

Christmas Celebration 2017

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Scripture: Luke 1:29; Luke 1:34; 1 John 1:1–3, 5; Luke 2:1–21

Introduction

- Imagine your parents prearranging things with another family.
- Maybe you grew up with them. Maybe you met them for the first time as a young adult.
- Imagine being married off or forced to marry as part of a treaty or trade agreement—to keep the peace.

Malhotras: met and married in three weeks. Who would your parents have chosen for you? Mary would have known by age 12.

I wonder what first-century middle school-aged girls living in Galilee wondered?

- Some believe her fiancé, Joseph, was a good bit older.
- Perhaps Mary wondered if she would be happy, have children.
- Would her children survive? Would she?

Did Joseph wonder? Framework: God's promise/Abraham

Like the rest of us, they wondered within a framework that, like all worldviews, left plenty of room for wonder.

God would create a nation and the world would be blessed through him.

When Israel fell on hard times, the framework expanded: Deliverer/Joshua reborn . . .

Even after the angel visited Mary . . .

There were unanswered questions. Unresolved mystery. Luke tells us:

Luke 1:29

Mary was greatly troubled at the angel's words and **wondered** . . .

[After being assured of God's favor, she wondered:]

Luke 1:34

"How will this **be**," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

