

# BEHOLD THE COMING KING

Luke 1:26-38

## Introduction: The Coming King

### Royal baby:

- If I say the words “royal baby” what/who do you immediately think of? Is it William and Kate or someone else? Be honest...did anyone think “Jesus?”
  - royal baby = 322MM hits on Google (and growing)
  - royal baby William = 72MM
  - royal baby Jesus = 3.5MM (20X less popular)
- Countless newspaper & magazine articles, blogs, TV stories about this story. It has to be, by far, the most popular pregnancy in the world. We haven’t seen this kind of coverage since Diana was pregnant with William. There are even polls about what the name should be. This is something England, and to a degree the rest of the world, is infatuated with. Why?
- Yes, this child will be 3rd in line for the throne of the United Kingdom, behind Prince Charles and William – but it’s a position that is largely symbolic.
- **It’s a “moot monarchy,” yet we are captivated it. Why? Why are so many obsessed with the birth of a future king that will have limited authority and influence, yet so few care about the birth of the King of Kings?**
- **No offense to the William, Kate, their child and the royal family, but I have to ask: Why aren’t we more captivated with the birth of Jesus?**

During the season of Advent we reflect on and celebrate the birth of the one, true, perfect, king that will rule for all eternity over the entire universe....King Jesus, King of Kings.

### Main Idea:

**Behold the Advent of Jesus, Son of God and Eternal King!**

**Follow Him in Faith.**

**In this passage today we have two key things going on...**

1. Gracious & Glorious Proclamation & Explanation...of grace and salvation and God’s sovereignty.
2. Faithful Submission...of a servant of the Lord.

### “Bookshelf” Passage

- Bookends:
  - 26-30: God shows grace (“favor”) to Mary. (Point 1)
  - 38: Mary submits in faith. (Point 4)
- In between (31-37): A heaping helpin’ of theology. (Points 2 &3)

### Ballad of Jed Clampett (v.3)

*Well now it's time to say goodbye to Jed and all his kin. They would like to thank you folks for kindly dropping in. You're all invited back again to this locality. **To have a heaping helping of their hospitality.***

- Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit)
- Angel, probably one of the chief angels
- Virgin birth & Incarnation of the Christ
- Jesus as Son of God (divinity of Christ) & Jesus as eternal King of Kings
- Omnipotence of God (to do the “impossible”)
- Grace and salvation

## The first bookend....

### 1. HEAR THE WORD OF GOD...God gives grace to his people. (26-30)

Mary finds favor with God because He is gracious.

Have any of you been surprised to find out you were pregnant?

- Shauna and I were 3x: Gabrielle, Grace & Caleb; my parents with me
- Others here may have been surprised to find out you were pregnant.
- **But what about an angel appearing to you AND telling you will have a child – miraculously? And that he will be the Son of God, and the promised Messiah King? That doesn't happen every day! So as we study this text today, I really want you to try to get in Mary's head and understand this from her perspective. And then ask yourself...how would you have responded? And more importantly, how do you today respond to Jesus?**

#### 1. The Setting (26-27):

As usual, Luke “paints the picture” before he tells the story. He provides us with a lot of details on the setting (the time, place, and people) and context of his narrative.

*26 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from 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. And the virgin's name was Mary.*

**Where:** *V. 26: a city of Galilee named Nazareth* Galilee was/is the northernmost region of Israel (Palestine). It's a hilly & mountainous region and was composed of many villages and small cities. Jesus was raised in Galilee (**Luke 4:16**), and 11 of his 12 disciples were from there (Judas Iscariot was the only Judean).

**When:** *V. 5: In the days of King Herod of Judea* Herod the Great was the Roman King of Judea (land of the Jews) who ruled from 37-4 B.C. These events take place at the end of Herod's reign and 6 months after Elizabeth becomes pregnant, (approx. 1 year after Gabriel appeared to Zechariah in the temple (**1:5-25**)).

#### Who:

**Gabriel** One of two angels mentioned by name in the Bible (Michael). Appeared Daniel in **Dan 8 & 9** to reveal the meaning of a vision about the Day of Judgment, and to give him wisdom and understanding. Also appeared to Zechariah to announce the birth of John the Baptist (**Luke 1:11–20**). Commonly called an archangel but is not referred to as such in the Bible.

**Mary** (*Maria/Mariam*, Greek form of Hebrew *Miriam*)

- **V. 27: virgin** (*parthenos* – only means virgin)
- **V. 27: betrothed to Joseph** (promised in marriage, formally engaged)

- For a Jew this was legally binding. Only divorce or death could break this arrangement.
- Girls became marriageable at 12 years of age with a one year betrothal period.
- Mary was a young teenager, lived in a rural setting (Galilee) and by all accounts was following Jewish tradition in terms of engagement. We also know from **vv. 46-55** (“The Magnificat”) that Mary was a faithful young women who trusted and praised the Lord.

### Joseph:

- **V. 27: of the house of David**
- Carpenter (**Matt 13:55; Mark 6:3**)
- We learn a lot more about Joseph later in Luke and the other gospels, but this is enough for now and all that Luke chooses to share with his readers.

Context (“Previously in Luke’s Gospel”): Gabriel’s prophesy to Zacharias and Elizabeth conceives

## 2. The Gracious Greeting (28-30):

The sayings we hear this time of year are “Happy Holidays” and “Seasons Greetings.” Gabriel has a greeting for Mary, but it’ isn’t a shallow, sentimental greeting. This greeting has eternal significance.

**28 And he came to her and said, “Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you!” 29 But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be. 30 And the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.**

Gabriel’s perspective: [imagine] giddy, anticipatory, coming to deliver good news

- **Illustration about telling kids about to Disneyworld, PCH**

Mary’s perspective: [imagine] confused, bewildered, fearful, can you blame her?

- **Caleb’s reaction**

- **V. 28: Greeting of grace:**

- Gabriel’s first word to Mary is...**Greetings!** = Rejoice! Hail! Listen up! I have good news for you!
- Then he tells her she is a “favored one” of God.
- **Favor** - appears twice in these three verses – **in vv. 28 (perfect passive participle)** and **30 (noun)**. In both cases the root word is **charis** – grace.
- First in **v. 28**, NIV: Mary is **you who highly favored**; ESV: **favored one**. Why? Because she is the recipient of God’s grace. This word (**charitoō**) means that she was endowed with grace – by God.
- A similar combination of words occurs in **Eph 1:6: “to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has (charitoō) blessed us in the Beloved.”** This is the same word as in **V. 28**. In Ephesians Paul is speaking to believers, to Christ-followers about their salvation; and like Gabriel says to Mary, he says to them... **“You have been endowed with grace.”**
- Some claim that Mary possessed some type of “special” grace, but the parallel in Ephesians shows that grace is given all believers apart from any merit of theirs. Grace, by definition, is unmerited favor. It is given, not earned or deserved based on the merit or work or inherent goodness of the recipient. It is given because of the inherent goodness and generosity of the giver. If you had to do something to earn it, it isn’t grace.
- Mary found favor with God because He is gracious. The story of Christmas, and this passage in particular, is about the gospel, and the gospel always begins with God and his grace.

- **V. 29: Confusion & Fear**
  - **greatly troubled** = confused, perplexed, confounded, mystified
  - Why was this angel speaking to her? Any why was he telling her she had found favor with God? Was this really happening? **Arnold Jackson (Diff'rent Strokes): "Whatchu talkin' about Willis?"**
- **V. 30: Reassurance & Reminding**
  - Mary was bewildered and fearful and certainly surprised. But Gabriel, as an instrument of God's grace, understood and had compassion and therefore reassured and reminded her of God's grace. He knew she needed reminded of God's grace, so he says: **"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."**
  - **Favor** again: In this case it's the noun **charis**, meaning grace. So we could translate this verse: **Don't be afraid Mary, for God has given you grace."**
  - And that's true...if we have the grace of God what do we have to fear?
    - Ps 118:6: The LORD is on my side; I will not fear. What can man do to me?**
  - **APPLICATION:**
    - Like Mary, we all need reminding of God's grace – everyday and especially when we are confused and fearful and doubtful. We forget his grace when we are in the heat of the battle or faced with unexpected, even tragic news. God is merciful, gracious, and abounding in steadfast love. In Christ he has given us grace and we need to hear that – over and over and over again.
    - And other times we need to be like Gabriel...an instrument of God's grace. We need to remind and reassure others of God's grace in the gospel every day.

### The books...proclamation

## 2. KNOW THE SON OF GOD...Jesus, born of a virgin, the promised savior and eternal king. (31-33, 35b)

### Gabriel foretells of the birth of Christ and his character.

*31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. 32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to 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."*

#### 1. What (is going to happen) (V. 31):

- **Behold = idou (Look! Get a load of this!)**
- **you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus.** Mary: You are going to become pregnant and have a son...and his name will be Jesus. Jesus is going to come as a baby.
- And remember that as **V. 27** says **this child will be born of a virgin.** A virgin-born child fulfills the prophecy and promise of **Isa. 7:14:**

*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

- Also should remind us of what Paul says of Jesus in Phil. 2: **Jesus,<sup>6</sup> who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped,<sup>7</sup> but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.<sup>8</sup> And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.**
- **Tim Keller: "Christianity is the only religion that claims God became vulnerable by becoming a baby. He became someone [a child] who could be hurt and killed, and he was – for us. This is the gospel. Our founder is not just a holy man, or a prophet – he is God, God who became vulnerable for us. If you**

really understand this you won't simply be saved you will be able to be like Jesus – you can understand divine love and become vulnerable to others and truly love.”

- Jesus became a vulnerable child for you. He later died on a cross for you. Do you love him? Do you love like him?

2. **Who: Six Attributes of Jesus (“heaping helping of theology”):** In vv. 31-33, Luke provides a six-fold description of Jesus. In these three verses he describes who this child is and what he will do.

1. **His name will be Jesus (Savior) (V. 31).** **Jesus** is a transliteration of the Greek **lēsous**, which corresponds to the Hebrew name **Joshua**, which comes from **YHWH** and means **savior**. In **Matthew 1:21** the name is actually explained by the angel (“**for he will save his people from their sins**”). This baby boy is to be given a name that connects to the name of God, to Joshua and means savior. His name points us to the fact that he is God and our Savior.

2. **He will be great (the greatest) (V. 31).** (not Mohammad Ali)

- **Micah 5:4: And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth.**
- Jesus’ greatness contrasts with the rest of humanity, which is not great (we are sinful), and also with the greatness of John, whose greatness was not absolute but qualified with “**in the sight of the Lord**” (**Luke 1:15**). Jesus and John were both great but Jesus’ greatness is an unqualified greatness. He is the greatest, there is NONE greater.

3. **He will be called the Son of the Most High (i.e. Son of God).**

- **Most High** – **hypistos** – one who is supreme, the highest. It’s OT idiom and indirect expression for the name of God.
- So this verse says Jesus will be the Son of God, and we see this explicitly in **V. 35b: therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.**
- This is in fulfillment of **2 Sam. 7:14** and **Psalms 2:7** and interestingly echoes the words of the Gerasene demon in **Mark 5:7** who says “**What have you to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?**” (**James 2:19** - “**Even the demons believe...**”)
- Once again Jesus is shown to be greater than John the Baptist. Whereas John is a “**prophet**” of the Most High (**Luke 1:76**), Jesus is the “**Son**” of the Most High. So John is great, but Jesus is greater (the greatest). John is a prophet of the Most High, but only Jesus is the Son of the Most High.

4. **He will be given the throne of David.**

- Jesus’ Davidic descent already has been alluded to in **Luke 1:27**, where Joseph is described as “**of the house of David.**”
- Why is this so important? Why does it matter that Jesus is given the throne of David and that through Joseph (his earthly, adoptive father) he can lay claim the Davidic dynasty?
- Consider **2 Sam 7** (Nathan speaking to King David): **12 When your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you, who shall come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me. Your throne shall be established forever.**
- This prophesy was partially fulfilled with David’s son, King Solomon, but it was not fully and perfectly fulfilled until Jesus. There would be only one descendant of David that could establish a forever kingdom. Any other descendant of David would (like David and Solomon) sin and rule imperfectly, and die. It will be impossible for them to reign forever. Only one king, only one from the house of David could rule for eternity. And this Jesus, this boy to be born of Mary, is that king!

### 5. He will reign over the house of Jacob.

- Not only will Jesus be given the throne of David he will rule over the house of Jacob (Israel) forever.
- Like the last point, this description depicts Jesus as the long-awaited Messiah. As the Psalmist tells us in **Ps 89:3-4: *You [God] have said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have sworn to David my servant: 'I will establish your offspring forever, and build your throne for all generations.'*"**
- There's a lot more about this in Micah 5 but Nate will be preaching on that passage next Sunday so I leave that to him; other than to say *Y'all come back now, hear?*

### 6. His kingdom is eternal.

- Jesus is Savior. He is the Son of God. He is the rightful heir to the throne of David. He will rule over the house of Jacob. He is the long-awaited Messiah-King. But here's the catch; here's the difference with Jesus: He will do this forever! His kingdom will have no end!
- **Isa 9:7: *Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.***
- **John Piper: "Promise after promise had pointed to the day when a son of David would come, a king, an heir to the throne...and at the end of the Bible in the book of Revelation (22:16), Jesus waves his banner over all of history with the words, 'I, Jesus . . . am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.'"**

#### APPLICATION:

- **John Piper: "The question is not whether God broke into the universe as a king. He did. The question is: What kind of king is he? What difference would his kingship make for you?"**
- **So what kind of king is Jesus to you? What difference does his kingship make for you?**

### More books...explanation

### 3. BELIEVE GOD...the Holy Spirit will do this by his almighty power. (34-37)

#### Gabriel explains the miracle of the incarnation.

*34 And Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" 35 And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God. 36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. 37 For nothing will be impossible with God."*

#### 1. Mary's Question: Unacceptable Unbelief or Understandable Uncertainty?

- **Keller: "Healthy dubiousness"** (troubled, confused and wondered, "how can this be since I have been with no man; how will this take place?")
- She responded in much the same we would; she desired to understand, and that's OK. In fact it's good. **Following Christ and believing the gospel doesn't mean we can't ask questions and look for evidence.** There is good doubt (like Mary's) and bad doubt (Zacharias'). God has given us PLENTY of evidence that his Word is true and can be trusted. **The issue isn't that we ask questions or have doubts, it's that when we are given evidence and answers, do we believe? Do we believe or reject the truth about Jesus?**
- And Mary is an example for us: she had barriers to belief, but evidence and experience led her to faith; and not faith in words only but faithful obedience to the word of God.
- As we will see in V. 38 Mary's heard and believed and obeyed.

## 2. Mary asked, Gabriel answered.

- God the Holy Spirit would do this – supernaturally.

*35 And the angel answered her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you;*

- It was understandable that Mary asked how this would happen because this could not occur naturally. It would be supernatural – above and beyond the way things naturally work. And there is only one that has the power to make that happen...God Himself. **God, the Holy Spirit, would do this!**
- **And this is the part that people really struggle with....how can you believe that a woman became pregnant without...That’s impossible! The answer: without God, you’re right, it is impossible.** But as **V. 37** tells us: *with God nothing is impossible.*
- God created the universe from nothing! He created nature and designed its operation. (**I think this means God was the first engineer!**) Surely the all-powerful, all-knowing Creator of the universe can do something miraculous in the natural world that doesn’t normally happen. He created nature. He sustains nature. This is God we’re talking about – He is supernatural and can act supernaturally whenever He wants. Who are we to tell Him he can’t do something?
- Reminds us of Jesus’ words to his disciples in **Mark 10** when they ask: *“Then who can be saved?”* And he answered them, *“With man it is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.”*
- The proof: You old barren cousin Elizabeth is pregnant.

*36 And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son, and this is the sixth month with her who was called barren.*

- As Mary would soon find out (and as the boys read for us today), Elizabeth was indeed pregnant.
- **APPLICATION:** True...it was impossible for Mary to become pregnant naturally. Of course it was impossible! That’s the point. Mary, as a virgin, couldn’t get pregnant any more than we can save ourselves from our sin. But with God nothing is impossible – not even your salvation. With God and through the saving work of Jesus on the cross we can be saved. This passage and the miracle of the incarnation points us to an even greater miracle – the resurrection. Salvation is possible because of the supernatural work of God: the conception of Jesus and years later his miraculous resurrection. You can believe this! Do you believe this?

### The other bookend....

## 4. FAITHFULLY SUBMIT TO GOD...and to the Lordship of Jesus. (38)

Mary humbly and faithfully surrenders herself to the will of God.

*38 And Mary said, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.*

### 3 steps of faithful surrender:

1. **Behold = idou (Look! Get a load of this!)** This is the same word used by Gabriel in **V. 36**. What she is about to say is of critical importance, just as what Gabriel said in **V. 36** was critically important.
2. **I am the servant of the Lord:** She is calling herself a maidservant and proclaiming that the Lord God is her master.
3. **Let it be = ginomai (happen, become, may it be, let this be fulfilled → implies surrender to God’s will and word) (not talking about the Beatles song!)**

- Mary is expressing a prayerful desire. What great faith this young girl displayed! She is not sinless, but has great faith. This verse shows the balance between God's sovereignty and His covenant mandate: **I will do this and therefore you should do that.**
- God planned and initiated; Mary cooperated.
- **Keller:** "Circumspect surrender"
  - **Circumspect** - She knows what she is getting into...a life of disgrace
  - **Surrender** – Giving up your "rights" to obey God. **Parents have the right to name their children, but angel said not this child...his name will be Jesus. When Jesus comes into your life, he's in charge, not you anymore – and that's a good thing!**
- True faith drops conditions, takes its hands off own life. **(I'm not going to sing Jesus, take the wheel!)**
- Like Abraham Mary went out not knowing where she would go.
- **APPLICATION:**
  - Do you follow Jesus even if you don't know where you are going? Do you trust Jesus with your life? This young girl did. And you can too.
  - Mary surrendered even though she knew there would be cost. She HEARD THE WORD OF WORD, SHE BELIEVED GOD, AND SHE SURRENDERED TO GOD.
  - How will you respond? Will you respond as Mary did – with faithful submission?
  - The least we can do is do as she did. We should say: **"Behold I'm your servant; let it be to me according to your word!"**