

## SERMON NOTES

### A. Introduction

1. ways of looking at this story of Gabriel's message to Mary

### B. Luke 1:26–37 — “Gabriel comes to the Door”

1. God works in U\_\_\_\_\_ ways with U\_\_\_\_\_ people
2. Nazareth was just a
3. Mary was just a
4. Isaiah 7:14 (compare Genesis 24:43 and Matthew 1:18, 23) but also Mary was a
5. this satisfies Genesis 3:15 because

### C. Luke 1:28 — “Gabriel's Greeting”

1. the words “highly favoured” (compare Genesis 6:5, 8)
  - a. do NOT mean
  - b. do mean

### D. Luke 1:29–30 — “Mary's Anxiety Met”

1. Being a recipient of God's grace can be
2. this can be met by stopping and

### E. Luke 1:31–33 — “Gabriel Describes the Son”

1. 5 truths about Mary's Son
  - a. He will be S\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. He will be G\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. He will be called the S\_\_\_\_\_ of the M\_\_\_\_\_ H\_\_\_\_\_ (but not in the same sense as we are in Luke 6:35) because
  - d. The Lord will give Him
  - e. He will

2. 1 Chronicles 17:11–14 — Gabriel reveals that Mary's Son fulfills

### F. Luke 1:34–37 — “Mary's Intellect Satisfied”

1. Mary's question reveals
  - a. a P\_\_\_\_\_ P\_\_\_\_\_ of life
  - b. an intention of
2. Gabriel satisfies her question by
  - a. taking her eyes
  - b. and his words reveal in this event the involvement of
  - c. and as proof, Gabriel uses the example of
  - d. because with God, nothing is I\_\_\_\_\_

### G. Luke 1:38 — “Mary's Decision”

1. Mary unreservedly S\_\_\_\_\_ to God, knowing the R\_\_\_\_\_
2. some of these were

### H. I am ready, therefore, to ...

A. Introduction

1. there is a song that is sung by the Gaithers — perhaps it’s better called a medley; in my mind’s ear I hear it accompanied by the roll of the drums — with this well-known refrain:
  - O the King is coming, the King is coming!
  - I just heard the trumpets sounding,
  - And now His face I see.
  - O the King is coming, the King is coming!
  - Praise God, He’s coming for me! —{2}.
  
2. that captures the emotions, the awe, the joy, the thoughts going through the soul of this poor, young Jewish girl, Mary, after the visit and message of the angel Gabriel, about which we read a few moments ago
  - a. the King is Coming!
  - b. the long-promised Messiah!
  - c. and she was to be His mother!
  - d. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord!
  
3. how shall we look at this story of Gabriel’s message to Mary?
  - a. at the fulfilment of prophecies in this promised event?
  - b. at the nature of the God-man, Christ Jesus?
  - c. at Mary as an example for the Christian as she submits emotionally, intellectually, spiritually, physically, and willingly to God?
  - d. at how the Bible and the church fathers of the first three centuries repudiate what the Roman church would later do in exalting Mary? On this subject, let me suggest the following, written by the Protestant and Reformed Christian historian Philip Schaff, as a healthy view of Mary: *“As mother of the Saviour of the world, the Virgin Mary unquestionably holds forever a peculiar position among all women, and in the history of redemption ... It is perfectly natural, nay, essential, to sound religious feeling, to associate with Mary the fairest traits of maidenly and maternal character, and to revere her as the*

highest model of female purity, love, and piety. From her example issues a silent blessing ... her name is even wrought into the Apostles' Creed, in the simple and chaste words, 'Conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.'" —{3}.

4. however, let's just simply look again at the dialogue between Gabriel and Mary, commenting on the verses as we go along

B. Luke 1:26–27 (NKJV): <sup>26</sup> Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary.

1. God works in unexpected ways and with unexpected people

a. when the magi came from the east to worship the newly born King of the Jews, where did they head? ... to the city of Jerusalem — only later to Bethlehem — and certainly not to Nazareth which the author has to explain its very whereabouts it was such an inconsequential town

b. the message comes to this young girl, Mary

(A) in the custom of the day she could have been as young as 12 when she was pledged in marriage to Joseph

(B) this state of betrothal would last at least a year

(C) it was just as binding as if the marriage had actually been performed, and could only be ended by divorce (That is what is meant in Matthew 1:19 that Joseph "was minded to put her away privily")

(D) and she is introduced here, not by her own family, but by that of her affianced husband, Joseph

c. that is important, because if you look at the lineage of Joseph as it is found in Matthew 1, you discover that it is the kingly lineage; from the historic Jewish legal standpoint (unlike in the state of Israel today), the status of Mary's Son as King was derived from His legal father, Joseph

2. but this young girl, Mary, we are told twice, was a virgin

a. this meant that she was sexually pure, even as she later stated to Gabriel; absolutely so and without compromise

- b. now this was important in order to fulfil the prophecy Isaiah 7:14 (NAS): *Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.*
- c. now, it is said by the modernists that the word עלמה ('almah), used simply means young woman, and that is true; but the implication of the word in the seven times it is used in the Old Testament is always of virginity. The denial that it means "virgin" is Jewish in origin; they wanted to make out that Jesus was illegitimate (which you will find in the arguments the religious rulers had with Jesus) But the Greek Old Testament in Isaiah 7:14, as in Gen 24:43 about Rebekkah, uses παρθενος (parthenos). This is the technical word for "virgin." It is what Dr. Luke uses as does Matthew. For the rest the Greek translators used the word νεανις (neanis) meaning a young, {unmarried} girl. But 200 years, or so, before Christ's birth, they recognized that this was inadequate for Isaiah 7:14 — only the word "virgin" would do
- d. but there is an earlier prophecy, Genesis 3:15 (NAS): *And I will put enmity Between you {Satan, the serpent} and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel.*
  - (A) it was to be the Seed of the woman, not of Adam, that was to be the deliverer from Satan
  - (B) this could only be the case if it were a virgin birth
  - (C) so, prophecy again is accurately fulfilled

C. Luke1:28 (NKJV) *And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favoured one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"*

- 1. picture the scene: the angel appears at her door, and with the courtesy of the East, was invited and came in, and uttered these momentous words – I like the casual words with which Wil Pounds entitled his sermon on this passage: "Gabriel Came by Today"! <sup>-(4)</sup>. then asking how we respond to God's message – *"where is God at work in your life today?"*
- 2. the words "highly favoured" were rendered "*gratia plena*" by Jerome when he translated the Bible into Latin; this came into the English as the expression "full of grace"
  - a. which has given rise to the false teaching of Mary being one who can dispense the grace of salvation
  - b. but this is to completely misunderstand what the passage means and what grace means

- c. this is NOT a commendation of the character of Mary, as commendable as that character may be
- d. people misunderstand Genesis 6:8 (NAS) *"But Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD."* in the same way mistaking what Noah became ("a preacher of righteousness") with what he, with all mankind, had been (see Genesis 6:5)
- e. no; Mary, as was Noah, was highly favoured, because of the sovereign mercy of God that was shown to her

3. but, as we already noted in Schaff's words, for this reason we can, as does Luke, refer to her as "blessed among women"

D. Luke 1:29–30 (NKJV): <sup>29</sup> *But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.* <sup>30</sup> *Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favour with God."*

1. have you ever had to face something unfamiliar, an unknown?

a. perhaps it was a date in court, or a visit to the doctor — or to the dentist when you should have gone years ago — and your stomach is churning in expectation of you do not know what, fearing the worst

(A) well, that is the idea behind the word "troubled"

(B) it means to be greatly stirred up, agitated; disturbed from top to bottom: the head worrying, the feet cold

b. well, that was where Mary was with this greeting: what in the world is coming next?

c. Rev. John Piper comments on these words, *"... grace does not always come with a welcome face. The highest and most precious gifts of God do not always come to us in attractive colors. Grace can perplex. Grace can frighten. The grace of healing may have the face, of a hypodermic needle or a surgeon's knife. The grace of patience may have the face of pain. The grace of humility may have the face of defeat. O, how we need to learn from Mary not to lash out at God for the frightening forms of grace. Instead like her we ought to wait and 'consider in our minds' how this strange event might be grace.* <sup>{5}</sup>.

2. now look at Gabriel's response to Mary's anxieties

- a. "Fear not!" — how often do these words appear when God visits one of His children, in the voice of His Son, in the voice of an angel — "I am a loving God and you have nothing to fear if you will listen to Me"
- b. why is this? ... because if Mary will hear and attend to God's message, she is the beneficiary of His divine favour; if we hear and attend to the word of the Lord, then we too will know His grace and favour — Mary, stop and look at God!

E. Luke 1:31–33 (NKJV): <sup>31</sup> "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. <sup>32</sup> 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. <sup>33</sup> And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

1. the angel proceeds, and if his greeting was troubling, how much more these words: "Mary, you are going to have a Son!"
2. and what a Son! Piper <sup>-(6)}</sup> notes that Gabriel announces to Mary five truths about the Son that she is going to bear:
  - a. His name will be Jesus, which in Hebrew is Joshua, and means Saviour or Deliverer — don't fear, your child will be your Saviour
  - b. "He will be great" — words fail to fill the greatness of Jesus but be comforted, Mary, this will outweigh any shame
  - c. "He will be called Son of the Most High" — not in the same sense as we are sons of the Most High (Luke 6:35) but uniquely so in His essence and nature
  - d. "The Lord will give Him the throne of His father, David" — inevitably and rightfully He will be King; Mary, the King is Coming!!!
  - e. "He will reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of His kingdom there will be no end" — Mary, this isn't just you in a little hole in the wall town: this is for keeps!
3. but there is something else in these words that I will note
  - a. I said that Matthew 1 traces Jesus ancestry back through His legal father, Joseph, to King David and that this gives Him the right to be called King

- b. and these words of Gabriel confirm that right to be King for the same reason
- c. but there is something else: in the book of Luke there is a second list of Jesus' ancestors, which differs from Matthew and though some dispute it, I take this list to be through Heli, the father of Mary, not through the royal line of Solomon and so on, but alternate levirate line of Nathan, also a son of David — and the reason is this:
  - (A) we saw that Jesus by the virgin birth can only be referred to as the seed (offspring) of the woman
  - (B) in this passage, Gabriel refers to the promise to David made in 1 Chronicles 17:11–14 which first refers to David's son, Solomon, but then goes beyond that to the Messiah ... let's look at what is said there
    - (1) verse 11: "... I will set up your seed after you..."
    - (2) verse 14: "And I will establish him in My house and in My kingdom forever; and his throne shall be established forever."
    - (3) the only way for this Messiah to be David's seed was that Mary was herself descended from David
- d. This brings us to the next verses:

F. Luke 1:34–37 (NKJV): <sup>34</sup> Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" <sup>35</sup> 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.*" <sup>36</sup> 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. <sup>37</sup> For with God nothing will be impossible."

- 1. first, let us note that Mary, young as she is, innocent and pure as she is, is not naïve – her's is not the purity that comes from ignorance or chance, but from a deliberate choice of knowing the realities of life and choosing to follow God's way
  - a. but she has an intellectual quandary
  - b. she knows her own self and not just the purity of the life that she has followed, but also the purity of the life that she intends to follow — do you see that? ... not even the message of an angel is going to compromise her standards!

2. next, Gabriel takes her eyes off of herself and onto God
  - a. this is where all those who refuse to admit the virgin birth fall into error
    - (A) they view it from man's perspective
    - (B) to them a virgin birth as a strange and unnatural thing
    - (C) since they often also refuse to admit that God is the Creator, it is little wonder they limit His ability
  - b. but Gabriel focuses attention simply on God Himself, and we find here the Three Persons of the One God involved:
    - (A) God Himself, the Holy Spirit will accomplish this
    - (B) God Himself, the Highest, the Father has the power
    - (C) God Himself, the Holy One, the Son will, as we said before, will invade time-space, as the man Christ Jesus
    - (D) in that wonderful, pivotal event that we know as the Incarnation, John 1:14 (NAS): *And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.* Lord willing, we will continue to look at this subject of the Incarnation, God dwelling among men, over the next few weeks.
    - (E) and, Mary, if you still have any doubts, look at your kinswoman Elizabeth — you know she is getting on in years; you know that she has been barren; well, Mary, she is having a son; yes, Elizabeth is having a son
    - (F) *"For with God nothing will be impossible."*
  - c. As Oscar Eliason puts it in the little chorus
    - Got any rivers you think are uncrossable?
    - Got any mountains you can't tunnel through?
    - God specializes in things thought impossible,
    - He does the things others cannot do! <sup>—{7}</sup>.

G. Luke 1:38 (NKJV): *Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

1. now, those words, which are so simple and easy for us to read this morning, speak to a faith and submission that evidence the working of the grace of God in this young, Jewish girl



- a. we have already said that Mary, though innocent and pure was not naïve
- b. she well knew the resulting gossip in the little town of Nazareth where she lived
- c. Rev. Bruce Goettsche lists the risks she faced <sup>{8}</sup>:
  - (A) she was being asked to risk her engagement; and life!
  - (B) she was risking the dowry paid to her father
  - (C) she was risking being cast away and disowned by her father and disgrace to her family
  - (D) she was being asked to give birth to the “Son of the Most High” which is something no one else has ever done.

2. yet, her response: “God: it’s Your plan; I trust You; I’m ready”

#### H. Conclusion

1. in this announcement to this young, Jewish girl, Mary
  - a. God commences to carry out His promises as are recorded throughout the Old Testament
  - b. He is Immanuel — God dwelling with man
  - c. He is initiating the Incarnation: God the Son in the flesh
  - d. He forges the first link in the chain that leads to the cross
  
2. yes, Jesus will be born
  - a. He is King — the King is Coming!
  - b. but He is the Saviour, the Redeemer, the Hope of mankind
  - c. those who will believe on His name will be “... delivered ... from the power of darkness, and ... translated ... into the kingdom of his dear Son:” (Colossians 1:13 AV)
  - d. the fact of the first advent is our evidence that our faithful God will complete His Messianic promise by the second advent — one which like Mary we can face either with fear or with faith ... which will it be?
  - e. at the first advent it was as Saviour and those who trust in Him will at His second advent rejoice in His presence
  - f. but Jesus, the King is Coming, and it will be to rule and to judge — a fearful event to those who do not now trust Him
  - g. which will it be? ... the King is Coming!

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Various English versions of the Holy Bible are used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in [square brackets]. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
NAS	New American Standard version © 1975 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

Further sermons and illustrations may be found at the web-site, [www.holwick.com](http://www.holwick.com). Materials in this sermon from Rev. David Holwick’s database are identified by “Holwick” followed by a sermon or illustration number.

2. Text by Gloria & William J. Gaither and Charles Millhuff © 1970 William J. Gaither
3. Excerpted from Philip Schaff, Volume III, Page 410, History of the Christian Church (I think), quoted by Rev. Dr Robert Rayburn in his sermon, “Roman Catholicism: Mary” – Holwick sermons, #2046
4. Message by Rev. Wil Pounds, South McGehee Baptist Church; McGehee, Arkansas – Holwick sermons #15460
5. “Christ Conceived by the Holy Spirit,” Rev. John Piper, Bethlehem Baptist Church – Holwick sermons #3577
6. Rev. John Piper, *Op cit*
7. “Got Any Rivers?” by Oscar Eliason, © Singspiration 1945, renewal 1973
8. “Christmas Surprises” by Rev. Bruce Goettsche, Union Church ( Congregational); La Harpe, Illinois – Holwick sermons #605