

The Gift

Luke 1:30-38
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A. The Giver of the Gift (vs 30):

1. And the Angel said – Gabriel delivered a message that is only going to be told to Mary once and it is more like an order from God, that is verbally communicated, than a request.
 - a) Gabriel spoke to Zechariah and Mary (vs. 19; 26). This is the first time God spoke to anyone in 400 years. His conversation began concerning Christ.
 - b) Gabriel -- the name can mean "God is my hero" or "mighty man of God." Only two angels are identified by name in Scripture: Gabriel (Da. 8:16; 9:21) and Michael (Da. 10:13,21; Jude 9, Rev. 12:7).
2. Afraid – Mary seeing the angel, became dreadfully afraid because of the awesome presence of one of God's key angels. The meaning of this word implies that in her heart she could have been in such awe of the angel that she contemplated hiding herself or running away. She is a young girl living in a time when God has not appeared or spoken to anyone in 400 years.
3. You have found favor with God – After God's careful and thorough scrutiny, He decided to extend to Mary His free-hearted, generous, and extraordinary bountiful grace towards her. God generously decided to extend spiritual blessings and benefits to Mary.
 - a) Nazareth in this period was an insignificant village of an estimated sixteen hundred to two thousand inhabitants. On Gabriel, see comment on 1:19.
 - b) Mary here joins the list of those in the Bible who found favor before God (Gen 6:8; 19:16, 19; Ex 33:13).
4. You have found favor with God – God's favor was extended to those who remained faithful (Joseph, Mary, Zacharias, Elisabeth); despite God not speaking for 400 years, where would we be without His favor?
 - a) The Favor found by the Bearer of the Message (vs. 30):
 - * Her morality
 - * Her spirituality
 - * Her humility

5. God - This bountiful grace is provided by the Creator who is sovereign over everything and has the power to institute His divine will in and through Mary. It is His will, in His time, for His purposes, who chose Mary (without consulting anyone), after much examination, to execute His divine will.
6. Behold - After Gabriel finished his proclamation, He encouraged Mary to not be frightened, and required her full attention.
7. Conceived in your womb – Gabriel is careful to say that in the near future the baby Mary will have will come from her womb.
 - a) His father David: Mary was a descendant of David, as was Joseph (see. (Mt. 1:16); so, Jesus could rightly be called a "son" of David.
8. Name sake – Mary, unlike Jewish tradition, is the one who will follow Gabriel's directive and provide the name he gives to the baby that will come from her womb.
 - a) Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew *Joshua*, which means, *Jehovah is salvation*.

B. The Nature of the Gift (vs. 32-34):

1. Called – Jesus is divinely set aside to partake in the holiness of God separated from the world, while in the world, for a divine purpose.
2. Son of God – Jesus is related to God, has the likeness of God's nature and character and will divinely work to execute the will of His Father, the Lord God. This is the main focus of everything attached to her pregnancy and birth.
 - a) Jesus did not often call himself Son of God (Matt. 27:43), but it is assumed in His frequent use of the Father, the Son (Matt. 11:27; Luke 10:21; John 5:19ff.). It is the title used by the Father at the baptism (Luke 3:22) and on the Mount of Transfiguration (Luke 9:35). The wonder of Mary would increase at these words. The Miraculous Conception or Virgin Birth of Jesus is thus plainly set forth in Luke as in Matthew. The fact that Luke was a physician gives added interest to his report.^[1]
3. Most high - Jesus's nature and character is shaped by the One who is “The Most Highest and Supreme One.” Jesus’s nature is therefore determined by the Greatest of the Greatest.

4. The Lord God – Jesus will be established on the throne of David by the One who has all authority and power and is supreme over all and is Creator of all. So, there is no possibility of all that is being described to not be instituted.
5. Give Him the throne - The Lord God is going to permanently cause Jesus to possess a place of authority over all things (Ephesians 1:22-23; Phil. 2:9-11).
 - a) Throne: Promised in the OT to the Messiah descended from David (2 Da. 7:13,16; Ps. 2:6-7; 89:26-27; Isa. 9:6-7).
6. He will reign - Jesus will rule as a royal leader, with supernatural power over Jacob's house eternally.
 - a) The early church clearly associated the reign of Jesus with his resurrection and exaltation and linked this with the Davidic promises (Acts 2:30–36). This would have been Luke's understanding of the matter, but he is also conscious that the kingdom of God could be said to have arrived in the ministry of Jesus, so that the exaltation was the open recognition of One who had already acted in his earthly life with kingly power as the representative of God.^[2]
7. His Kingdom - the Kingdom of God - Jesus is going to be in the place where God sovereignly rules in all His glory; supreme over all evil forces so that even though He is born of a woman, by the supreme power of God He will be in the heavens of heavens as the ruler over all things. This being a genitive means this is something Jesus is going to possess.
8. The Nature of the Child (vs. 31-33):
 - a) Name is Jesus
 - b) He will be great
 - c) Will be Son of the Most High
 - d) Will give Him the throne of His father David -- promise fulfilled.
 - e) Will reign over the house of Jacob forever -- over Israel.
 - f) Kingdom will have no end.
9. Knows - (I am a virgin) – Mary did not challenge whether or not God could do all that Gabriel is saying. She is questioning how it can be done through her when she has not experienced intercourse with a man. Mary seems to expose how old she is here because this word means to approve something because of one's level of understanding and knowledge. She is saying she lacks that knowledge and understanding.
 - a) Betrothal then was more binding than most engagements are

today and was normally accompanied by the groom's payment of at least part of the bride's price. Betrothal, which commonly lasted a year, meant that the bride and groom were officially pledged to each other, but had not yet consummated the marriage; advances toward anyone else were thus regarded as adulterous (Deut. 22:23-27). Two witnesses constituted mutual consent (normally and the groom's declaration were necessary to establish Jewish betrothals, in Roman betrothals, consent alone sufficed).

- b) The Jewish law held espousal or engagement to be as binding as marriage. An engagement was completed after negotiations had been carried on by the groom's representative and the dowry money had been paid to the girl's father. After the betrothal, the groom could claim the bride at any time. The legal aspect of marriage was included in the betrothal; the wedding was merely a recognition of the agreement that had already been established. Joseph had a perfect right to travel with Mary to Bethlehem, "Of the house of David". By adoptive right as the reputed son of Joseph, Jesus could claim the kingly heritage of the house of David.^[3]
- c) Mary would have probably been between the ages of twelve and fourteen (sixteen at the oldest). Joseph perhaps between eighteen and twenty; their parents likely arranged their marriage with Mary and Joseph's consent. Premarital privacy between betrothed persons was permitted in Judea but apparently frowned upon in Galilee.
- d) The word translated "virgin" (*parthenos*) means a young, unmarried girl and normally indicates virginity. A young Jewish girl would normally be engaged between twelve and fourteen years old. This engagement was far more formal than today. A legal marriage contract would be drawn up (which could only be broken by "divorce"), the girl would be called her fiancé's "wife," and infidelity would be treated as adultery. Yet she would continue to live with her parents until the marriage ceremony which usually occurred a year or so later.^[4]

C. Gift Exchange (vs. 35-38):

1. Answered and said – Gabriel did not accuse Mary of a lack of faith; he rather sought to provide the understanding she lacks by summoning her to listen to his explanation.
2. The Holy Spirit will come – Not only is God involved in this process, but He is the Holy Spirit who will descend and be the One who will rest upon Mary, like the cloud that

rested upon Moses while on ~~the~~ Mt. Sinai or over the tent of meeting.

3. The power – The supernatural mighty capability of God that has inherent ability to overcome all obstacles is of the Most High God who has the ability to get this done.
4. Most high - The supernatural capacity of God is great because He is Highest of the Highest, the Supreme One over all and therefore has the power to overshadow Mary's need for a man to become pregnant with 'the Son of the Most High.'
 - a) Most High: A title frequently used of God in both the OT and NT (vv. 35,76; 6:35; 8:28; Ge. 14:19; 2 Sa. 22:14; Ps. 7:10; NASU study Bible).
5. Will overshadow you – The presence of the Lord God will possess Mary so that she becomes pregnant as well as protected.
 - a) The verb “overshadow” appears in Exodus 40:35 (LXX) with reference to God’s presence or Shekinah “overshadowing” the tabernacle in a cloud (cf. Num. 10:34), and a similar reference to God’s overshadowing presence appears in the transfiguration account (Luke 9:34).^[5]
 - b) A figure of a cloud coming upon her. Common in ancient Greek in the sense of obscuring and with accusative as of Peter’s shadow in Acts 5:15; but we have seen it used in the shining bright cloud at the Transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:5=Mark 9:7=Luke 9:34). Here it is like the Shekinah glory which suggests it (Ex. 40:38) where the cloud of glory represents the presence and power of God.^[6]
6. Holy child; Born - Holy Child sets apart Jesus from any other child as particularly begotten by God with His divine nature and character. Jesus has God's complete nature and being. He is the subject (nominative, singular) that defines this story, not Mary. She is the one who experienced God's grace and was possessed by God to produce His child that bears His nature.
 - a) Jesus never sinned (2 Co. 5:21; Heb. 4:15; 7:26; 1 Pe. 2:22; 1 Jn. 3:5).
7. Called the Son of God – Jesus is divinely called to be in the likeness of God's character. There seems to be a re-emphasis in reference to the nature of Christ. He is the “Holy Child” and is called “the Son of God;” not a son of God - like angels are called.
 - a) Mary could not have missed the significance of that terminology. The fact that her Baby was to be called the “Son of the Most High” pointed to His equality with Yahweh. In Semitic thought, a son was

a “carbon copy” of his father, and the phrase “son of” was often used to refer to one who possessed his “father’s” qualities (e.g., the Heb. trans. “son of wickedness” in Ps. 89:22 [KJV] means a wicked person).^[7]

8. Behold - If there was any doubt, Elizabeth who was barren and past childbearing age is now pregnant.
9. Conceived – Elizabeth is six months pregnant, so her conception of John the Baptist is complete.
 - a) The first reference to the mother of the Messiah is in Gen. 3:15 indicating that the destroyer of Satan would be the seed of "the woman." Isa. 7:14 is interpreted by Matthew (1:22-23) as a prediction that the messianic birth should come about through a virgin.
10. Nothing is impossible with God - Because God is the One who is making Mary pregnant, and He is the Lord God who has authority and the power of the Highest of Highest, there is no possibility that He shall lack any power to overcome any obstacle that may exist.
 - a) Hence, we may translate “nothing will be impossible for God”, or “no word from God will be powerless”^[8]
11. Mary said behold – Mary response is definitively seeking to gain the full attention of Gabriel.
12. Bondslave of the Lord - Mary using the term “bondslave” which is a strong statement that depicts Mary's heart. She is defining herself as a slave humbly willing to no longer be a free woman, focused on doing only what she desires to do. She views the will of God as superior to her will and the Lord is now her Supreme leader and she is totally obligated to Him.
 - a) God is in control of everything, therefore being a bondslave causes her to be a powerful channel that God can use to accomplish His salvation plan.
13. May it be done to me – Mary is totally convinced because she tells Gabriel that he can create in her, once and for all, what he is saying will take place.
 - a) Mary’s unhesitating acceptance showed her devout and obedient character. She was willing to risk disgrace and divorce to comply with God’s command.^[9]

14. According to your word - Mary believes that God can do exactly what He said He can do through Gabriel.

a) Mary demonstrates a lack of understanding, not a lack of faith (vs. 34,38,45). The gift began with a person who was willing to surrender her life to God.

15. And the angel departed - The angel was a messenger of God so Gabriel's job is done; as a result, he leaves Mary. No timeline, no powerful bright light, he is gone in a flash. Mary has no worries because she has accepted his word. We know that for sure because she goes to her relative Elisabeth who is miles away.

16. And the angel departed – We want God to give us a timeline, but because Mary is the Lord's bondservant, God's Word is enough.

[1] Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Lk 1:35). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

[2] Marshall, I. H. (1978). *The Gospel of Luke: a commentary on the Greek text* (p. 68). Exeter: Paternoster Press.

[3] Pfeiffer, C. F., & Harrison, E. F. (Eds.). (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Lk 1:27). Chicago: Moody Press.

[4] Arnold, C. E. (2002). *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 1, p. 331). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

[5] Arnold, C. E. (2002). *Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (Vol. 1, p. 332). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

[6] Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Lk 1:35). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

[7] Martin, J. A. (1985). Luke. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 205). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

[8] Marshall, I. H. (1978). *The Gospel of Luke: a commentary on the Greek text* (p. 72). Exeter: Paternoster Press.

[9] Pfeiffer, C. F., & Harrison, E. F. (Eds.). (1962). *The Wycliffe Bible Commentary: New Testament* (Lk 1:34). Chicago: Moody Press.