

Behold the Lord's Maidservant

Advent 2013

Luke 1:26-38 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" ²⁹ But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. ³⁰ Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³² He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³ And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." ³⁴ Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" ³⁵ And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. ³⁷ For with God nothing will be impossible." ³⁸ Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her. (NKJ)

REVIEW

God's Choice of Mary holds many lessons, teaching us that:

1. God came to save a lowly people.
2. Although Israel expected the Messiah, how He came was a total surprise.
3. We should not fear God's calling for He is with us.
4. The miracle of Mary's conception teaches us of the new birth.
 - As God created new life in Mary's womb, He regenerates those who are spiritually dead.
 - As Adam was the firstfruits of a fallen race, Jesus is the firstfruits of a righteous people.



THE IMPOSSIBLE?

Gabriel's words must have seemed impossible. While her cousin's conception in old age would be remarkable, it would still be within the realm of natural processes. Yet, Zechariah is skeptical and requests a sign while Mary simply believes. Still, God grants her a sign.

- As with the news of Mary's conception, Gabriel introduces the sign of Elizabeth's conception with "behold." It is a remarkable sign; information only God could reveal.
- This news prompts Mary to visit Elizabeth where greater confirmation is given.

MARY'S "BEHOLD"

After hearing Gabriel's announcement, Mary has an announcement of her own, also introduced with "behold."

- The surprise is not in reference to Mary's willingness but her unworthiness of such a calling.
- Gabriel said, "No word from God is without power. Mary responded, "let it be unto me according to that word."

Mary's response speaks to our relationship with God.

- Our calling may seem impossible but God will provide.
- God's effectual calling results in a willingness on our part to submit to His will.

Luke 1:42-45 "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."