

# Further up, Further in

## Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

### "GOD'S GRACIOUS ANNOUNCEMENT TO MARY"

For individual study or discussion

As we begin our *Advent* sermon series in the first chapter of Luke, we encounter the angel Gabriel announcing the incarnation to Mary (v. 31). We marvel that the incarnation transcends human wisdom (Is. 55:8-9) as God the Father reconciles the world to himself in the second person of the Trinity, by miraculously causing a young, teenage girl from an obscure town called Nazareth to conceive "the Son of the Most High" (v. 32).

#### The Improbable Nature of God's Grace

- How does God's choosing of Mary to be the mother of Jesus transcend human wisdom? (see also I Cor. 1: 27-29)
- Like most Jewish women of her time, Mary was probably familiar with the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14. Why do you think she was still surprised when the angel Gabriel came to her (v. 29)?
- What other characters in Scripture meet angels? (e.g., Hagar, Abraham and Sarah, Daniel) What does this suggest to us about Mary or about this event?

God's people had not seen nor heard from an angel for over four hundred years. Then within the course of a few months, God's messenger, Gabriel, appears two times. In his second announcement, Gabriel tells Mary, "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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end" (vv. 32-33).

- How did Mary react to Gabriel (v. 29)? How did Gabriel respond (v. 30)?
- List all the names, titles, and ancestry of Jesus in this passage. What do these reveal about who this child will be and what he will do? (cf. Is. 9:6-7; Ps. 132:11; Ez. 37:25)

#### The Impossibility of God's Grace

The impossibility of God's grace (vv. 34-37) is summed up in Mary's question, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" Confused, Mary asks for clarification as to what she was to do in order to cooperate with the purposes of God. Gabriel explained to Mary that she didn't need to do anything, because the conception would be the result of God's intervention.

- Compare Mary's response to Zechariah's (v. 18). How are their responses different?

#### The Incredible Response to God's Grace

Note in verse 35, the doctrine of the Trinity present in Gabriel's words, "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." Here we encounter the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit working in unison, as the Father unconditionally elects Mary to be overshadowed by the Holy Spirit for the express purpose of bearing the Son of God.

- What progression do you see in Mary's responses from verses 29, 34, and 38?
- How can Mary's incredible response (v. 38) be a model of faith in your life?

DATE: November 28, 2021

SPEAKER: Wil/Brian

SERIES: Advent

PASSAGE: Luke 1:26-38

## Family Dinner Table

### Two Bethlehems

by David Enger

The power of the Highest will overshadow you. —Luke 1:35

*The birth of Jesus Christ was unlike any other. Mary's was an "other world" conception. The angel told her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you" (Luke 1:35). The child conceived in her was from outside our world. And it had to be so, because the boy born to Mary was Immanuel, "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).*

*The baby born in Bethlehem was of heavenly origin. God had entered the earth in the form and nature of Mary's little son. He came into the world from above, and His incarnation made possible our redemption.*

*Now think about it. Our own new birth—our regeneration—comes from outside the world. Jesus said that we are born again "of the Spirit" (John 3:3,7-8). Our salvation is not from an earthly source, but from God Himself through Jesus by means of His Spirit. In a sense, then, our heart becomes a "Bethlehem stable," a place where Jesus comes into the world. We open the door to Him by faith, and He is born in us by the blessed Holy Spirit.*

*We make Him known to others by His power in us. He affects every aspect of our lives. We are a "Bethlehem," His place of entrance into today's world.*

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

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#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

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