

EVENTS 2 and 3

Annunciation to Mary: Luke 1:26-35

- 1:26 “In the 6th month”... of Elizabeth’s pregnancy...
Luke connects the two miraculous events... 2 pregnancies with God as the origin of the event...
- this was God’s intervention in human history.
- 1:27 “a virgin betrothed...” fulfils Isaiah 7:14... quoted by Mt 1:23.
Betrothal was a binding commitment... so that the term “wife” is appropriate for her: Deut 22:24; Mt 1:20
- however Luke doesn’t use the term ‘wife’
- Joseph was “of David’s House” ... this was royal descent
So, any son of Joseph would have legitimate claim to Kingship: Mt 1:1,6,17,20
- God sent the Angel Gabriel – His Announcer – to Mary – just as He did for Zechariah:
God does not distinguish between persons.
- This announcement was made to the **Mother** since the Father was God Himself.
In Zechariah’s case the announcement was made to the **Father** of the child...
since his mother – Elizabeth – was human.
- So, these announcements look superficially alike... but deal with miracles of a **very different ORDER**.
- Mary’s child had no connection to barrenness or old age in the Mother...
- the Incarnation was God’s own idea; His Plan; His Creation...
- 1:28 “The virgin’s name was Mary: i.e. Miriam. This has 2 meanings: a) exalted one b) bitterness
Joseph’s spouse experienced both aspects of that name...
- “Rejoice so highly favoured!” used to be translated: **“Hail, full of Grace...”**
- Some scholars today shy away from the consequences of **FULL ... GRACE**
- She has found favour with God: She is His Chosen Vessel for the Incarnation of His Beloved Son.
- “The Lord **is** with **you**” The Angel said: **“CHAIRE KECHARITOMENE”**
- Recent and Protestant translations render this: “Rejoice, highly favoured one!”
 - Older and Catholic translations say: Hail Mary! Full of **Grace**
- Kecharitomene is the word being translated. God’s Grace is God’s Love poured out on us.
- Mary was full of this Love [Charity] because God was “with her” in an altogether special manner since she was conceived without sin and lived in the Divine Will in a unique manner.
- 1:29 “Mary was greatly troubled” by this intervention of God in her own life – which also included the whole history of Humanity...
Why? Because the expectation of the Messiah’s coming was on everyone’s lips.
- In her humility Mary is shocked at being the Chosen Mother – even though, like everyone else – she would have prayed for the Messiah’s coming.
- 1:30 “Do not be afraid”: DO NOT FEAR. Whenever **God** intervenes He banishes fear,
whereas the enemy **uses** fear as his weapon to capture, control and destroy souls!
“**You** have won God’s favour”: you are the Chosen Vessel of the Lord.

1:31-33 **The Message:**

- 1) You are to conceive and bear a Son.
- 2) You must call him JESUS = YESHUA = SAVIOUR
- 3) He will be GREAT... will be **called** Son of MOST HIGH
- 4) The Lord God **will** give him the THRONE OF DAVID: 2 Sam 7:12-13
- 5) He **will** rule over the House of Jacob (the Nation) forever: Acts 15:16; Ps 110 (109):1
- 6) His reign will have NO END... (His Resurrection: beginning of everlasting Kingdom of God)

1:34 **Mary's Response:** Mary asks how God can accomplish His Plan in a **VIRGIN**

- this is a VIP question, regarding the **Fatherhood** of her future Son.
- it appears to presume her **continued** life as a virgin.

1:35 The Father of the child is revealed. It will be an act of Creation by God Himself.

She will be "overshadowed" by the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament this expression was used of the Bright Cloud over the Tabernacle which revealed **God's Presence**.

Cf. { Ex 40:35 ... He overshadowed the Infant Church in Acts 1:5; Ps 90:4
Ex 13:22

1:36 **"And so**, (therefore) the child will be **holy**... called Son of God"

In Greek Culture their great men were called "sons of God"

Luke says Jesus is THE UNIQUE Son of God... **that is of a different order...**

"Holy One": see Acts 3:14; 4:27; 30 Luke 3:22; 9:35; 22:70

Jesus proved this by His Resurrection: Acts 9:20; 13:32-33

1:37-38 **Nothing is impossible with God**. He is the Originator of all life. He has full control of all reality.

"I am the handmaid of the Lord": Mary is the **servant** of Yahweh.

Her Son will fulfill the 4 Servant-Songs of Isaiah: Is 42:1-9; 49:1-6; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12

- Mary is the true Israelite committed to doing **God's** Will: **Fiat**
- She and her Son will fulfill God's Plan for Redemption of the Human Race.
- She goes ahead of God's People (like the Ark) ... they, too, will receive the Holy Spirit, as prophesied:
Acts 2:18

COMPARE		
Zechariah	and	Mary
1) An "old" man		1) A teenager (14 years old)
2) A priest official representative for Nation		2) Private citizen – much later seen as representative for all Humanity
3) Prophecy given to Father of the child		3) Prophecy given to Mother... Father is God
4) Unbelieving		4) Full of Faith and Love
5) Questioning – uncooperative		5) Questioning – accepting
6) Angel Gabriel STANDS before Zechariah		6) Angel Gabriel KNEELS before Mary
7) Zechariah's obstacle: "old" / "barren"		7) Mary sought clarification on her virginity
8) Zechariah cannot bless the people now that he is deaf and dumb		8) Mary becomes a great blessing for humanity

EVA (H) Eva	vs	BVM Ave
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- Both were created in Grace : knew no sin
- Both were called to be “Mother of all the living” cf. Gen 3:20 and Jn 19:26-27
- Both had exceptional relationship with God from their creation.
Both played a significant role in Destiny of Humanity - **but in opposite directions!**
Eve brought down the Human Family
Mary brought Redemption, through the Redeemer...

Differences:

Eve listened to the fallen Angel...

Mary listened to the Holy Spirit and God’s Announcer, Gabriel...

Eve’s disobedience brought sin, death and disaster in its wake.

Mary’s Fiat to God’s Will began the REVERSAL...

Eve’s children rebelled against God [Gen 1-6 for example]

Mary’s children are the Redeemed of the Lord: Isaiah 35

CCC No 494 quotes Early Church Fathers: Irenaeus, Jerome and Epiphanius says

“The Knot of Eve’s disobedience was untied by Mary’s obedience...

Just as Christ is the Second Adam, so Mary is second Eve.

She is the NEW WOMAN, the definite expression of what it is TO **BE** HUMAN!

In Mary, we see what God INTENDS for THE REST of His People!

A Unique Point: Mary’s Silence

In **Matthew’s** Infancy Narrative the concentration is on THE Man – on Joseph: Mt 1:16, 19, 20, 24, 25; 2:13-4, 19, 23

Here Luke focuses on Mary: the only human parent of the Child Jesus.

- this is very unusual in a patriarchal society... the social world at that time...
- also, in the light of the tradition of the Bible...
- but more importantly because it was through Joseph that Jesus would be a descendant of the House of David
- and have a right to inherit the Throne “according to the flesh”!!

Mary is the first – and greatest – representative of “the poor of Yahweh”

- She was among the most POWERLESS in her society.
- She was young in a world that valued AGE –
- She was female in a world ruled by men –
- She was poor in a world that bows before RICHES –
- Even worse, she has no husband or child to validate her existence!
- Yet, SHE is **God’s** choice ... not the rich and powerful of the land...
- Where the Religious Leadership are CLOSED to God’s action: Mary is open...
- She gives her total... and **final** surrender to God... thus enabling Him to begin the Process and New Era of Redemption...
- Her Fiat was the KEY God wanted to open Heaven to let THE WORD descend to the earth...
- It was all accomplished through HER NOTHINGNESS and **His** ALLNESS!

Mary's Silence is remarkable:

- 1) She told NO-ONE what happened to her!
- 2) Since Joseph was to be part of God's Plan, Mary allowed God His Freedom to reveal the mystery to Joseph.
- 3) She didn't tell Elizabeth either! Elizabeth told Mary and then Mary acknowledged it.

Mary Visits Elizabeth: The Ark of the Covenant

- Here the New Ark begins its journey to Jerusalem to present itself to the Holy of Holies in the Temple.
- Mary carries her unborn, and so-far unrecognisable pregnancy, to present Him to His Father in the Temple
- The Visitation is the beginning of that journey...
- The Presentation in the Temple: Lk 2:21-40 is the culmination of that journey...

Mary as the Ark of the Covenant

The Ark of the Covenant

- 1) A container: 3 objects
 - a) Manna: Bread of God
 - b) Tablets of Stone: Word of God
 - c) Aaron's Rod: Priest of God
- 2) The Ark was understood to be "The Throne of God" on earth.
- 3) The Presence of God appeared as Fire / Light / Cloud over the Ark: The SKEKINAH or Glory of God
= manifestation of God
- 4) The lid of the container was called The Throne of Mercy
- 5) The Angels protected God's Throne and Presence.

NB All this became the reality in Mary after the Incarnation of Jesus – Word Incarnate/ Bread and Priest of God

- Mary was the FIRST CHRISTOPHER = CHRIST-BEARER

Notice Luke puts

a) {	Annunciation	
b) {	Visitation	one after the other
c) {	Presentation	

This is deliberate. He wants to present BVM as the Ark of New Testament.

Visitation cf. 2 Samuel 6 when King David brought the Ark to Jerusalem for the first time



Ark of Old Testament	Mary: Ark of the New Testament
1) 2 Sam 6:1-11 The Ark travelled to House of Obed-Edom in hill country of Judea	1) Lk 1:39 Mary travelled to the House of Elizabeth and Zechariah in the hill country of Judea.
2) 2 Sam 6:14 King David – dressed as a priest – danced and leapt in front of “the Ark”	2) Lk 1:41 John the Baptist – of Priestly lineage – leapt for joy in his mother’s womb before Mary who carried Jesus
3) 2 Sam 6:9: David asked: “How can the Ark of the Lord come to me?”	3) Lk 1:43 Elizabeth asked: “How can the Mother of my Lord come to me?”
4) 2 Sam 6:15: David shouted (for joy) at the presence of the Ark.	4) Lk 1:42 Elizabeth “exclaimed with a loud cry” at the presence of Mary.
5) 2 Sam 6:11 The Ark remained in the House of Obed-Edom for 3 months	5) Lk 1:56 Mary remained for 3 months in Elizabeth’s house.
6) 2 Sam 6:11 The house of Obed-Edom was blessed by the presence of the Ark	6) Lk 1:39-35 The word “BLESSED” used 3 times! Everyone in E’s house was blessed through Mary
7) The Ark returns to its home – but ends up in Jerusalem where God’s Presence and Glory are revealed in the Temple: 2 Sam 6:12; 1 Kings 8:9-11	7) Mary returns home but eventually ends up in Jerusalem, where she presents God-Incarnate in the Temple of God: Lk 1:56; 2:21-22

- On first reading the Visitation we don’t see the Ark.
- We need Elizabeth to uncover the mystery for us –
- This is a meeting between two Women who are POWERLESS in society but POWERFUL in God’s Plan for Humanity.
- They are powerful in faith, hope and love – the 3 greatest things in the Kingdom of God cf. 1 Cor 13
- Elizabeth’s relationship with God gives her DISCERNMENT so that she can CONFIRM Mary’s gift without seeing anything.
- It is through Elizabeth that Luke tells the READER about the mystery in Mary - that God’s Word has come to pass...

1:39 **“Mary set out in haste”**. The Divine Love present in Mary wants to express His Presence in a work for Elizabeth’s Household. Jesus, present in Mary:

- a) will turn Elizabeth into a prophetess
- b) will sanctify John in his mother’s womb – fulfilling the prophecy of Lk 1:15-16
- c) will cure Zechariah of deafness and dumbness
- d) will transform Zechariah into a prophet

- Thus, Luke illustrates the transforming power of Jesus’ Presence – as we see later in the Gospel

Mary is the first CHRISTOPHER = ‘Christ-Carrier’

Wherever she goes she brings Him to His People – thus she is an agent of Salvation for Humanity.

1:41 “the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit”

- this is the action of God on both mother and child
- the destiny of the child is revealed: Malachi 4:2
- Ps 113:1-8 shows nature leaping with joy at the Presence of God