

“How Can This Be, Since I Am a Virgin?”

Luke 1:26-38

The 5 Questions of Christmas

God works through the providential with the improbable to accomplish the impossible. Our present culture wishes to purge Christ from this time of year. They wish to call it a holiday and not use the pejorative title, “Christmas.” Elementary schools have to accommodate all sorts of theological nonsense in the name of political correctness. Let them do what they wish, but we will not and cannot remove Christ from the text of Scripture.

The supernatural birth of Jesus Christ through the Virgin Mary is a vital part of what has come to be known as the Christmas Story. The virgin birth is the means God chose. But the means is only that; a means through which God took upon Himself the form of the nature of man. From Luke 1:26-38 there are six ideas that relate to and unfold for us God becoming man.

I. The timing of the incarnation (v. 26 “Now in the sixth month”).

Galatians 4:4 tells us that the timing of the incarnation was in the fullness of time. It was in fulfillment of a promise.

II. The forerunner to the incarnation (v. 26 “The angel Gabriel”).

The angel Gabriel lived with anticipation of this event. He was like a runner at the ready. Every moment was lived in expectancy of having the runner’s gun go off sending him on his heavenly mission.

III. The recipient of the incarnation (v. 27 “To a virgin [named] Mary”)

Although we do not deify Mary as many do, to her mortification, she is the one through whom God became man. “Mary is a vessel to receive, not a fountain to dispense.” (Lenski, Luke, 62). Of all that God could have chosen who would have perhaps fit the bill, she was picked for the task. Mary is noteworthy for three reasons.

A. She was morally pure (vv. 27, 34).

The world of yesterday is as vile as the world of today. Our culture has made a goddess of sex. We bow at her feet and make her like a god. She has deceived us by her siren voice. We are like the men of Ulysses who must stop our ears with wax lest we fall prey to her seductive ways. Mary was stellar in being morally pure.

B. She was the recipient of divine favor (vv. 28, 30).

It is apparent from her response that the announcement spoke of the unusual and of the miraculous (v. 29). She was highly unsettled like the crashing waves against the shoreline. Yet despite the nature of the announcement she was obedient to it.

C. She was obedient (v. 38).

Mary affirmed her status as bonds slave. She willingly submitted herself to the word of the Lord. It is difficult to completely understand the shame and reproach she was to face in being pregnant without marriage. Her situation placed her in the path of stoning.

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IV. The nature of the incarnation (v. 35 “The Holy Spirit will come upon you”).

We struggle to define and understand this event for nothing like it has ever happened prior to this event or will it ever be repeated again. There is nothing to compare it to.

A. He emptied Himself (Phil. 2:7).

He was made in the likeness of sinful flesh (John 1:14, Rom. 8:3) without forfeiting His divine nature. Nothing in the process was compromised. The emptying was not a subtraction of deity, but the addition of humanity. He, in the incarnation, became the God-Man, 100% God and 100% man. God did not empty Himself of anything that is intrinsic to being God.

B. He was made in the likeness of men (Phil. 2:7).

He became like His brethren (Heb. 2:17) yet without sin (Heb. 4:15). “He was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh (Rom. 1:3).”

What is the consequence of the incarnation?

V. The consequences of the incarnation (vv. 31-33 “You shall name Him Jesus” [Matt. 1:20-23 “God with us”])

A. He will be named Jesus (v. 31) for He will save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). He is our **Savior**.

B. He will be called the Son of the Most High (v. 32a). He is our **God**.

C. He will be given the throne of His father David (v. 32b). He is our **King**.

1. This throne will be perpetual (Luke 1:31-33).

2. This throne will be powerful (Matt. 1:21).

3. This throne will be personal (Matt. 1:23).

VI. The impossibility of the incarnation (v. 37 [“Nothing is impossible with God”])

God works through the providential with the improbable to accomplish the impossible. God did not miraculously cause Mary to be morally pure. Mary had been taught to be morally pure. She, when confronted by the opportunity for immorality, chose the right over the easy. Mary was, however, as unlikely a candidate as you or me. Yet God works through the providential with the improbable to accomplish the impossible.

This God is still working the impossible today. God has, is, and can work miracles today. What are you asking of God today? What appears as impossible for you is possible for God. Why? Because He is the God of the impossible.