

Luke 1:26-45 – The Announcement of Jesus' Birth (Faith in The Promise)

I. The Angel Brings God's Word To Mary (26-33)

A. Gabriel is Sent To Mary (26-27)

1. God Sends Gabriel To Nazareth (26)

- a. The 6th month refers to Elizabeth's pregnancy
- b. The Similarities and Differences Between Zechariah
 - i. Gabriel goes to Zechariah who is a priest in the Temple – a person of status in the court of God
 - ii. Gabriel goes to Mary who is a teenage girl in a backwater town with no status at all
 - iii. Gabriel announces the birth of a child to both – but one is a prophetic forerunner, the other is the Son of God Himself
- c. Jesus would come in obscurity
 - i. The eternal Son of God would not only humble himself to take the nature of mankind
 - ii. The eternal Son of God would humble himself to become the lowest of mankind
 - He will be born in a nowhere town to a family of poor means
 - He will not be born of wealth or royalty
 - He will have no worldly or religious standing at all
 - He humbled himself to the lowest state so that the Father will exalt Him to the right hand of the throne

2. God Sends Gabriel to A Young Virgin (27)

- a. Luke emphasizes the virginity of Mary (mentioned 2x)
 - i. The importance of the virgin birth will be seen later in this section
- b. Mary is betrothed to Joseph
 - i. Mary's Father has already legally arranged and given her to Joseph
 - ii. Mary and Joseph would have had a formal ceremony of engagement – but not yet formally married
 - This betrothal is legally binding so that if Mary is unfaithful she would be labeled an adulteress
 - To cancel the betrothal would require a divorce – although the marriage is not yet formally consummated, the couple is considered bound

B. Gabriel Announces The Christ's Birth (28-33)

1. Gabriel's Greeting To Mary (28-30)

- a. She is called "Favored One" (28)
 - i. Favored means one who has received grace
 - ii. She has been accepted by God
 - iii. The same word is used of all believers in Eph. 1:6
 - b. She is told the Lord is with her (28)
 - i. The Lord has chosen a lowly girl to bear the Messiah
 - ii. Because of grace, the Lord is with her. Not because she is righteous or sinless
 - iii. God often uses the lowly and humble to accomplish his purposes
 - From a worldly perspective, it is the lofty and people of high status that are esteemed greatly
 - God looks not on the outward appearance but upon the heart
 - c. She is Confused By this greeting (29)
 - i. Mary is troubled at seeing the angel
 - ii. Mary is troubled at this lofty greeting the angel gives Mary
 - "How can I be favored of the Lord?"
 - "I am not worthy of the Lord's esteem. I am just a peasant girl"
 - Mary's heart was humble
 - d. She is told not to fear (30)
 - i. Angels delivering God's messages often say this
 - ii. Seeing an Angel is a fearful experience, yet there is a reason Mary should not be afraid
 - e. She is told God has placed Grace upon her (30)
 - i. There is no need to fear for the one who stands in God's grace
 - ii. She needs grace like everyone else, and she stands favored of the Lord because of that grace alone
2. Gabriel Declares Mary's Calling (31)
 - a. She will Conceive and Bear a Son
 - i. God has called Mary to have a son
 - ii. Gabriel will give her more information about who this child will be
 - b. She is told to name Him Jesus
 - i. Jesus means "the Lord is Salvation" or "The Lord Saves"
 - ii. John's name meant "the Lord is Merciful"
 3. Gabriel's Description of Mary's Child (32-33)
 - a. He will be God's Son (32a)
 - i. He will be great - period

- John was prophesied to be “great before the Lord”
- Jesus’ Greatness will be simply because of who He is as the Son of God
- ii. He will be Son of the Most High
 - John will prepare a people for the Lord but Jesus Himself will be the Lord
 - Here we see Jesus’ dual nature – He will be man being born of Mary, but he will also be divine as the Son of the Highest
 - This is the title of the promised Messiah
- b. He will Reign Over The Eternal Kingdom (32b-33)
 - i. He will be given David’s throne
 - He will be the fulfillment of God’s promise
 - A king in the line of David that will rule forever
 - ii. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever
 - He will never be dethroned
 - He still rules and reigns today
 - He is king of kings and Lord of lords
 - iii. His kingdom will be eternal
 - The kingdom of God will go on forever
 - There will never be an end to the perfect kingdom of God

II. The Angel Confirms God’s Word To Mary (34-37)

A. Gabriel Adds Knowledge to Mary’s Faith (34-35)

1. Mary Inquires From A Heart of Faith (34)

- a. Mary’s question is different from Zechariah’s
 - i. Mary asks from a heart of faith (see v.45)
 - ii. Mary asks how will this be? And Zechariah asked “how will I know this will be?”
 - Zechariah wanted assurance that the word of God was true
 - Mary simply wanted to know how this could happen?
 - She believed it was true even though she didn’t understand how it could happen since she is a virgin
- iii. Virgins don’t have babies – what the angel was proposing had never been heard of before
 - Zechariah on the other hand should have been well aware that God had opened barren wombs from elderly people many times before in the history of Israel
 - Mary simply wanted some information about how this would come about

2. Mary's Question is Answered (35)

- a. God doesn't always tell us how his plans unfold
 - i. Even here, he doesn't give Mary a full understanding of what will be
 - ii. But because of her heart of faith, Gabriel does not rebuke her but explains to her how a virgin will conceive
- b. The Holy Spirit will Come upon her
 - i. "overshadowed" may echo back to the creation of the world where the Holy Spirit hovered over the face of the waters
 - ii. The Holy Spirit will create this pregnancy in her womb
- c. The Child will be the divine Messiah
 - i. He will be the Son of God because He is divinely conceived
 - ii. The Virgin Birth is a Necessary doctrine of Christianity
 - Remember Luke said that the purpose of his gospel is so that we would have certainty about the things believed among us
 - The virgin birth is not a natural occurrence and many doubt the possibility but it is necessary for the gospel. – There is no salvation without it.
 - In Genesis, Adam was cursed by the fall and all those born from him inherited that sinful nature
 - God promised a "seed of the woman" who would crush the serpent's head (notice it is not the seed of the man)
 - Jesus is that seed for he had no human father and did not have the sinful nature mankind receives from Adam. Jesus had no need for redemption of himself
 - To pay the perfect payment for mankind's sin – The Messiah must be God Himself – perfect and without spot or blemish – no sin
 - But to stand in the place of humanity, he must be really human, but have no sin of his own which must be atoned for.
 - Only by being God and Man can Christ reconcile God and man together

B. Gabriel Gives Mary a Sign of Confirmation (36-37)

1. Notice that Mary asks for no sign – she asks for no proof.
 - a. We will see that she trusts the promise completely
 - b. But Gabriel will give her the assurance of a sign
 - c. Yet this will not be a sign of punishment as he gave to Zechariah
 - i. You must admit, this must have been pretty hard for Mary to grab hold of
 - ii. Virgins don't have babies – it is unheard of
 - iii. How could God do such a thing
 - iv. But Gabriel shows her that it is God who controls the womb
2. Elizabeth Has Conceived Though Barren (36)
 - a. God has blessed the elderly, barren Elizabeth by giving her a son
 - i. He has brought life out of the desolate and barren
 - b. Therefore, God is perfectly capable of causing a virgin to conceive by His power
3. Nothing is Impossible With God (37)
 - a. Mary needs to know that even though she doesn't yet have all the answers – God is able
 - b. Nothing will be impossible
 - c. This is a message we need for today
 - i. Strange that people believe for salvation and resurrection / creation / flood / miracles
 - ii. People have a hard time believing God for things in their own lives that are far less miraculous than resurrecting the dead

III. The Holy Spirit Confirms Mary's Faith in God's Word (38-45)

A. Mary Surrenders Herself In Faith (38)

1. Mary has been given a call from God and a basic explanation of the miracle that will take place
 - a. She doesn't have all the information
 - b. She doesn't know how she will be able to cope with the hard times that are coming
 - i. Her husband will no doubt believe she has been unfaithful
 - ii. The people will believe she is an adulteress and shame her
 - iii. She will endure the hardships of the pregnancy alone (as far as she knows)
2. Mary declares in faith that she is God's servant first and foremost
3. Mary surrenders to God's plan for her life
 - a. She says let it be done to me as you have said
 - b. She trusts herself to God

- c. This should be the confession of every believer in every circumstance
 - i. God is faithful and he has a purpose in everything we are called to do
 - ii. God expects faith in his calling and equips those he calls
- B. Elizabeth's Baby Confirms The Word To Mary (39-41a)
 - 1. Mary Greets Elizabeth (39-40)
 - a. The news of Elizabeth's pregnancy has probably inspired and thrilled Mary
 - b. She goes immediately to see Elizabeth which would no doubt strengthen her faith
 - 2. Elizabeth's Baby Recognizes the Promise Bearer (41a)
 - a. Gabriel's word is confirmed as the Holy Spirit causes Elizabeth's baby to leap in the womb when Mary greets her
 - b. The Baby recognizes the mother of the Lord – His purpose is to announce the Lord and even in the womb that purpose is upon his life
- C. Elizabeth Confirms The Word To Mary (42-45)
 - 1. Elizabeth Pronounces Blessing on Mary and the Baby (41b-42)
 - a. Elizabeth is Filled with The Holy Spirit to Speak (41b)
 - b. Elizabeth's words here are not just encouragement, they are prophetic confirmation of the word given to Mary
 - 2. Elizabeth Pronounces That The Baby is the Lord (43-44)
 - a. By the Holy Spirit, Elizabeth understands and declares that Mary's child is indeed the Lord of all
 - b. Mary receives prophetic confirmation that her faith has been well placed and the words of Gabriel will be fulfilled
 - 3. Elizabeth Confirms Mary's Faith in The Word (45)
 - a. The Holy Spirit through Elizabeth praises Mary's faith in what Gabriel has told her
 - b. This is a look inside the heart of Mary as Gabriel spoke to her
 - c. She believed the word of God – She believed it would be as the Lord said – and the Holy Spirit through Elizabeth pronounced her blessed because of it.

Remember Luke's purpose is certainty of what we believe. It is not enough just to be certain. We must trust ourselves in the Lord's hands. God brought forth the Messiah from a virgin to bridge the gap between God and man, and pay for the sins of the world.

Can you say – "I am the servant of the Lord – be it done unto me as you have said?"