

Minor Festivals: The Annunciation of our Lord, March 25

For centuries Christians have celebrated the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ, on December 25. Back up nine months from that date—the normal time for a baby to fully develop in the womb and be delivered into this world. That brings us to March 25—one of the few minor festivals of the Christian Church year that falls in this month. And what is that festival? The Annunciation of the Lord.

Up north in Galilee, in an obscure little town, lived a descendant of the great Old Testament King David. She was a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to another descendant of King David named Joseph. Back then engagement was a legally binding contract. Those who were engaged were legally considered husband and wife—although there was no consummation of the marriage until the wedding night, which normally took place within a year of the engagement. It was during this time of engagement when Mary received a heavenly guest. The angel Gabriel suddenly appeared to her and announced (thus the term: The Annunciation), “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 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, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Imagine that! What Jewish women everywhere longed for—to be the mother of the promised Messiah (the Anointed One)—was graciously granted to this young virgin. Her Son would be named Jesus, which means Savior. Jesus the Savior would come as the King of kings and Lord of lords to lead the charge into battle against Satan’s dark kingdom of death and damnation. Jesus would fight the battle alone and overcome every attack launched at him by the Prince of Darkness. Jesus would rescue a world full of sinners from Satan’s clutches. This he would do by laying down his life on Golgotha’s battle field, where his perfect, precious blood was shed on the accursed cross. He displayed the devil’s devastating demise by mightily rising from the dead on the third day. He continues to rule on David’s throne, conquering hearts through the truth of the Gospel and establishing his rule there.

Mary asked, “How will this be, since I am a virgin?” This was not a question of unbelief. She knew it would happen—she simply wanted to know the mechanics behind it. How would this happen? Through the mighty work of the Holy Spirit, as Gabriel announced, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.”

The miracle of the virgin birth is paramount to our Christian faith. In a day and age when many charlatan Bible scholars are polluting the Christian church with their false doctrines, it is important for us to stand up for the Truth of the Bible. What these imposter Bible scholars label as an ancient fairy tale, we know is the Truth. What these faux biblical sages declare as products of superstitious simpletons from ages past, we know is the center of our Christian faith. Although many reject the virgin birth of Jesus—it remains the truth. Because Jesus is fully God and fully human—perfectly and permanently combined in one Perfect Person—he could be our King of kings and Lord of lords who has wrested us from Satan’s power and brought us into his glorious kingdom of life and of light and of eternal life in heaven. What God announced to the virgin Mary through the angel Gabriel he fulfilled through the miracle birth, perfect life, innocent death, and glorious resurrection of the Son of God—our Savior, Jesus. Praise God that it was to Mary as Gabriel said!

The angel Gabriel from heaven came, His wings as drifted snow, his eyes as flame;
“All hail,” said he to meek and lowly Mary, “Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!

“I come from heav’n to tell the Lord’s decree: A blessed virgin mother you shall be.
Your Son shall be Immanuel, by seers foretold, Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!

Then gentle Mary meekly bowed her head; “To me be as it pleases God,” she said.
“My soul shall praise and magnify his holy name.” Most highly favored maiden, Gloria!

Of her Immanuel, the Christ, was born In Bethlehem, all on a Christmas morn,
And Christian folk throughout the world will ever say, “Most highly favored maiden.” Gloria!

After sharing this devotion with your family, take the time to read Luke 1:1-38.