

Gabriel Announces the Birth of Jesus Christ**TEXT:** Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-25**STORY ELEMENTS:****Setting:** circa 6 BC in Nazareth and the hill country of Judea.**Main Characters:** God, Gabriel, Mary, Elizabeth and Joseph**Plot:** The angel Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus Christ.**Key word(s):** “ _____ ”**Climax:** Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.***“Hail, thou that art highly favored...”**

- (Luke 1:26-33) In the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy with John the Baptist, Gabriel was sent by God to visit Mary, a virgin of Nazareth espoused to a carpenter named Joseph. He told Mary that she would give birth to a son and that...
 - ...his name would be _____ (from the Hebrew *Yehoshua*, meaning “the LORD is salvation”)
 - ...he would be called the _____ of the Most High
 - ...he would sit on the throne of _____ and will reign over Israel forever in an eternal kingdom.
- (Luke 1:34-37) Of course, Mary was shocked and wondered how such a thing was possible since she was a virgin. Gabriel explained that her child would not be conceived by man but by God – that her son would quite literally be the Son of God. Gabriel also told Mary of her cousin Elisabeth's pregnancy, adding, “For with God nothing shall be _____.”
- (Luke 1:38) Mary's response to Gabriel's news was, “Behold the _____ of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word.”

“My soul doth magnify the LORD...”

- (Luke 1:39-43) Mary went to visit her cousin Elisabeth, and as she entered her house, the infant John the Baptist leaped for joy within her womb. Elisabeth was immediately filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed, “Blessed *art* thou among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my _____ should come to me?”
- (Luke 1:46-55) Mary responded with a song of praise. Called the *Magnificat* (Latin for “[my soul] magnifies”). Mary's song is filled with references to Hannah's prayer in 1 Sam. 1:11 and 2:1-10 and many other Old Testament passages. The Magnificat displays how Mary had saturated her mind with God's Word and how she understood her child to be the fulfillment of God's covenant to _____.
- (Luke 1:56) Mary stayed with Elisabeth for _____ months, implying that she stayed until the birth of John the Baptist.

7. (Luke 1:57-79) When John the Baptist was born, Zacharias was still mute from when he had seen Gabriel in the temple. On the eighth day, when the child was presented in the temple, all those gathered for the ceremony assumed the he would be called Zacharias, after his father, but Elisabeth insisted on calling him John (as Gabriel had directed). When asked for his opinion, Zacharias wrote, "His name is _____." Immediately Zacharias' tongue was loosed and he delivered a powerful benediction.

“Do not fear to take Mary as your wife...”

8. (Matthew 1:18-24) Meanwhile in Nazareth, after Mary had returned, Joseph was considering breaking the engagement because Mary was with child. But in a dream, an angel explained to Joseph that the child Mary carried was the Messiah, the Son of God, conceived by the Holy Spirit. Matthew, the writer of the passage, explained that all this was in fulfillment of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, And shall call his name _____." When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.

Observations & Applications

9. Zacharias' and Mary's reactions to Gabriel's announcements were similar and yet very different. Zacharias said, "Whereby shall I know this?" and Mary said, "How shall this be?" Zacharias was rebuked for unbelief but Mary was not. What's the difference? Though their words sound alike, their hearts were quite different. Zacharias wanted more evidence, but Mary wished for an explanation. The one couldn't be sure, the other couldn't understand. The difference is demanding more evidence before belief or asking for an explanation of something already _____.
10. Elisabeth's greeting to Mary shows the _____ power of the Holy Ghost. Filled with the Spirit, Elisabeth called Mary the "mother of my Lord." Elisabeth understood the significance of the child Mary carried.

Answer Key

Key word(s): "Immanuel" | 1) a) Jesus; b) Son; c) David | 2) impossible | 3) handmaid | 4) Lord | 5) Abraham | 6) three | 7) John | 8) Immanuel | 9) believed | 10) illuminating