



## 2: FAITH LIKE FERMI BUBBLES??

Have you ever heard of the Fermi Bubbles? In November 2010, the Fermi Gamma-ray telescope discovered these strange bubbles. As you can see from the picture below, these bubbles emanate above and below the galaxy. If they were centered in the galaxy, then we could explain them, but these bubbles are tangent to the galaxy in an hourglass shape. These bubbles are enormous, taking up half the sky, and are almost 7 million degrees Fahrenheit! Scientists have reached a common expression on what has caused this: They're saying "We have no idea"!<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://theastroenthusiast.com/the-top-ten-coolest-things-in-space/>



Some things are just meant to blow our minds! Some things are meant to challenge our existence. Some things make us realize how limited we are and how vast the Universe of God is...

Things of God don't always make sense to us. But we can trust God much like Jesus's mother Mary!

*<sup>26</sup> In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, <sup>27</sup> to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. (Luke 1:26-27)*

Mary got visited by the same angel that visited John the Baptist's Dad Zechariah six months after Elizabeth conceived John (v. 24).<sup>2</sup> She was in a town in Galilee called Nazareth, which was a small agricultural village to the southwest of the Sea of Galilee. Nazareth had been inhabited continuously since the third century BC and was firmly within the territory allotted to Herod the Great's son Antipas (see Luke 3:1).<sup>3</sup>

God must not have been much of a strategic Church growth thinker because Nazareth was the "Compton" of its day, it was the "Toledo" of its day. It had a bad rap. When the apostle Philip first told Nathanael about Jesus, Nathanael responded; "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" (John 1:46)

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<sup>2</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:26). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>3</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:26). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

But, contrary to much American Middle Class thinking, God likes to show up in the obscure, the marginalized, the forgotten, and the cast out spaces and people of humankind. “God has chosen what is foolish in the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen what is weak in the world to shame the strong.” (1 Cor. 1:27)

Those in my community who have chosen to be missionary disciples of Jesus in the Kenmore neighborhood have chosen wisely, in my humble opinion. 😊 It’s easy to fool ourselves and think that the flashy, sexy, opulent, attractive, wealthy, shiny, appealing places and peoples of the world are the places where God dwells the most- but hey y’all- God sees different than we see!

And by the way, even weirder than the obscurity and marginality of Nazareth, the angel Gabe had visited Mary, who was a virgin. Luke, in fact, called Mary a virgin twice in verse 27 to demonstrate that Jesus’ conception was an act of God (see vv. 34–35; Matt 1:23). Luke was like, “she was a virgin, and by the way, she was a **virgin**.” This was to establish the miraculous, insane thing that was about to happen, much akin to something like purple Fermi bubbles in the galaxy!

Additionally, throughout his Gospel, Luke drew extensively from the book of Isaiah. By doing so, he portrayed Jesus’ life through Isaiah’s theological lens. In this verse, Luke alluded to the Septuagint (ancient Greek translation) version of Isa 7:14, applying Isaiah’s prophecy about the virgin (*parthenos* in Greek) being with child as a reference to Mary’s miraculous conception. In this way, Luke portrayed Jesus as God’s promised Messiah.<sup>4</sup> Isaiah prophesied this divine moment that was about to happen hundreds of years earlier:

**14** *Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: See, the virgin will conceive, have a son, and name him Immanuel. (Isa 7:14)*

Mary was engaged or “betrothed” to Joseph. At this time, betrothal represented a permanent relationship nearly equivalent to marriage; breaking off a betrothal required a decision akin to divorce. Joseph was of the house of David. Luke was alluding to Isa 11:1–2 to portray Jesus as the shoot and branch of Jesse (compare Luke 1:32 and note). This portrayed Jesus as the Messiah, from King David’s line. (David was Jesse’s son.)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>28</sup> *And the angel came to (Mary) and said, “Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you.”* <sup>29</sup> *But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be.* <sup>30</sup> *Then the angel told her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.”* <sup>31</sup> *Now listen: You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will*

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<sup>4</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:27). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>5</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:27). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

*name him Jesus. <sup>32</sup> He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David. <sup>33</sup> He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end.” (Luke 1:28-33)*

The angel’s greeting of “The Lord is with you” recalled “Immanuel” (“God with us”) from Isa 7:14.<sup>6</sup> Naturally, Mary was troubled by not only this intense, supernatural encounter, as anyone would be. But she was also troubled by the angel saying, “Hey Mary- the Lord is with you! You’re favored!”

Like I don’t know about y’all- but if an angel supernaturally shows up all glowing and telling me I’m favored and God is with me, I’m wondering, “what is this kat gonna ask me to do next?” Like- it seems like a set up doesn’t it? Usually when people are being all nice to us, much less an angel of God, we’re wondering, “but yeah, what’s the catch homie?” We all have trust issues but God and His genuine messengers can be trusted all by the power of, and because of, His Spirit!

But the angel comforted her and told her she had found favor with God...

And then, the “catch” sorta shows up! Mary is about to enter into something wild and crazy for sure.

The angel goes on to say that she is going to give birth to a Son, and His Name is to be **Jesus**, from the Hebrew name Joshua, which means “Yahweh is help (or, salvation)” (see Matt 1:21).<sup>7</sup> He will be **Son of the Most High**, which highlights the fact that Jesus possessed both heavenly divinity and royalty (compare Luke 1:35, 76).<sup>8</sup> The Lord will **give him the throne of his father David**, which implies that Jesus will fulfill the Davidic covenant (2 Sam 7:12–13).<sup>9</sup> Jesus will, “reign over the house of Jacob”, which is a common OT phrase referring to Israel (e.g., Exod 19:3; Isa 48:1).<sup>10</sup> **His Kingdom will have no end**. Gabriel was again alluding to the Davidic covenant, but this allusion also evokes messianic imagery from Daniel (see Dan 7:13-14).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:28). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>7</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:31). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>8</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:32). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>9</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:32). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>10</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:33). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

<sup>11</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:33). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Kingdoms of the world will rise and fall. Powers that be will flex and crumble. Jesus would and will have a Kingdom with no end. Hallelujah! What a promise!

But let's face it y'all- Mary had to be rightfully flipped out!

*<sup>34</sup> Mary asked the angel, "How can this be, since I have not had sexual relations with a man?" <sup>35</sup> The angel replied to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God. <sup>36</sup> And consider your relative Elizabeth—even she has conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called childless. <sup>37</sup> For nothing will be impossible with God." (Luke 1:34-37)*

Wow... This is where things get ultra weird!

Mary knows she's a virgin. God knows too. She straight up asks the angel how it could be possible for her to conceive a child when she's never had sex with a man. Gabe the angel replies that the Holy Spirit will come upon her, and the power of the Most High will "overshadow" her, and that's how the baby will be conceived in her womb.

Whoa- hold on a second here!

So is this saying that God will impregnate Mary? What does "overshadow" mean? Many Greek and Roman pagans of the time would've believed that gods could come down to earth and have sex with people, giving birth to demigods. Is this what was happening here? Muslims think that Christians believe that God had sex with Mary and that's what impregnated her, and that's one of the reasons they disbelieve Christianity.

That's not what is happening here. Mary would be the first and only woman in history that would be miraculously impregnated, while remaining a virgin, by the power of the most high God. It's about as easy to wrap our heads around as a Fermi bubble in the galaxy, but it's real. This baby was supernaturally placed in Mary's womb. We have no clue how to scientifically explain it, though many have even tried, or rejected the notion of its possibility.

And yes, this holy one to be born would be called the Son of God, a title reflecting Jesus' miraculous conception and, consequently, His divinity.<sup>12</sup> Mary was going to give birth to the Son of God!

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<sup>12</sup> Barry, J. D., Mangum, D., Brown, D. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M. Ritzema, E., ... Bomar, D. (2012, 2016). [Faithlife Study Bible](#) (Lk 1:35). Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

I can imagine that Mary was a combination of awestruck, excited, and absolutely terrified.

And let me say that when God moves powerfully in our lives, we will be awestruck, excited, and terrified all at the same time. Our God is not “safe”. There might be plenty of Christians that only pay attention to the aspects of God that are safe, but the God who created the Universe, called prophets to speak as boldly as lions in His Name, penetrated the earth with His Son- fully God and fully human, does not typically call people to live a safe life for Him.

He calls us into exhilarating, wild, unpredictable scenarios. We are forced to trust Him through it all. We cling to Him. In the wildness of it all there is a joy birthed in us that we could never muster up on our own!

In Mary’s awestruck, excited, and terrified state, she says;

*<sup>38</sup> “See, I am the Lord’s servant,” said Mary. “May it happen to me as you have said.” Then the angel left her. (Lk 1:38)*

Mary didn’t understand all of the implications for her life that lay ahead, but she humbly submitted to the will of God. She’s an example for us all.<sup>13</sup>

And you might be in a season, a predicament, or a scenario that is testing you. You might be going through something that is requiring crazy faith from you. You might be going through testing. And oh may you and I follow Mary’s example. “May it happen”. Say it with me right now, “may it happen”! Say it over your circumstance, your difficulty, your valley, and your storm! Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever! He’s got you through it! In a wild way, He had His Mom through it before He even came to be in her womb, before he was born, before He cried his first human tears, and soiled his first human diaper, though I’m not sure what kind of diapers they had in the first century!

GOD HAS GOT YOU. Say it with me. GOD HAS GOT ME. Because of Jesus Christ, who lived a perfect sinless life, died a sinner’s death, was buried, rose from the grave three days later, ascended to heaven, and will return one day to judge the living and the dead. YOU... CAN... HAVE... HOPE!!!!

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<sup>13</sup> CSB Tony Evans Study Bible Copyright © 2017 by Holman Bible Publishers.