from any other woman ever born on this planet?

2. How did young Mary (*probably just a few years beyond puberty at this point*) react to the message from the angel (vs. 29)? Why? How do you think you would have reacted to such a message?

3. The angel seems to sense Mary’s fear, how does he attempt to comfort her in verse 30?

Was this similar to how Gabriel responded to Zacharias' in **verses 11-14**, or different? How does Gabriel's message to Zacharias ultimately relate to the coming of Jesus Christ? (See **Isa. 40:3-5**) According to **verse 30**, why should Mary not fear?

4. What startling announcement does Gabriel bring to Mary in **verse 31**? Why would this be a surprise to Mary? (See **vs. 34**) Had anything like this ever happened before or since? What Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled by the conception of Jesus Christ according to **verse 31**? (See **Isa. 7:14**) Why is "*the virgin birth*" so critical to our salvation today? (See **Matt. 1:1; 20-21; Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; 2 Cor. 5:21**)
5. Is there any significance to the title "*the Son of the Highest*" (**vs. 32**)? If so, what is it? What can we learn about Jesus from this title? (See Commentaries) According to **verses 32 & 33**, whose throne will Jesus sit on? When will Christ's reign begin and how long will it last for according to **verse 33**?

Part III: Mary's miraculous conception of the baby Jesus foretold by Gabriel (Luke 1:34-38)

1. Mary doesn't doubt the message Gabriel brings to her, but simply asks, "*How will this be since I am a virgin?*" in **verse 34**. What did Mary mean when she said, "*I do not know a man?*" In **Gen. 1:1-3** God spoke the universe into existence; do you believe He could also miraculously bring a child into Mary's womb apart from a human father? Why or why not? (See **John 1:1-14**)
2. According to Gabriel, how would this miracle take place (**vs. 35**)? What unique title is given for this child in **verse 35**? People today tend to go to one of two extremes when it comes to Mary, either they worship her and give her too much glory, or they ignore her and don't give her the attention due. How should we as Christians view Mary the mother of Jesus today? NOTE: It is interesting that Mary's womb became "*the holy of holies*" on earth while she carried the baby Jesus. Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us!"
3. What startling revelation is given as a sign to prove the truth of Gabriel's words to Mary (**vs. 36**)? Why would this new information shock Mary? Elizabeth was in her old age (*beyond childbearing age*) and had been barren for her entire life. According to Gabriel,

how long had she been pregnant when he spoke to Mary? What was the name of the baby in Elizabeth's womb and what special role did God ordain for him? (See **verse 13, 16-17**)

4. **Verse 36** is given as a sign pointing to the truth of Gabriel's statement in **verse 37**. What is this truth and how does it apply to us today? **Verse 37** should be a core belief for every Christian, is it for you? Why or why not?

5. In what incredible way does the young virgin Mary respond to the startling words of the angel Gabriel (**vs. 38**)? Does this response demonstrate extraordinary spiritual maturity for a person her age? Does Gabriel's response to Mary differ from that given to Zacharias (*the elderly priest*)? (See **vv. 18-22**) What can we learn about Mary's faith from **verse 38**? Do you have a faith like Mary's, or do you find yourself often doubting God? Why?

6. If you have never received Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, why not do so right now in the quietness of this moment through prayer?

MINER'S CORNER ~ *Manna to live by!*

- The angel Gabriel appears three times in scripture, each time announcing a revelation relating to the birth of Jesus Christ.
- Mary was a poor young Jewish girl from Nazareth, perhaps just a few years beyond puberty. In spite of her youth she demonstrates incredible maturity.
- The virgin birth of Christ is critical to our salvation today.
- Mary conceived the baby Jesus apart from a human father when the Holy Spirit of God overshadowed her, "*for with God nothing is impossible.*"
- Mary did not doubt the message from Gabriel like the elderly priest Zacharias had, she simply asked "*How will this be since I am a virgin?*"
- Mary's faith and trust in God should be an example for every Christian to follow today.