

The Christmas Story According to Luke

Luke 1 & 2

God of the Impossible

++Matthew's Christmas Story was unexpected, Mark's is about our Nativity, and Luke wants to tell us about the impossible Christmas story.

++Luke was a doctor, a man of science, a man of learning. Yet it is His Christmas story that contains some of the most astonishing, miraculous events that any doctor today would scoff at.

++Today, we'll look at Luke's Christmas story, but it begins by being birthed (pun intended) by the angel's statement to Mary.

++ 34 Mary asked the angel, **"But how can this happen? I am a virgin."** (Luke 1:34)

++Mary was confused and troubled - I've been there! Sometimes God speaks to us and it leaves us confused and troubled because we are finite beings with finite thoughts. How can this be? How can you do this? When are you going to do this? This is impossible! It defies logic! It defies everything I know!
++*We sometimes have this habit of telling God what we think He hasn't considered or what He doesn't know - as if He weren't aware.*

++Listen to the angel's reply:

++35 The angel replied, **"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. 36 What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. 37 For the word of God will never fail."**

Luke 1:35-37

++Other translations read for v. 37

For nothing will be impossible with God." (ESV)

For there is nothing that God cannot do." (GNT)

Nothing is impossible with respect to any of God's promises." (ISV)

HE IS THE GOD OF THE IMPOSSIBLE

Luke 1:78-79 is the crescendo in the soundtrack.

Now sit back and watch God do the impossible that He promised to do!

++Because of God's tender mercy, the morning light from heaven is about to break upon us,

79 to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace."

++God of the Impossible Situation

2 At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. 2 (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) 3 All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. 4 And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. 5 He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.

6 And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. 7 She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

++It's the original Christmas story that has the best plot - the one from which all others are taken!

++Here we have an engaged couple, unwed with no place to go. The impossible situation - miles from home, pregnant fiancée, and no place stay.

++But Luke's Christmas story of the Impossible drives forward!

++The child who should have been born in Nazareth is born in Bethlehem (the impossible became possible)

++It's never in the way we expect, but always the best way.

++We can look back the Christmas story and see God's hand in it all, but if you were to ask Mary and Joseph in the midst of it, they'd probably say one thing, "God's going to have to do something impossible - He's going to have to make the impossible, possible."

++And that is exactly what He did.

++God of the Impossible Sign

8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. 9 Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded

them. They were terrified, 10 but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. 11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! 12 And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

++Have you ever asked God for a sign? We hear it all the time, "God, just give me a sign!"

++Gideon did, but that doesn't mean it's right to do

++*Asking God for a sign is like saying, "I need You to prove that You keep Your promises."*

++The *promises* are already there - woven into the tapestry of our lives, we simply must realize them.

++The "sign" (*sémeion*), "that which is done that mere man can not replicate or take credit for."

++A miracle, not a sign

++This sign of the God of the Impossible, was the most humble, strange and unexpected "sign" you could ask for: the Messiah of Israel would be born to an unwed, homeless mother and lying in a cattle feeding trough? - Some sign! "*God, do you have another one you could give me?*"

++But consider this:

++Shepherds out in the fields at night - why?

-Lambing season

-Had to watch, keep close

-The birth of new lambs had to be monitored

-This would have been near Pesach (Passover)

-one year old lambs were used for meal

-Jesus was born during Passover prep

-Jesus, the Impossible Passover Messiah

++God of the Impossible Mission

13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." 15 When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. 17 After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to

them about this child. 18 All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished, 19 but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them often. 20 The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

++First, for shepherds to leave their flocks would have been crazy

++To find this impossible sign, they had to do the impossible - go against logic and common sense. They denied what they expected, and followed what they saw/believed/heard - what God had said!

++As soon as they found the "sign" that God had promised, they didn't immediately return to their flocks in lambing season...what did they do?

++**The mission of proclaiming the impossible!**

++That this child born in Bethlehem was the Messiah--God came to rescue us in our darkest moment!

++That the God of the Impossible Situation and Sign has been born and can be reborn in you too!

++Luke's Christmas story is one of the impossible...and so is yours:

++Lost in sin, dead in spirit, condemned in death deserving death, and needing rebirth

++The God who owed you nothing, gave everything to rescue you from certain death.

++God has seen to it that "impossible" is no longer part of the Christian's vocabulary.

++What He does is this: He recreates us to see things His way - what we see as improbable, impossible, and immovable, He sees as nothing. ++He wants us to see things His way, with His eyes.

++Will you let the God of the Impossible Situation make you see Him as the God of the "All Things Worked Together for Good"?

++Will you let the God of the Impossible Sign make you see Him as the God of the Perfect Promise?

++Will you let the God of the Impossible Mission make you see Him as the God of the Finished Work?