

The Good News of God: Jesus the Messiah

Covenant Church

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1. Scripture for Today

Luke 1:26-33 (NIV) In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him 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 Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

2. The beginnings of Luke and Matthew

Matthew 1

1. The Gospel's opening line: "This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham..." (1:1).
2. *How* Matthew describes Jesus' identity:
 - a. He situates Jesus in a Jewish genealogy whose point is that God has worked profoundly and directly in history to bring His Messiah at a specific time in history to release His people from exile (cf. Matt 1:2-17, especially v. 17).
 - b. He grounds Jesus' birth in a prophecy from Isaiah (Isa 7:14 in Matt 1:23).
 - c. The angel declares Jesus' mission to be to save *his people* from their sins" (1:21).
3. "Messiah" is repeated four times: 1:1, 16, 17, 18

Luke 1

1. The description of the characters and setting:
 - a. Zechariah is of the priestly division of Abijah; Elizabeth is "also a descendant of Aaron" (1:5). An angel appears to Zechariah in the Temple, at the altar (1:9, 11).
 - b. Joseph is a "descendant of David" (1:27).
2. The angel's announcements of John's and Jesus' missions:
 - a. John: "He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the parents to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous—to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." (1:16-17).

- b. 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 Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end” (1:32-33).
- 3. The characters’ responses to the angel’s announcements:
 - a. Mary: “He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors” (1:54-55).
 - b. Zechariah: “Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David (as he said through his holy prophets of long ago), salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us—to show mercy to our ancestors and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham: to rescue us from the hand of our enemies, and to enable us to serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him, to give his people the knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins, because of the tender mercy of our God, by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace” (1:68-79).

3. God’s Promises to Israel and Israel’s Hopes

1. Security and peace in the land, especially in Jerusalem (e.g., 2 Sam 7:10-11; Isa 49:14-21; 51:3; 52:7-10; 60:18-21);
2. Progeny (e.g., Gen 12:1-3; 15:5);
3. A Davidic Messiah (e.g., 2 Sam 7:16; Isa 11; Psa 72:5; Psalm 89);
4. God will be their God in their midst (e.g., Jer 30:22; Ezek 36:28);
5. The nations will come to worship Israel’s God (e.g., Isaiah 11; 42:6-7; 49:6; 51:4-6; 56:7; 60:3; Psalm 72).

4. The Good News of God

The Good News, the Gospel, of God is that...

- 1. We are called to good works which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life.**
- 2. Our bodies will be resurrected; we will live in a new heavens and earth where God will wipe away every tear and Himself be our light.**
- 3. God loves and will satisfy the needs of the poor.**
- 4. God forgives all of our sins with an unfathomable grace.**
- 5. Jesus is Israel’s Messiah.**