

“A Child Is Born”

Luke 1:26-38

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Teaching Aim: To recognize the importance of the promised Messiah to the Jewish people and to see the miraculous way in which God brought about His birth. To examine the mature response of young Mary to the announcement of the coming birth of Jesus. To understand the significance of the virgin birth to our salvation. To realize that Jesus truly is Immanuel, “*God with us*,” and He will save His people from their sins.

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

Part I: The angel Gabriel appears to a young virgin named Mary (Isaiah 11:1-2; Luke 1:26-27)

1. The prophet Isaiah did not speak about the lush green decorated trees that the prophet Jeremiah wrote about, he spoke of an ugly stump with a single shoot growing out of it. (See **Isa. 11:1; Jer. 10:1-5**) What was this broken stump symbolic of? What did the single shoot represent? What can we learn about Israel’s Messiah from **Isa. 11:2**? Why should this prophecy be an encouragement to every believer in Christ today?
2. Some have tried to claim that the angel Gabriel is an archangel, but the Bible never specifically says so. Who is the only angel in the Bible to be named an archangel? (See **Jude 9**) The angel Gabriel had a specific mission from God every time we see him in the Bible, what was his mission (**vs. 26**)? (See **Dan. 8:15-17; 9:21; Matt. 1:20-21; Luke 1:11-20; 26-38**) Where was Mary living when Gabriel suddenly appeared to her? What did many of the Jews think about this famous city? (See **John 1:43-46**)
3. What did it mean for a couple to be “*betroted*” (**vs. 27**)? (See Bible Commentaries) How is “*betrotal*” different from engagement today? Who was Mary betroted to? What can we learn about this young man’s background from **Matt. 1:1-18**? What was required to terminate a betrotal? (See Commentaries)

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

1. What did Gabriel instruct Mary to do in **verse 28**? How was Mary especially blessed? The description "*highly favored one*" has at times been interpreted as "*full of grace*?" Is Mary simply the recipient of God's grace, or the dispenser of it as so many believe today?
2. How did young Mary (*probably just a few years beyond puberty at this point*) react to the message from the angel (**vs. 29**)? Before Gabriel's revelation to Zacharias, how long had it been since Israel had received a prophetic word from God? How do you think Mary felt as she listened to carefully to the words that Gabriel spoke?
3. Gabriel seemed to sense Mary's fear; what did he say to comfort her in **verse 30**? Was this response similar to the way Gabriel responded to Zacharias in **verses 11-14**? If not, why not? According to **verse 30**, why should Mary not fear?
4. What startling message did Gabriel proclaim to Mary in **verse 31**? Why would this news be a surprise to Mary? (See **vs. 34**) Had anything like this ever happened before? Has it happened since? What Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled by the incarnation of Jesus Christ according to **verse 31**? (See **Isa. 7:14**) What makes "*the virgin birth*" so critical to the Christian faith and to salvation in general? (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 His reign begin? For how long will it last (**vs. 33**)?

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

1. Mary never doubted the message that Gabriel shared with her, but simply asked, "*How can this be since I am a virgin?*" (**vs. 34**). What did Mary mean when she said, "*I do not know a man?*" According to Gabriel, how would this miracle take place (**vs. 35**)?

2. People today tend to go to one extreme or the other when it comes to Mary, either they treat her with reverence and give her too much glory, or they ignore her and don't give her the respect she deserves. How should we as Christians relate to Mary today? What can we learn about Jesus from the title, "*Immanuel*?" (See **Isa. 7:14**) Would you agree that Mary's womb became "*the holy of holies*" on earth while she carried the baby Jesus? Why or why not?

3. What unexpected revelation was given to Mary as a sign proving the authenticity of Gabriel's message (**vs. 36**)? Elizabeth was in her old age (*beyond childbearing age*) and had been barren her entire life. According to Gabriel, how long had she been pregnant at the time he spoke with Mary? What was the name of the baby in Elizabeth's womb? What special role would this baby play? (See **verse 13, 16-17**)

4. What incredible truth was revealed to Mary in **verse 37**? How should this truth affect every Christian today? Are you facing any seemingly impossible situations in life today? If so, why should this verse encourage you today?

5. What was Mary's response to the message from Gabriel (**vs. 38**)? What can we learn about the spiritual maturity of Mary from the way she responded? How was Gabriel's response to young Mary in **verse 38** different than the way he responded to the elderly priest Zacharias in **verses 18-22**? Why did he respond differently? What can we learn about the depth of Mary's faith from **verse 38**? When it comes to your faith, are you more like Zacharias or more like Mary? Why?

6. This Christmas, why not receive the greatest gift ever? It is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone that we find salvation! (See **John 3:16; 14:6; Acts 4:12; Eph. 2:8-9**)

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

- The angel Gabriel appears multiple times in Scripture, each time announcing a revelation relating to the birth of Jesus Christ.
- Mary was a poor young Jewish maiden from Nazareth, perhaps only 14 or 15 years old.
- Mary demonstrated an incredible level of spiritual maturity for a person her age.
- The virgin birth of Christ is critical to the Christian faith and to our salvation today.
- Mary conceived the baby Jesus apart from a human father when the Holy Spirit overshadowed her, *"for with God nothing is impossible."*
- Mary did not doubt the message from Gabriel like the elderly priest Zacharias did, she simply asked him, *"How will this be since I am a virgin?"*
- Mary's faith and trust in God should be an example to every Christian today.