

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS STORY

Mark 1:1-15

December 7, 2008 Sunday am

INTRODUCTION

- A. The Christmas story is not found in all four of the gospels. Its found in only two, Matthew and Luke.
 - 1. In Matthew's Christmas story we learn about an angel instructing Joseph to take Mary as his wife even though she was pregnant and we also learn about the Wisemen's visit to worship the new born baby Jesus.
 - 2. In Luke's Christmas story we learn about the angel Gabriel's visit to Mary; Jesus' birth in Bethlehem and the visit of the Shepherds to the manger.
- B. There is another Christmas story, though, found in the Bible. Not in another gospel or even in one of Paul's letters. Its found in the Old Testament.
 - 1. Who delivers this Old Testament Christmas story?
 - a. Not an angel.
 - b. Not a shepherd.
 - c. Not even a wise man.
 - 2. It was the Old Testament prophets who gave us another story of Christmas.

I. WHAT WAS THE CHRISTMAS STORY DELIVERED BY THE PROPHETS?

- A. Their message was to get ready for the birth of Jesus—1:1-3.
 - 1. Verse 3 is a quote of the prophet Isaiah—40:3.
 - 2. He was only one of many Old Testament prophets who foretold of Jesus' birth.
- B. Mark is reminding us in his gospel that Jesus' birth was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy.
 - 1. In verse 2, Mark says, "It is written".
 - 2. Mark used this phrase 7 times throughout his gospel.
 - 3. Mark's purpose in using this phrase is to emphasize that Jesus' birth was no coincidence or accident, but rather was predicted by the prophets.

II. THE LAST PROPHET TOLD THIS SAME CHRISTMAS STORY.

- A. John was the last of the biblical prophets.
- B. How do we know?
 - 1. First, John's ministry was like a prophets-v.2 (quoted from Mal. 3:1).
 - 2. Second, John's manner was like a prophets, especially the Old Testament prophet Elijah—1:6-8.
 - 3. Third, John's message was like a prophets-v. 4-5.

III. JESUS IS THE FULFILMENT OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY.

- A. Jesus' birth was in fulfillment of this Old Testament Christmas story—v.15 "The time has come". Jesus meant his coming fulfilled all of the Old Testament promises about him.
- B. Jesus' message was identical to the Old Testament prophets-v. 15.
 - 1. First, he calls us to repent. This is what we really need for Christmas—forgiveness.
 - 2. Second, he calls us to believe. Believe that he is the Christmas story.

CONCLUSION

- A. The purpose of the prophets was to prepare the world for the birth of the Messiah—v.3 "Prepare the way for the Lord".
- B. How can we get prepared for Jesus' birth? He told us.
 - 1. First, repent of our sins. "Repent" means "to change our minds". We need to change our minds about sin and the fact we are sinners.
 - 2. Second, we must believe. Believe that Jesus is Christ. He is Christmas. He is what we really need.