

“The Promise of Messiah Fulfilled”
(Luke 1:26-38)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

This morning,

We looked at some introduction

To the Gospel of Luke:

How important the Gospels are

As they give us the most concentrated look

At the life and teachings of our Lord.

How this Gospel

Was written by Luke

Through careful research

And interviewing of eyewitnesses,

Superintended by the Holy Spirit;

To Theophilus –

“Lover of God,”

Who was a disciple

And perhaps Luke’s patron

To publish this book –

That he might know the exact truth

About the things he had been taught.

And we saw Luke record

The sending of Gabriel

To break the 400 years of silence

By announcing the coming of the one
 Who would prepare the way of the Lord
 In the spirit and power of Elijah.

B. Preview.

From here, we move to the second stage of fulfillment:
 The Messiah's forerunner is here,
 Now it's time for the Messiah.

II. Sermon.

A. We pick up the account in verse 26.

We're now in the sixth month
 Since Gabriel appeared to Zacharias (v. 26) –
 Which means John was about six months older than Jesus,
 And likely began his ministry about six months before His –

 Gabriel is again dispatched:
 This time to Nazareth in Galilee (v. 26),
 To speak to Mary –
 A godly young lady –
 Who was engaged to Joseph (v. 27) –
 Who is singled out as a descendent of David,
 Because this was the fulfillment
 Of God's promise to David:
 That Messiah would come through his line.

Matthew gives us Joseph's genealogy
 To David in his Gospel (Matt. 1:1-17);
 Luke will go on to show us

That Mary also was descended from David (Luke 3).

One thing of interest to note here

Is how Luke singles out

These appearances of Gabriel to these two women –

As well as Mary's trip to visit Elizabeth,

And Mary's connection to David –

While the other Gospel writers completely omit them.

As we go through his book,

We'll notice he draws attention

To other women as well

Showing how important they were

To our Lord's story.

B. When Gabriel arrived, he said to Mary,

“Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you” (v. 28).

He said this because the Lord –

As with Zacharias and Elizabeth –

Had chosen her for a very important purpose –

As we noted this morning,

God uses clean vessels

Through which to carry out His work –

He had given Mary grace

And the ability to make good use of it

To become the kind of person

He would be pleased to carry and care for His Son –

As evidenced by her relational purity:

Something almost unheard of in our time.

The Lord has also given us grace,

And wants us to use it as best we can

To become as much like His Son as we can:

At the same time, we need to realize

That He also has a particular plan for us:

No one else could have been the Lord's mother:

God had chosen/favored Mary:

He had been working in her life

From the time she was born until then

To prepare her for this very thing –

He also has a specific purpose

For each one of us,

That He is working to fulfill in us –

One we won't fully understand

Until our lives are over

And we stand with Him in glory –

But for that plan to be realized,

We need to seek to be pure and holy in Him.

C. When Mary saw the angel

And heard his greeting,

She was deeply troubled –

She was afraid –

And was trying to understand what Gabriel meant (v. 29).

Seeing her fear,

He immediately comforted her:

“Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God” (v. 30).

It isn't usually the Lord's intent

To strike fear in the hearts of His children –

Reverence, yes,

But not terror –

Think about the many times

Jesus comforted His disciples

When they became afraid:

When He came to His disciples on the water

And they thought they were seeing a ghost,

He said to them, “Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid” (Matt. 14:27).

When His glory was revealed to them

On the Mount of Transfiguration,

And they heard Father's voice,

They fell to the ground and were terrified:

But He said to them, “Get up, and do not be afraid” (17:7).

In the Old Covenant,

The Lord appeared in fire and smoke on Mount Sinai –

A symbol of His justice and wrath –

So that His people would learn to fear and obey Him.

In the New Covenant,

Jesus has quenched those flames for us

By taking God's wrath on Himself –

Now He tells us not to be afraid.

D. But what's more important

Is Gabriel's message:

Mary has been singled out by the Lord,

1. First, to give birth to a son:

Gabriel, "And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son" (v. 31) –

We'll get back to how this will happen in a moment –

A son she was to call, Jesus:

"And you shall name Him Jesus."

We saw this morning

That Gabriel had a name for Elizabeth's son: John –

Which means gracious, or God's gracious gift.

"Jesus" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua,

Which means "the Lord (Yah) is salvation (shua).

Gabriel said to Joseph regarding Mary in Matthew 1:21, "She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

2. Second, to bear a special child:

Gabriel, "He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High" (v. 32).

Gabriel told Zacharias that John would be great –

This One would as well, only much greater.

John the Baptist said of Him, “I baptize in water, *but* among you stands One whom you do not know. *It is* He who comes after me, the thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie” (John 1:26-27).

He would be the Son of the Most High,

And that for two reasons:

He’s already the eternal Son of God,

The One the Father has begotten from all eternity –

But He was about to become the Son of Man –

Conceived by God the Spirit in the womb of Mary.

He’s also the One through whom

The Father would fulfill His promise to David –

“The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end” (Luke 1:32-33) –

As He said in 2 Samuel 7:12-13,

“When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.”

As a side note,

The house of Jacob over which He would reign

Isn’t referring to the natural Jews,

Or only to the elect Jews,

But to all who share Abraham’s faith –

It refers to us, if we’re trusting Jesus:

Paul writes to the Galatians,

“So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer” (Gal. 3:9);

“And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise” (4:28).

Jesus is reigning over us now –

He is our Lord,

And so we need to listen to Him –

But He will continue to do so forever

In the new heavens and earth.

E. But this raises a question:

“Mary said to the angel, ‘How can this be, since I am a virgin?’” (Luke 1:34).

How can she have this child,

If she and Joseph are only engaged,

And have not yet come together in marriage?

“The angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God’” (v. 35).

She will have this child apart from a human father,

Fulfilling the prophecy God gave to Adam and Eve:

“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel” (Gen. 3:15).

Women are not said in Scripture to have seed;

Men are:

The Lord was speaking then of *this event*:

Mary would have a Child without a husband;

This Child would crush the devil's head;
And in the process would give His life.

The One who would bring this about
Would be the Holy Spirit,
Who would take of her substance –
So that He would be connected to our race –
And create a man without sin –
The head of a new humanity –
Whose personality would be that
Of the eternal Son of God.

This is what we call the hypostatic union:
When two completely different natures –
Divine and human –
Were joined together in one Person.

This is the emptying Paul speaks of in Philippians 2:5-7,

“Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men.”

He didn't empty Himself
By giving up His divinity,
But by taking our humanity.

This is the descent of our Lord
Paul speaks of in Ephesians 4:9-10,

“Now this *expression*, ‘He ascended,’ what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.”

This is what He was willing to do that He might save us.

Paul, “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich” (2 Cor. 8:9).

F. What the angel says next

Appears to be geared to strength her faith

That this could happen:

“And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. For nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:36-37).

“Do you doubt what I say?

Your cousin Elizabeth –

Though she is past the age of child-bearing,

Has conceived a child.

With God, nothing is impossible.”

We should remember this

Next time we ask God for something

That doesn’t require nearly as much faith.

G. Finally, we see Mary’s faith and submission to God’s plan:

“And Mary said, ‘Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word’” (v. 38).

She now knew this was God’s will;

She believed God could do it;

She submitted to His plan;

And God’s promise to send the Messiah was fulfilled:

Our Lord descended into the world,
And because He did, we are saved.

It's the heart of every true believer
To submit to God's plan.

Jesus told us that if we are to follow Him
We must be willing to take up our cross –
To die to ourselves
That we might live for Him –
That's the grace He gives us by His Spirit.

It's comforting to know
That every time we do,
It always works out for our good,
As well as for God's glory.

His mission now complete,
Gabriel departs again for heaven –
He goes to where we will go,
Because Jesus has come down to us.

Let's again thank our Lord
That He was willing to submit to His Father's will,
To come and save us. Amen.