THE ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY

Luke 1:46 “Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her.”

Setting

Luke 1:26&27 In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary.

John 1:45&46 Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the one Moses wrote about in the Law, and about whom the prophets also wrote – Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. Nazareth!” Can anything good come from there?” Nathaniel asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.

“Pledged to be married” means the dowry (bridal price) had been paid and they were, in the eyes of the law, legally married, although they had not yet come together and the wedding ceremony had not yet taken place.

“Joseph, a descendant of David.” Matthew 22:41&42 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, “What do you think about the Messiah? Whose son is he?” “The son of David,” they replied.

Gabriel’s Greeting

Luke 1:28 The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.”

“Greetings” is literally the verb meaning “rejoice,” used as a greeting.

“You who are highly favored” translates the verb form of the word meaning “grace.” I Peter 5:5 “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble.” Many translations say, “gives grace to the humble.” Just like Noah, “a righteous man,” who “found favor (grace) in the eyes of the LORD” (Genesis 6:8&9). Mary didn’t deserve what God called her to be and do, but she was chosen because of who she was.

“The Lord is with you” is literally “The Lord with you.” It could refer to what she was or what God was going to do.

Mary’s Reaction

Luke 1:29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

Gabriel’s Message

Luke 1:30-33 But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

“You are to call him Jesus.” God gave Joseph the same name in a dream (Matthew 1:21). Both Mary and Joseph being given the same name would be strong confirmation to them that their experiences were real. Jesus means “Jehovah is Salvation”. Matthew 1:21c “because he will save his people from their sins.”

“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.” Your son will be great and will be called the “Son of God.”

“The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.” He will be the Anointed One, the Messiah, the Christ. He will reign forever.

Mary Asks Not for a Sign, But How Will This Be?

Luke 1:34 “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?”

Mary’s Question Answered

Luke 1:35 The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

A 60-year-old woman getting pregnant by her husband is miraculous, but not impossible. What the angel told Mary was clearly naturally impossible.

An Unasked-for Sign Given

Luke 1:36&37 “Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month. For no word from God will ever fail.”

Mary was going to need someone to believe her. Elizabeth, who probably had been told by her husband what Gabriel had said to him, was the logical choice.

“For nothing will be impossible with God” (ESV) is probably a better translation.

Mary’s Response

Luke 1:38 “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” Then the angel left her.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

Luke 1:39-41 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah’s home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary’s greeting the baby leaped in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!”

John, in his mother’s womb, recognized the just conceived Jesus in Mary’s womb. Elizabeth, with no previous knowledge of Mary’s pregnancy, under the control of the Holy Spirit, calls both Mary and the child she will bear, blessed.

Luke 1:42-45 “But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

John “leaped for joy.”

“Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!”

The contrast to Zechariah’s asking for a sign could not be more obvious.

Luke 1:56 Mary stayed with Elizabeth for about three months and then returned home.

Some Things to Think About

When God tells us that He is going to do something, or use us to do something, we can respond either like Mary or like Zechariah.

Zechariah asked for a sign and was given a sign that was discipline.

Mary simply said, “I am the Lord’s servant. May your word to me be fulfilled,” and was given a sign that provided confirmation and three months of encouragement.

God also later told Joseph in a dream what was going on and gave him the same name for the boy to be born He had given Mary though Gabriel.

When God says He is going to do something, He will do it. Whether we enjoy it or not is largely up to whether we receive what He is saying to us in faith.