

God in Impossible Business

Luke 1:26-38 (New American Standard Bible)

²⁶ Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee named Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ But she was very perplexed at this statement, and was pondering what kind of greeting this was. ³⁰ And the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. ³¹ And behold, you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. ³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³ and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." ³⁴ But Mary said to the angel, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" ³⁵ The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God. ³⁶ And behold, even your relative Elizabeth herself has conceived a son in her old age, and she who was called infertile is now in her sixth month. ³⁷ **For nothing will be impossible with God**" (literal translation: no word shall be impossible with God--anything God says will happen--kc). ³⁸ And Mary said, "Behold, the Lord's bond-servant; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

Introduction

There are two Christmas stories in the New Testament: One in Matthew and the other in Luke. Although both stories revolve around Jesus, Matthew's account begins with Joseph, the husband of Mary, while Luke begins with Mary the mother of Jesus.

These accounts reveal the fundamental truth about God and how He operates in the salvation business of humanity. For instance, God sends us the Savior the Messiah in an impossible and unthinkable way in human eyes. Yes, you got it right. The Messiah has to be born of a woman, of a virgin, without any help of man (Matthew 1:20, Luke 1:34).

This morning, we are going to think about Christ's virgin birth.

Content

Our God is in impossible business--- Consider this. One day Jesus and His disciples were talking about salvation and who enters the Kingdom of God. When Jesus said that it is

easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God, His disciples shook their heads saying, “Then, who can be saved?” (Mark 10:26). To them, Jesus said, “The things that are **impossible** with people are possible with God.” (Luke 18:27, Mark 10:27, Matthew 19:26). In other words, there are things that we humans think impossible, but with God nothing is impossible. In fact, God has done many impossible things which we simply call ‘miracles’— things beyond human imagination or comprehension.

God’s Word is filled with many miracles God has done for His people: Parting of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:21); Stopping the Sun in the middle of the sky and it didn’t go down for about a whole day (Joshua 10:13); Tumbling down the walls of Jericho without one single shot of an arrow (Joshua 6:20); Resurrection of the dead (Elijah—1 Kings 17:22, Peter—Acts 9:40, Paul—Acts 20:10); Calling down fire from heaven (1 Kings 18:38); Walking on the waters (Jesus and Peter—Matthew 14:29); Turning water into wine (John 2:9); Multiplying the fish and the bread to feed 5000 people (Matthew 14:17-21); Healing the Sick; Opening the eyes of the blind and the ears of the deaf. The list goes on.

2000 years ago in Israel, God did it again. This time, two miracles in a row. Two baby boys, John a.k.a. the Baptist and Jesus, were born six months apart, of two women who were related: Elizabeth and Mary. Each mother gave birth to their child in an incredible and impossible way. Of course, God could’ve had brought those babies into the world in a simpler way. Let’s say, let them be born into young and healthy families. Everyone would understand. No one would argue with that. So natural, and so perfectly normal that it requires no faith.

Yet, God intentionally chose a way that is impossible and even scandalous to human eyes. So much impossible that only God can do it. So much impossible that humans would throw their towels in. So impossible that without faith no one can accept or experience. For instance, for John’s birth, God chose an old couple Zachariah and his wife Elizabeth. We don’t know how old they were at the time, but the Bible says, they were ‘*advanced in years,*’ long passed their child-bearing age (Luke 1:7). Everybody said that they were too old to have babies. Even themselves agreed with the rest of the world. However, by God’s grace, a son was born to this family. So, it was the baby’s name, John—*God is gracious.*

By the way, this wasn’t the first time God gave a son to an old couple. Many years ago, He did it for Abraham and Sarah (Abraham was 100 and Sarah was 90 years old when Isaac was born). A year before Isaac’s birth, God visited them and told them both that Sarah would give birth to a child. Do you know how Abraham and Sarah responded to that

news? They both laughed thinking that it was impossible, and that God was joking. Listen yourself: (When God told them so,) *“Abraham fell on his face and **laughed**, and said in his heart, “Will a child be born to a man a hundred years old? And will Sarah, who is ninety years old, give birth to a child?” (Genesis 17:17). So Sarah **laughed** to herself, saying, “After I have become old, am I to have pleasure, my lord being old also?” (Genesis 18:20).* We humans think alike. Abraham and Sarah were both talking perfect human sense, too. Surprise! Surprise! A year later, Sarah was holding a baby boy in her bosom. Humans laugh because we think it is impossible and too much even for God. God wonders why we laugh, because it is nothing to Him. He is in *impossible business*.

What about the birth of Jesus? God made this one even harder and more impossible than Isaac’s case: **A virgin** who never knew a man gives birth to a child?! When Mary was told so by Gabriel the angel, she responded: *“How will this be, since I am a virgin?”*³⁵ *The angel answered and said to her, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; for that reason also the holy Child will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:34-35).* Humanly speaking, it is totally impossible for a virgin to give birth. But, God says, *not for Me! Nothing is impossible with Me. What I say, every word I speak, will be a reality. You will be pregnant with a son by the power of the Holy Spirit and of the Most High.*

Now, please note here the angel pronounced that the holy Child, the Son of God, the Messiah, would be born through a virgin. That means without a man’s help. Why? Because God’s prophecy had to be fulfilled. In fact, the virgin birth was foretold by the LORD God Himself long time ago—at the very beginning of human history right after the Fall of Adam and Eve. Remember, the Garden of Eden? Where the devil in the form of serpent approached and tempted Eve to eat the forbidden fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil?

What happened after both Adam and Eve ate it? They both were ashamed of their nakedness. So, God asked Adam what he had done. Adam blamed Eve for his disobedience. When God asked Eve about that, Eve pointed her fingers to the serpent. To the serpent, God said, *And I will make enemies of you and the woman, and of your offspring and **her Descendant; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise Him on the heel”*** (Genesis 3:15).

When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin along with death and sickness came into the world and into the lives of people ever since. Right there and then, God had to come up with the plan to save humanity from their sin and death.

Genesis 3:15 is God's own prophecy on the Messiah and what the Messiah would do to the devil the serpent. Listen one more time: *The woman's Descendent shall bruise the devil on the head and the devil shall bruise Him on the heel.* Normal Hebrew expression in the Bible never calls a child woman's descendant/seed. It is always, the *father begot a son.* Here, however, God calls the Messiah the woman's Descendant. So, the birth of Messiah has to be that way, independent of man.

Furthermore, God also prophesied what would happen between the Messiah and the devil. The woman's seed will bruise the devil on the head and the devil on His heel. Compare the damage. The strike on the head would be fatal while the bruise on the heel is minor, right? That's exactly what happened between Christ and the devil. The devil inflicted a damage on Christ on the cross, yet it was impossible for Christ to be held in the power of death (Acts 2:24). He has risen from the dead! By doing so, Christ threw a double fatal punch to the devil. He first set people free from sin by paying the wages of sin through His own death. He then set them free from the fear of death by His own resurrection.

Do you understand now why the virgin birth was necessary and why God did that way? To fulfill His own prophecy on the Messiah to be the seed of woman, not the seed of man.

Conclusion

The message in today's story is simple and clear: God is in impossible business. Nothing is impossible with God and for God. Even the virgin birth. It was God's plan for our salvation from the beginning of human history. One more thing: His miracles happen to only those who believe in His power. Not to everyone, but to those who trust in God's power without wavering. For instance, Abraham and Sarah believed God's promise even when they were 'as good as dead' (Hebrews 11:11-12). So did Mary. ³⁸ *And Mary said, "Behold, the Lord's bond-servant; **may it be done to me according to your word**"* (Luke 1:38). Those who believe will experience such miracles of God in their lives.

Let us pray.