

The Lord's Message: Prophecy Fulfilled: The Birth of Jesus Foretold

Date: December 5, 2021

Where: Tilghman UMC

Scripture Reference: Luke 1:26-38

We are continuing in our Advent sermon series: Prophecy Fulfilled. Today, we are going to be looking at the prophecies in the Old Testament that are fulfilled in the New Testament concerning the life of Jesus. It has been recorded that Jesus fulfilled 400 prophecies. For one person that fulfill just 8 out of the 400 prophecies is an astronomical number. Jesus fulfilled all 400 prophecies. As we will say today, one event in the New Testament could fulfill two or more distinct prophecies in the Old Testament.

Let us pray.

When we open our Bible to **Luke 1:26**, we find that the angel Gabriel has been a very busy angel. Last week, we learned that God had sent the angel to an Aaronic priest, Zechariah. Zechariah was busy fulfilling his priestly duties in the Holy of Holies section of the temple. Gabriel appeared to Zechariah and told him that God had heard his and his wife, Elizabeth's prayers for a son and God is granting their request. Nothing is impossible for God. Zechariah still questions the angel about this answer to prayer, because both he and Elizabeth are well past the age of child bearing. The angel tells him because of his unbelief, Zechariah will be mute until the appointed time. The prophet Isaiah and Malachi prophesized that a person like Elijah would prepared the way for the Messiah. This son of Zechariah, John fulfilled the prophecy.

Now, God has sent Gabriel to a virgin named Mary to fulfill two prophecies. The first prophecy is found in **Isaiah 7:14**. I know that there is a lot of controversy in regards to the interpretation of the Hebrew word for virgin, *almah*. According to my "The Complete Jewish Study Bible," the Hebrew word, *almah*, can mean young woman, woman of marriageable age, but not yet married, and/or virgin. In this passage of scripture, the kings of Aram and Israel are attacking Judah. They have tried to take Jerusalem, but have been unsuccessful. They call on the unrepentant king of Judah, Ahaz, to surrender. King Ahaz is trying to decide on whether to surrender or not. Isaiah says to King Ahaz to trust in God and God will deliver Judah from the hands of the kings of Aram and Israel. God is going to give you a sign that God will do this. The sign is a young woman or virgin will give birth to a son. The son will be named Immanuel, meaning that God is with us. Now, King Ahaz does not have to wait 700 years for this prophecy to occur. Instead in less than 5 years, after Isaiah prophesied to King Ahaz the Assyrians invade Aram and Israel. The people of Aram and Israel are exiled to Assyria. There are no historical records to tell us who this young woman was who gave birth to a son. I am almost positive that there a young woman in Judah that gave birth to a son. Before this son was grown the Assyrians had invaded Aram and Israel. Even though the prophecy was fulfilled

in Ahaz's time, does not mean that God does not use the same plan. As God has been at work in the past, God is at work in the present, and God will be at work in the future.

Luke, tries to emphasize this point. You have two women that are by all knowledge unable to bear children. One woman, Elizabeth is past child bearing age. God work miracles with Sarah and Hanna in the Old Testament. A woman past child bear age and another that is unable to conceive. We are going to find out, that the other woman, Mary is a virgin. From my understanding of the human reproduction in Biology class, you have to have a male and a female to make a baby. How is God going to perform a miracle in this situation? Nothing is impossible for God.

Let us get back to **Luke 1:26**. We find out that in the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, that God sends the angel, Gabriel, to Nazareth, a small town in Galilee. In verse 27, we find out that God sends Gabriel to a virgin named Mary. Mary is to be married to Joseph, who is a descendant of David. In verse 29, Mary is uneasy about being in the presence of Gabriel.

The angel, Gabriel, tries to ease her fear and also announces to Mary what the purpose of the visitation in verses 30-33. Here is the second Old Testament prophecy fulfilled by this one event in the New Testament. Mary, the virgin, is to have a son. This son will be given the throne of King David. This son's kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom. This fulfilled the prophecy that King David was told by Nathan in **2 Samuel 7:11b & 16**.

Mary responds in a similar manner that Zechariah did last week, "How can this be?" Zechariah was responding to his incredible miracle, because he and Elizabeth were well past child bearing age. Mary is responding to her incredible miracle, because this is humanly impossible. Nothing is impossible for our God.

In verse 35, Gabriel goes on to tell Mary that the Holy Spirit will come upon her. For this reason, this son will not be like all the other sons. This son will be called the "Son of God." This son will be fully human and fully God. As verse 37 says, "For no word from God will ever fail."

In verse 38, Mary not understanding all of this, does respond in faith, "I am the Lord's servant. May your word to me be fulfilled. Then Gabriel left her.

In the birth of Jesus foretold, we have two prophecies being fulfilled. The first prophecy, Jesus will be borne by a virgin and the Holy Spirit. The second prophecy, Jesus will reestablish the Davidic kingdom and this time it will be an everlasting kingdom.

I hope that by understanding of God fulfilling the prophecies that we can have peace knowing that God will go to any means to show us how much God loves us. Amen.