

A HARMONY OF THE GOSPELS
IV. The Announcement Of Christ's Miraculous Birth
(Luke 1:26-38)

I. Introduction

- A. Following the announcement of Jesus Christ's forerunner in Luke 1:5-25 came the announcement of the conception and birth of the Jesus Christ Himself in Luke 1:26-38.
- B. Though the conception and birth of Messiah's forerunner was miraculous, far more so was the conception and birth of the Messiah Himself as Luke 1:26-38 explains. We view this passage for our insight and edification:

II. The Announcement Of Christ's Miraculous Birth, Luke 1:26-38.

- A. In the sixth month of Elisabeth's gestation with Messiah's forerunner John, the same Angel Gabriel who had appeared to Elisabeth's husband Zechariah in the temple appeared to the virgin named Mary who was betrothed to Joseph who was of the house of David, Luke 1:26-27 with Luke 1:11-19.
- B. Mary and Joseph lived in Nazareth of Galilee (Luke 1:26b) as Hebrews who were viewed "by the Jews in Jerusalem as an inferior people" who only "occasionally were . . . able to attend the services and ceremonies of the temple, and thus . . . were considered second-class citizens." (J. Dwight Pentecost, The Words and Works of Jesus Christ, 1991, p. 43) For such a virgin to conceive the Messiah was never anticipated in Israel!
- C. Gabriel appeared by "coming in" (*eiselthon*, aorist participle of *eiserchomai*, "come in" (U. B. S. Grk. N. T., 1966, p. 201; The Analyt. Grk. Lex. (Zon.), 1972, p. 120; Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 231-232) unto Mary in her private quarters, which, for a betrothed virgin was immediately alarming so that she wondered what kind of greeting was truly meant by his invading approach, Luke 1:28-29.
- D. The angel told Mary to "stop being afraid for your own benefit" (*me phobou*, the negative particle *me* with the second person singular present imperative *middle* from *phobeo*, "terrify, frighten," Ibid., U. B. S. Grk. N. T.; Ibid., The Analyt. Grk. Lex., p. 428), and he claimed that she had found favor with God, a "special set-apart position" as "a gracious gift from God," Luke 1:30; Ibid., Pentecost, p. 45.
- E. Gabriel then gave ten truths of what God was about to do for her, Luke 1:31-33: (1) Mary would conceive in her womb and (2) bear a son and (3) call His name Jesus. (4) He would be great and (5) be called the Son of the Highest, a reference to God, (6) and the Lord God would give unto Him (7) the throne of His ancestor David. (8) Jesus would reign over the house of Jacob (that is, Israel, cf. Genesis 32:28) (9) forever, (10) and of His kingdom there would be no end.
- F. There was no Biblical precedent for a virgin to conceive a child, so Mary asked how this pregnancy would occur since she had not had relations with a man, Luke 1:34. Gabriel explained that the Holy Spirit would come upon her and overshadow her like He did in Genesis 1:2b over the lifeless earth so that the Holy Entity that would be born of her would be called the Son of God, Luke 1:35. God would produce a miraculous virgin conception of the God Incarnate Son of God in Mary like He had once brought life to an inanimate early earth!
- G. Mary had not asked for a tangible sign for such an unprecedented miracle, but Gabriel then gave one to her: He stated that Mary's relative Elisabeth in old age had conceived a son, that she was in her sixth month of gestation though she had formerly been barren, for with God, nothing would be impossible, Luke 1:36-37.
- H. We know that Mary clung to this sign, for after Gabriel had appeared to her, she hastily traveled many miles south from Nazareth to the Judaeen hill country meet Elisabeth, Luke 1:39-40. Thus, Mary believed Gabriel's message, stating that she was the female servant of the Lord, that as He had announced His intention for her to bear the Messiah by supernatural conception and birth, she was submissive to that calling, Luke 1:38.

Lesson: *Though Mary was a despised Galilean Hebrew woman who had to be encouraged by the Angel Gabriel to stop being terrified at his coming into her private presence to announce that she would supernaturally conceive and bear the Messiah and God Incarnate, and that her aged and formerly barren relative Elisabeth had also supernaturally conceived as a sign unto her, Mary believed the angel's claim that with God nothing was impossible. Accordingly, she accepted the angel's message as true and yielded to God's calling for her life.*

Application: *(1) May we not doubt God's ability to achieve what is impossible for humans to accomplish, but heed Mary's example in believing God's promises and submitting to His assignments for us. (2) Since the Angel Gabriel explained to Mary the virgin conception of Christ in terms of the Biblical precedent of the Holy Spirit's overshadowing the lifeless earth in Genesis 1:2b, may we follow God's lead to heed His Biblical precedents without imagining on our own what we would want God to do for us, for such imagining efforts are actually paganism!*