

## CHRISTMAS SERIES

### EPIKAIZO – THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY

*Luke 1:26-38 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!" However, when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 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. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" 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 the Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God. 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. For with God nothing will be impossible. Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.*

*This morning we will consider verse 35. Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?" And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you."*

The angel Gabriel said that the virgin birth will take place when the power of the Highest will overshadow her.

I want you to notice he is not saying *the power of the Holy Spirit* but he says *the power of the Highest*. For a long time I have thought that, the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Highest were synonymous. However, as I began to meditate more in this area the Lord began to show me that the power of the Highest is another realm beyond the power of the Holy Spirit. It will be called the empowerment of the Holy Spirit. It is still of the Holy Spirit but it is what I call the extreme end of the scale. The greatest power possible demonstrated by the Holy Spirit is that it touches between eternity and the natural world. The power of the Highest will overshadow you and then this miracle will be wrought.

We are going to consider the word *overshadow* because that is the key word to understand this kind of power that the angel Gabriel is talking about. The word *overshadow* comes from the Greek word *epikaizo*. This Greek word here *epikaizo* has been used three times in the New Testament. Every time it is used, it refers to a special manifestation of God's power. It is not the ordinary level of manifestation. What is the ordinary level? It is found in Acts 1:8, *But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth*. A lot of people think that Acts 1:8 is the powerful level. However, Acts 1:8 is just the first step of the degree of power that God can manifest. It is just the beginning. Remember it starts in Acts chapter one. That is the beginning but here the word *overshadow* talks about the fullness possible of God's power.

If God were to manifest in all His fullness, this natural world would explode. It cannot contain or take God's fullness. Therefore, what God does is He manifests a certain measure of His power on this earth. Later, when our bodies are perfected we can see God's power in greater and greater measure in the heavenly places in eternity. However, now when this earth is in its imperfect stage, God only manifest a certain amount of power.

Now that amount of power is what we are talking about. Let us say the starting amount of power in Acts 1:8 is one volt. Let us say that the maximum voltage is just 240 volts. Then at the point where there is 240 volts of power is where the word *overshadow* with the power of the Highest takes place. In other words, that is the point where the natural contacts the spiritual at its highest level. That is the point that Enoch reached just before his body was translated into heaven. The power level of Acts 1:8 is not going to translate you. It is only going to enable you to be a witness here. However, translation and rapture has to take place not at the one-volt level of power. It has to take place at the 240 volts where the spiritual power is manifested so much that it transforms you from the natural to the spiritual. Therefore, what the angel was saying if you understand that the release of the baptism of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1:8 is God's power at one volts, then at the end level at the 240 volts level, the power of the Highest is going to overshadow Mary. The overshadowing of the power of the Highest is not just that one-volt level but it is at the 240 volts level. At this level, it is going to cause a creative act upon Mary. Notice that the word *epikaizo* has been used two other times. Both of those times are special occasions. In other words, it is far beyond Acts 1:8

Let me illustrate with Luke 9 where we see the transfiguration. Verses 28 and 29, *Now it came to pass, about eight days after these sayings, that He took Peter, John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. As He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.* I want you to know that the power of God was already working. It took the power of God to transform His robe, to transform His face so that the glory began to manifest to His disciples. When they looked at Jesus, He did not even look like Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai with his face shining. However, Jesus did not only have His face shining. He had every part of His face and clothing shining. His glory was greater than the glory that Moses had. Therefore, there was a tremendous amount of power working. Yet, there is a greater level.

Verses 30-31 *behold, two men talked with Him, who were Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of His decease which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.* Isn't it interesting that he is talking about Jesus going from the

natural world into the spirit world? How Jesus will die on the cross and after three days, He is going to be resurrected, overcome this natural world with its natural laws and natural limitations and translated into the spirit world. In verse 31 these people were appearing in glory. Therefore, it was more than one volt. It could be two volts, three volts or about 40 volts by that time. There was a great amount of power demonstrated that day on the mountain.

Meanwhile verse 32 *However, Peter and those with him were heavy with sleep; and when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men who stood with Him.* Now they saw all these glory yet there was one more level that suddenly came. While they were talking in verse 34 *While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them. Epikaizo* was taking place. They already had so much glory. They already saw this glory on Jesus and His clothes. They saw the glory of Moses and Elijah who were there. The glory was shining all over the Mount of Olives and yet there was another level of glory. While they were talking about putting tents up, a cloud of glory came and *epikaizo* them. It covered them until they could not see anything but the cloud. That is the 240 volts. The point nearest to eternity was coming into their lives. When it came in verse 34 they were filled with fear. They have never seen this amount of glory and this amount of power so thick that they could not see anything but glory.

Verse 35 *a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"* You could see obviously from Luke 9 that there are different degrees of glory. However, the word *epikaizo* meaning *overshadowed* is used for the highest manifestation of God's glory and God's power. That word is interesting because that word is from two Greek words *epi* and *kaizo*. The word *kaizo* means to block out something. What is a shadow? A shadow scientifically is defined as the absence of light on a place because some opaque material has absorbed the light. Let says right now with this light shining down, I could see a faint shadow over there. It is my shadow. That shadow is there because my body is blocking those light rays from touching the ground over there. In other words, there is a cancellation or blocking of that light. When that word is used in the spiritual world in a sense it means that when the end level the 240 volts level of the power of the Highest manifests, it brings a "cancellation" of the natural world. That is why before we are raptured, God is going to show that amount of glory. There will be a cancellation of the natural world to enable the Holy Spirit

to snatch the spirit man of those called to the rapture. I believe that was what happened to Enoch as he walked with God. As he began walking with God, he tasted the glory of God. Day by day as he walked closer and closer with God, the glory increased until one as he reached that 240 volts level the end degree and he walked one more step and his body was just transformed and translated into heaven. Every natural law became cancelled. Every natural cells became cancelled and was replaced by spiritual cells. Every thing was transformed because of the power of *epikaizo* or overshadowing that took place.

Turn over to the book of Acts 5 where we see the third time the *epikaizo* manifests. You can see here in verse 12 of Acts 5 that there was already power demonstrated. There was already Acts 1:8 demonstrated. You will never have *epikaizo* until you move into Acts 1:8 first and Acts 1:8 becomes normal with you. As you walk with God, it is normal for you to know authority over diseases, germs, viruses, sicknesses, and over demon power. It becomes normal for your life. Wherever you go demons are afraid of you. You have the authority to lay hands on the sick. It is the normal part of your life. You live in divine health and you know God's power upon your life. It is normal to you. However, as you continue walking at that level and increase it, you will reach *epikaizo*.

In Acts 5, they were already having a normal special demonstration of the power of the Holy Spirit including the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In verse 12 *through the hands of the apostles, many signs and wonders were done among the people. They were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid them on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them.*

As many as the shadow comes upon they were healed. There was a special demonstration in Acts 5:12. In other words, as Peter walked with God and demonstrated the power of God, there came a time when the voltage increased and reached 240 volts. Suddenly even before he could touch them the healing took place. However, it became even more powerful because it reached the *epikaizo* level. This is what happened. It may not have been a natural shadow. It

may have been that there was such a glory that came upon that place that literally there was demonstrated a glory and a light greater than the sun. That manifestation did not happen after that. It was only on that occasion. Wherever that shadow was, the natural world was cancelled. Every natural law becomes subjugated to the spiritual and higher law. Under that law, there can be no sicknesses. There cannot exist any demon. There cannot exist any disharmony. There cannot exist anything that contradict the presence of God. Now how did they reach that level?

Firstly, in all three incidences in Luke 9, Luke 1, and Acts 5 especially in Luke 9 and in Acts 5 that they already were very deep in prayer. Jesus in Luke 9 was praying. As He was praying, His countenance was transformed. As you look at the greeting to Mary in Luke 1, Gabriel said, "Thou highly favored one." If you examine that title from Genesis to Revelation, you will find that it is reserved only to those who had spent a lot of time with God. It was used of Daniel when Gabriel met him and said, "Daniel, thou greatly beloved of God." That greeting had the same sense of being highly favored. So just from that greeting, you could tell that Mary was a woman who loved God, loved to spend time with God, and loved to pray. That harmonizes *epikaizo* and the ability to tap into that. The prayer level was extremely high. Daniel spent so much time with God that God gave him a special title, "Thou greatly beloved." To Mary, it was "Highly favored one." That is the first thing. And when you begin to move into that 240-degree volt level, you notice that the natural world becomes afraid. On all three occasions fear came. In Luke 1, it says that Mary was troubled. Mary began reasoning to herself. Then the angel had to say, "Fear not, Mary." Now it was not the normal fear that you will have of natural things. However, it was a fear because the natural world is about to be absorbed by the spiritual world.

In Luke 9 when the three apostles, Peter, James, and John saw the glory of Jesus, it didn't say that they were afraid. When they saw Moses and Elijah, it did not say that they were afraid. However, when the cloud came and they cannot see anything they were afraid because there is something about the highest point where the spiritual contacts the natural and the natural becomes afraid. It is going to be cancelled, dissolved and absorbed and transformed. In Acts 5, you could see that as they move from the point of laying hands and having signs and wonders deeper into the powers of the Highest, the people became afraid. It was not out of

natural fear but the fear of God. At that point, where the natural totally yield to the spiritual, you notice immediately that special manifestation took place. However, we see the first point here - prayer is an important avenue. I will guarantee you that if you spend 10 to 16 hours a day for 365 days in prayer, just see what you will get next Christmas. You may be among the *epikaizo*. There is something about spending time in God that no natural program or activity can replace. There is something about spending that time with God and letting the glory that is on Him transform your life.

The second thing is Mary's response. In order to tap on that Mary said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord. Be it onto me according to your word." That was total surrender and submission. That is the second thing. A lot of people pray but their lives are submitted to God only 70 percent. So, 30 percent of their prayers are out. Some people submit 90 percent. Their prayers are 10 percent off track. Some people submit to God a hundred percent of their life a few seconds a year. They reached that point and then they come out again. The things of this world grip them so they come out of that 100% surrenderedness. Surrenderedness is not a position that is once made. Tomorrow you will have to make that decision again. When you got more blessings and when you have more things about this life you have to make a choice to surrender more. Therefore, yesterday you may be surrendered but today you may not be surrendered. However, I am talking about this. If you live a life that is 100 percent surrendered 365 days a year not just a few seconds or a few weeks constantly day in and day out, something is going to happen. The *epikaizo* of the power of the Highest is going to happen to your life.

The third thing that takes place is worship. Even though the presence of God has just begun, Mary was filled with the supreme presence of God and she blessed the Lord. When she met Elizabeth, praise just welled out within her. Even Peter did not forget the experience of the transfiguration in Luke 9. Later on in the epistle of Peter, he mentioned that experience how they saw the kingdom of God. In Acts 5, if you examine it very carefully the disciples were people who constantly worshipped God and praised God. That is the third area. We are not talking about prayer, surrender, and worship once in a blue moon or just once in a while. If you continue in steadfast prayer, if you continue in steadfast surrender, if you continue in steadfast worship, then you will reach *epikaizo*.

Let me close by reading Ps. 91 to show you that David knew about that place. Ps.91:1 *He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High.*

Those three things will bring you into the secret place. He will not overshadow you first and then you enter the secret place. You must enter the secret place and remain there then He will overshadow you. The key into that secret place was given by Mary - constant in prayer, constant in surrender, constant in worship. David had all those three things. He fell a few times but he always returned to God. He was a person who sought God. He was a man of prayer. He was a person surrendered to God and he was a person who worships God. Moses made this statement but it was included among David's Psalms that he sang. You will notice that Ps. 90 and 91 were attributed to Moses. How did Moses get that revelation? Moses only had it for a few moments. When he said, "Lord show me your glory," God said, "I will hide you in the cleft of the rock. When I pass by, I will not show you the front part of My glory. I show you the back part of My glory." When Moses saw that glory, *epikaizo* was taking place. My friends, if *epikaizo* takes place in your life, your very skin will be transformed.

John G. Lake touched on *epikaizo*. When a plague raged through the land, he boldly allowed some scientists to drop some drops filled with germs from that plague on his hand to test the Spirit of life in him. When the scientists took the drops

filled with germs from his hand and placed them under the microscope, they saw that all the germs died. That my friend is *epikaizo*.

*He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. Verse 4 He shall cover you with His feathers. And under His wings you shall take refuge.* Therefore, understand the blessing of *epikaizo* this Christmas and even as we worship God and bless one another and fellowship together may we remember that it was all made possible because one woman called Mary was yielded enough to allow *epikaizo* to take place. Every time you talk about creative miracles and the growing of new limbs, you are talking about *epikaizo* the creative highest power of God. The spiritual creates the natural. The natural is dissolved by the spiritual.