

The Angelic Announcements
Series: Luke
December 3, 2017 **Pastor Bill Bump**

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, who invaded the spiritual darkness of our fallen world and became our Savior.

A biblical mystery refers to the activities of God, which are unknown to man except by revelation.

Luke's purpose in writing his Gospel was for the world to clearly see that Jesus is the Savior of the world. Luke begins his account by showing how God prepared the world stage to receive Jesus.

Galatians 4:4 *But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law.*

For 400 years, the people of Israel had not heard a word from any prophet. In the midst of this spiritual darkness, Luke records, God began to act.

Luke 1:5-9⁵ *When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order of Abijah, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also from the priestly line of Aaron.*⁶ *Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous in God's eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord's commandments and regulations.*⁷ *They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to conceive, and they were both very old.*

⁸ *One day Zechariah was serving God in the Temple, for his order was on duty that week.*⁹ *As was the custom of the priests, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense.*

Elizabeth and Zechariah were very spiritual people.

Zechariah was given a very special honor that enabled him to go into the sanctuary of God in the Temple.

This set the stage for the first angelic announcement.

Luke 1:10-13¹⁰ *While the incense was being burned, a great crowd stood outside, praying.*

¹¹ While Zechariah was in the sanctuary, an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing to the right of the incense altar. ¹² Zechariah was shaken and overwhelmed with fear when he saw him. ¹³ But the angel said, "Don't be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayer. Your wife, Elizabeth, will give you a son, and you are to name him John."

Zechariah was shocked at this news. It is human nature to doubt the supernatural.

Luke 1:18-20 ¹⁸ Zechariah said to the angel, "How can I be sure this will happen? I'm an old man now, and my wife is also well along in years."

¹⁹ Then the angel said, "I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! ²⁰ But now, since you didn't believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time."

Gabriel gave Zechariah a sign that would be a reminder of the promise given to him.

Then came the second angelic announcement.

Luke 1:26-28 ²⁶ In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. ²⁸ Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!"

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth is a pivotal doctrine for us.

Isaiah 7:14 All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means 'God is with us').

Gabriel predicted what Jesus would be and do.

Luke 1:29-33 ²⁹ Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. ³⁰ "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!"

The first person ever to question the Virgin Birth was Mary herself.

Luke 1:34-37 ³⁴ Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin."

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."

Mary graciously accepted this role with all the burdens and accusations that would accompany it.

Luke 1:38 Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

Conclusion

A biblical mystery is a truth of God revealed to us. It doesn't have to fit into our understanding.

Christmas is a season of mystery.

Christmas celebrates the fact that God became flesh and came to earth in the person of Jesus to offer salvation to all who believe and accept Him.