

Luke 1:26-38

Introduction: We shift from Zechariah and Elizabeth to Mary. Who is she, and how does she respond to God's working in her life?

Gabriel is sent as God's authorized representative—1:26-27

- 1) What happened? ²⁶ *Now Gabriel the angel was sent* [ἀποστέλλω]...
- 2) When? *in the sixth month* (of Elizabeth's pregnancy; 1:36)
- 3) By whom? *by God*
- 4) To whom?
 - a) To a specific city—to a city (basically insignificant) *in Galilee called Nazareth*,
 - b) To a specific individual privately (cf. the more public setting for Zechariah)
 - i) ²⁷ *to a virgin pledged to marry a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.*
 - ii) *The virgin's name was Mary.*
 - (1) Mary was the most common name of Jewish females in the 1st century.
1 in 5 girls was named Mary.
 - c) "Barren wombs, like Elizabeth's, had been opened before (in history), but a virginal conception was an unprecedented act of God." Garland

Gabriel speaks as God's authorized representative—1:28-38

- 1) Gabriel's initial greeting—1:28 "*Greetings*,
 - a) Recipient of God's grace—*O favored one* [pf. pass. ptc. χαριτόω], (NB, she is not a dispenser of God's grace; cf. Ephesians 1:6)
 - b) Recipient of God's active presence—*the Lord is with you.*
 - c) Recipient of God's blessing—*Blessed* [pf. pass. ptc. εὐλογέω] *are you among women.*"
- 2) Mary's initial two-fold response—1:29 ²⁹ *But having seen, ...*
 - a) Perplexed—*she was troubled* [διαταράσσω] *by his words*
 - b) Meditating—*and kept pondering* [διαλογίζομαι] *what kind of greeting this might be.* (i.e. what was God going to do with her?)
- 3) Gabriel's primary message—1:30-33 ³⁰ *And the angel said to her,*
 - a) Reassurance—1:30 *Do not be afraid, Mary,*
 - i) *Why? because you have found favor* [χάρις] *with God.*
 - (1) i.e. God has freely chosen to act on your behalf in a unique way
 - b) A three-fold promise concerning the birth of a child—1:31³¹ *And behold, ...*
 - i) Conception—*you will conceive in your womb*
 - ii) Delivery—*and give birth to a son,*
 - iii) Naming—*and you will name Him Jesus.*
 - c) Prophecy concerning the ministry of her Child—1:32
 - i) Concerning His greatness as God—1:32a
 - (1) Unique—³² *He will be great*, (cf. 1:15 John was to be great **before the Lord**) cf. Deuteronomy 10:17; Titus 2:13
 - (2) Deity—*and will be called the Son of the Highest*; (cf. Psalm 2:7)
 - ii) Concerning His kingdom—1:32b-33 (fulfilling God's covenant with David)

- (1) God-given right to rule—*and the Lord God (Father) will give Him the throne of His father David.* (cf. 1:37; 2nd Samuel 7:16)
- (2) God-given realm is Israel—³³ *And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,* (cf. Zechariah 12:1-10)
- (3) God-given reign is endless—*and of His kingdom there will be no end.*” (cf. Psalm 89:36-37; Isaiah 9:6-7)
- 4) Mary’s legitimate practical question—1:34 ³⁴ *Then Mary said to the angel, “How can this be, since I have not known (had sexual relations with) a man?”*
 - a) She assumes the conception will take place while she is still a virgin, before she and Joseph begin to have sexual relations.
- 5) Gabriel’s Godward answer regarding the Virgin Conception of Jesus—1:35-37
 - a) Gabriel understands the distinct creative functions of the Triune God—1:35
 - i) God the Spirit—*“The Holy Spirit will come upon you,*
 - ii) God the Father—*and the power of the Highest overshadow you;*
 - iii) God the Son—*therefore, also, the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God.*
 - b) Gabriel explains God’s previous workings—1:36-37 ³⁶ *And behold, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.*
 - i) Why? ³⁷ *For nothing will be impossible with God.*” (lit. “every thing from God will not be impossible”) (cf. Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:17)
 - ii) If God can do this with Elizabeth, He can also fulfill His promise to you.
- 6) Mary’s submissive response—1:38 *“Behold, ...*
 - a) Proper humble understanding of their relationship—*the bondservant of the Lord;*
 - b) Proper submissive mindset—*let it be to me according to your word.*”
 - i) “There is risk in agreeing to go God’s way, but as the Lord’s servant, she willing goes.” Bock
- 7) Gabriel departs—*And the angel departed from her.*
 - a) He does not stay to hover over her to ease the pathway, to comfort her, or to explain perplexing things that will continue to happen. (Garland)

Take-home truth: nothing is impossible with God, not even the birth of a son to an old couple or to a young virgin. Are we willing to be His vessel for His cause?