

THE ARRIVAL SERIES
STUDY TWO
”A VISIT LIKE NO OTHER”
DECEMBER 9, 2007

MEMORY VERSE

Luke 1:31-32, “And behold you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High...”

INTRODUCTION

In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy (mother of John the Baptist), the angel Gabriel brought an announcement of another miraculous birth. This time it was not presented to a priest, but to a young virgin who lived in Nazareth. Her name was Mary. It is interesting to note that the people of Judah did not believe the Jews who lived in Nazareth were very spiritual because they associated with the Gentiles who lived in the area. Yet, God chose a young, poor woman living in this region for one of the most important acts of obedience He has ever demanded of anyone. Mary was a Jewish descendent of King David from the tribe of Judah. She was engaged to a carpenter in Nazareth, named Joseph. In that day, engagement was a legal and binding contract and could only be broken through divorce. This announcement and pending pregnancy could mean disaster for a young unmarried girl in that culture. In addition, with her story of being made pregnant by the Holy Spirit she risked being considered crazy. In spite of these risks and uncertainties, Mary displays great faith, trust and obedience by responding to Gabriel, “May it be as you have said.” As you study this passage concerning Mary’s great display of faith, consider how you respond to the Lord’s leading and prompting in your own life today.

UNDERSTANDING GOD’S WORD

Read Luke 1:26-38 and answer the following questions.

1. What was Mary’s response to Gabriel’s greeting? What did Gabriel tell Mary that put her at ease with his amazing, unexpected visit?

2. What was the angel's message for Mary? Gabriel revealed both the humanity and deity of Jesus in his prophecy. What phrases in this passage reflect these truths?

3. According to the angel, whose throne was Jesus going to inherit? Why was this so important to the Jews of that day?

4. Both Zechariah and Mary asked Gabriel questions. What was different about the question that Zechariah asked in 1:18 and the question Mary asked in 1:34?

5. How did the angel respond to each question? What else did Gabriel say that greatly encouraged Mary?

Note: One of the interesting words Gabriel used in his proclamation was the word "overshadowed." This referred to the presence of God in the tabernacle and temple. The implication would be that her womb would become a holy of holies for the Son of God, giving her reassurance of what was to take place.

OUR WALK WITH GOD

1. Can you identify with Mary's fear and struggle to discern what the implication of the angel's appearance meant? Have you ever been in a situation where you have struggled with fear and doubt over what God might have in store for you? Explain.

2. What are some of the possible misunderstandings or “what if’s” that Mary faced as she surrendered completely to God’s Will for her life. What are some ways in which you identify with Mary in terms of being called by God to do something that might result in possible misunderstandings from your family, community, or maybe your church?

3. Can you think of a time that you faced circumstances that seemed like an impossibility for God’s Word to be fulfilled? Did you respond to the situation in belief or unbelief? What did you learn about God and yourself through this situation?

4. Faith cannot grow unless it is exercised. God can do this in many ways. Some of those ways might involve calling you to serve Him in a specific place or in a specific way. This may involve dealing with difficult relationships or trying circumstances. What can you do to prepare for these times of testing and stretching of your faith? What might you do during these times to ensure you walk in faith like Mary walked?

GOING DEEPER

Read Isaiah 9:6-7. What are the names ascribed to Jesus in this passage? What do you think verse 7 means?