

Lk 1:8 So it was, that while he was serving as priest before God in the order of his division,  
1:9 according to the custom of the priesthood, his lot fell to burn incense when he went into  
the temple of the Lord.

1:10 And the whole multitude of the people was praying outside at the hour of incense.

1:11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared to him, standing on the right side of the altar of  
incense.

1:12 And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and fear fell upon him.

1:13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer is heard; and  
your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.

1:14 "And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

1:15 "For he will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong  
drink. He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb.

1:16 "And he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

1:17 "He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, 'to turn the hearts of the  
fathers to the children,' and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people  
prepared for the Lord."

1:18 And Zacharias said to the angel, "How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my  
wife is well advanced in years."

1:19 And the angel answered and said to him, "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of  
God, and was sent to speak to you and bring you these glad tidings.

1:20 "But behold, you will be mute and not able to speak until the day these things take place,  
because you did not believe my words which will be fulfilled in their own time."

1:21 And the people waited for Zacharias, and marveled that he lingered so long in the temple.

1:22 But when he came out, he could not speak to them; and they perceived that he had seen  
a vision in the temple, for he beckoned to them and remained speechless.

1:23 And so it was, as soon as the days of his service were completed, that he departed to his  
own house.

1:24 Now after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived; and she hid herself five months,  
saying,

1:25 "Thus the Lord has dealt with me, in the days when He looked on me, to take away my  
reproach among people."

1:26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named  
Nazareth,

1:27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The  
virgin's name was Mary.

1:28 And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with

you; blessed are you among women!"

1:29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was.

1:30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

1:31 "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.

1:32 "He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

1:33 "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end."

1:34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

1:35 And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God.

1:36 "Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren.

1:37 "For with God nothing will be impossible."

1:38 Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

1:39 Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah,

1:40 and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.

1:41 And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.

1:42 Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

1:43 "But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

1:44 "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.

1:45 "Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

November 30, 2025 Luke 1:8-45

Sermon Title: "The Mighty One's Power Will Overshadow You"

We have entered Advent. We give thanks to the Lord, born to bring light to a dark world, to

grant salvation and life.

This passage describes the conception of Elizabeth and Mary, along with the angel's announcement, depicting the responses of two people with contrasting characteristics.

"Zacharias, your prayer has been heard." When prayers are answered decades later, we may even forget we prayed, but God answers at the perfect time. "My word will be fulfilled in its time." "He will bring you joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth." When such a child was born, Elizabeth, his mother, heard Mary's greeting and the child leaped in her womb. "Blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises!" she exclaimed.

Christmas is joy. Though the timing and method were not what people expected, "nothing is impossible with God." There is no need to fear. The miracle occurs: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be holy, the Son of God."

Notice also the five instances of "Behold," words that draw our attention. God speaks to us, comes with power, and accomplishes His purposes. We too must believe, keep our eyes open, receive, and obtain His grace.

Preface: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be holy and will be called the Son of God."

2 Corinthians 2:14 But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of him.

2:15 For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

2:16 To the one it is the fragrance of death leading to death, but to the other it is the fragrance of life leading to life. Who is sufficient for such things?

2:17 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even as we speak in Christ from God, as God sent us on behalf of Christ, we implore you on his behalf: Be reconciled to God.

2 Corinthians 6:1 As God's fellow workers, we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.

6:2 For he says: "In the time of my favor I listened to you, and in the day of salvation I helped you." Behold, now is the time of favor; behold, now is the day of salvation.

6:3 We make it our aim to do nothing to cause anyone to stumble, so that our ministry will not be discredited.

6:4 On the contrary, in everything we commend ourselves as God's servants: in great

endurance, in troubles, hardships, distresses, 6:5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, night and day, hunger and thirst, weariness and sleepless nights, 6:6 slander, and persecution; as prophets, as saints, as Christ, and as those who are despised and reviled. We have shown ourselves to be servants of God in every way: in great endurance, in troubles, in distresses, in calamities, in

6:5 beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in labors, in sleepless nights, in hunger.

6:6 In truth and knowledge and patience and kindness and the Holy Spirit and genuine love, 6: 7 by the word of truth and the power of God, by the weapons of righteousness held in both hands,

6:8 whether praised or blamed, whether slandered or honored—we present ourselves as servants of God. We seem to be deceiving, yet we are truthful;

6:9 we seem to be unknown, yet we are well known; we seem to be dying, yet behold, we live on; we seem to be punished, yet we are not killed;

6:10 we seem to be sorrowful, yet we always rejoice; we seem to be poor, yet we make many rich; we seem to have nothing, yet we possess everything.

Philippians 3:3 We are the true circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh—

3:4 though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more:

3:5 I was circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;

3:6 as to zeal, persecuting the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

3:7 But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

3:8 More than that, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For Christ's sake I have lost all things, and I consider them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ,

3:9 not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith—so that I may be found in Christ.

3:10 That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

3:11 if by any means I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.

3:12 Not that I have already obtained it, or am already perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

3:13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have already attained this. But one thing

I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead,  
3:14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

4:4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called.

4:5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

4:6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

4:8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

4:9 Now that it is said, "He ascended," what does it imply but that He also descended into the lower, earthly regions?

4:10 He who descended is the very one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.

4:11 And He gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

4:12 This was to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

4:14 So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

4:15 but speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

4:16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Good morning, everyone. We have finally entered Advent. The cold is intensifying, bringing mornings below freezing, and snow is forecast for this Thursday. Yet our hearts are warmed by the anticipation of Jesus' birth.

As December approaches, it's the season for year-end cleaning. But this Advent, we also

welcome a time for spiritual cleansing. What does this mean? It means reflecting on how we often become preoccupied with the visible things of each day, neglecting to rely on the invisible God. It means opening our eyes to God, consciously and deliberately opening the eyes of our faith to look around us once more. With this in mind, let us proceed to read today's passage.

This passage describes the annunciation to Elizabeth and Mary and the angel's announcement, depicting the responses of two people with strikingly contrasting characteristics.

God's intervention is truly abrupt and utterly startling.

1:8 Now while his division was on duty, and while he was serving as priest before God,  
1:9 according to the custom of the priesthood, he was chosen by lot to enter the sanctuary of the Lord and burn incense.

1:10 And while the whole crowd of people was praying outside,

1:11 Then an angel of the Lord appeared, standing at the right side of the altar of incense.

1:12 When Zechariah saw him, he was troubled, and fear seized him.

1:13 But the angel said to him, "Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall name him John.

1:14 He will bring you joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.

1:15 For he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He must never drink wine or strong drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from his mother's womb.

1:16 He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

1:17 He will go before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."

All of this was part of God's plan. Even Zechariah being chosen for the incense offering duty was entirely God's arrangement. Both he and his wife had prayed for years to be given a child, but their prayers went unanswered. They had long since passed that age and forgotten their prayers. It was precisely at that moment that God acted—a result of His meticulous calculation and careful guidance.

Everything is within God's good plan; everything is a grace prepared in advance. Yet our human problem is that we cannot simply believe and accept it as it is.

The prayer was heard; my child will be born, and that child will be extraordinary. Even when such wonderful things are spoken, the sudden message of blessing passes over his head, like

water blocked by a clog in the pipe. And he ends up saying this:

1:18 Then Zechariah said to the angel, “How can I be sure of this? I am an old man, and my wife is well advanced in years.”

I don't understand. I can't comprehend it. Therefore, I cannot believe it.

How often do we respond to God in this way? God's wonderful work—His very answer to our prayers—stands before us, yet we, the ones who prayed, reject the result. Why, when grace is right before our eyes?

During this Advent season, let us thoroughly cleanse our narrow hearts. With a heart of faith, let us sweep away and purge the stubborn, argumentative heart that doubts God.

1:19 The angel answered and said to her, “I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak this good news to you.

1:20 But because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time, you will be unable to speak until the day these things come to pass.”

It will come to pass in due time. When an angel standing before God comes and speaks, we have no right to argue. Zechariah was told to be silent, reflect, and watch in silence as the gracious scene of events unfolding before him. It will come to pass step by step. We can believe God's word, the word of Scripture, “which will be fulfilled in due time,” at all times.

1:24 Afterward, his wife Elizabeth conceived and remained in seclusion for five months.

1:25 She said, “The Lord has looked upon me in his kindness, to take away my disgrace among people.”

Zachariah did not speak, but watched God's work in silence. Until the moment his tongue was loosened to speak thanksgiving.

1:26 In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a virgin in a town of Galilee named Nazareth.

1:27 She was betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and her name was Mary.

1:28 The angel came to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is

with you."

1:29 But Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

Now a sudden intervention came to Mary as well.

She too was deeply perplexed, but she pondered within herself, desperately seeking its meaning.

1:30 Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

1:31 Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.

1:32 He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,

1:33 and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

Finally, Mary speaks.

1:34 Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?"

Unlike Zechariah, who immediately declared he couldn't understand or believe it, Mary responded positively and favorably, asking, "How can this be? How can it happen?"

1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be holy and will be called the Son of God.

1:36 Even your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age, though she was said to be barren; she is now in her sixth month.

1:37 For nothing is impossible with God."

The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be holy and will be called the Son of God.

Receive God's word. The Word, Jesus, was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

When we too understand the word through the Holy Spirit and receive God's word, something

happens within us. The Holy Spirit comes upon you, and the power of the Most High overshadows you. And we become witnesses who manifest and testify to Jesus in our very being.

With God, all things are possible. Nothing is impossible.

1:38 Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

1:39 In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a city of Judah,

1:40 and entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

1:41 When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit,

1:42 and exclaimed in a loud voice: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb!

1:43 But why am I so honored that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

1:44 For as soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. When the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

1:45 Blessed is she who believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"

The Lord will fulfill his promises. Herein lies the greatest joy.

Verses 20, 31, 36, 38, and 44 contain the exclamation "Behold!" God always graciously intervenes in our lives, urging us to believe, accept, and obey. Let us continue to cleanse our faith so we may remain those who respond by trusting in the Lord.

◇**Prayer:** Heavenly Father, we thank You for today's worship. Beyond human thoughts, desires, timing, and understanding, You accomplish Your best work. You show us outcomes greater than what we prayed for. We watch attentively for such wonderful works of God. Thank You for filling our hearts with joy. Lead all those who suffer into Your salvation and peace. Bless our families and our neighbors. Use us. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.