**LUKE: The Story of Christmas**

**God Keeps His Promises, Luke 1:26-80**

Weekend of 12/16-17/23

**WE Ever have someone make a promise and not keep it?** When someone makes a promise how long do they have to fulfill it before you stop believing they will? **What if the person who made the promise was God and it was taking 1000’s of years for Him to fulfill it? That’s the situation Zacharias, Mary, Joseph, ALL Israel, found themselves in on that first Christmas.** For literally 1K’s of years God promised over/over One who would come to not only free Israel from the oppression of their enemies, but free all people from their sin. **God called the one who would come- “one like Moses/Messiah/Savior/Immanuel- God with us”, but no one ever came; Israel remained oppressed.**

**THEN 400 YEARS after God last gave this PROMISE an angel, Gabriel, shows up to say that the time had come for the promise to be fulfilled- no wonder they were shocked.** What Israel got when Jesus came was not what they expected and they were not impressed. **In fact, they were so not impressed they hung Him on a cross!** A guy born to an unmarried teenager, from a no-name town of 400 people, in an armpit region of northern Israel, who had no military training, and just talked about being right with God. **How is this guy going to overthrow their Roman oppressors? Israel was not impressed with Jesus/maybe you’re not impressed either.**

**TURN TO LUKE 1, pg. 1018, and let’s see why we should be impressed with Jesus and how He fulfilled God’s PROMISE in a greater way than Israel/us could ever imagine or deserve.** Let’s pick up where we left off last week. **Mary was going to have a child by the power of God…**

**GOD**

1. **PROMISE OF JESUS’ BIRTH, Luke 1:26-56**
2. **Gabriel Visits Mary, 1:26-38**
3. Mary would have a child by the power of God.
4. The child will be called Jesus- God is Savior. Pretty common name, but no one has ever been described like this.
   1. He will be great and called the Son of the Most High.
   2. God will give Him the throne of His father David, covenant/PROMISE God gave to David 1000 years before Jesus, 2 Samuel 7:12–16.
   3. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever- another way of saying King of Israel.
   4. His kingdom will have no end- it will be eternal!
5. This baby is God and will not just change our world, but more importantly change our eternity.
   1. For Israel God’s going to fulfill His promise to King David- Jesus is the descendant that will reign over Israel, not just on this earth, but the kingdom will be eternal.
   2. For us- this is important because His eternal kingdom is another way of saying heaven. **Why is this important?**
   3. There are only 2 places we can go when we die- either heaven or hell and both are eternal.
   4. It is God, through Jesus, who makes heaven possible for us.
6. **Mary Visits Elizabeth, 1:39-56**
7. Elizabeth blesses Mary, calls her the “mother of my Lord”, 1:39-45
8. Mary praises God for blessing her in this way, 1:46-56
   1. God’s seen her humble position- she’s a poor teenage girl.
   2. She might not be much, but now all generations will call her blessed.
   3. God has done great/mighty things for Israel through the centuries.
   4. But of all the great things He’s done nothing compares to His fulfilling His PROMISE to Abraham, made 2000+ years earlier, through her.
9. **THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST, 1:57-80**
10. **John Is Born, 1:57-58** 
    * + 1. When it was time to name him, friends/family thought they’d name him Zacharias.
        2. Elizabeth said no his name will be John and Zacharias confirmed it by writing it on a tablet. **Guess what happened as soon as he did that?**
        3. As God promised through Gabriel, he got his voice back.
11. **Zacharias Gives God’s Plan for Jesus and John, 1:67-80** 
    * + 1. “God visited us…”- - episkeptomai; God came to look after, care for us.
        2. God came in the flesh to PERSONALLY look after, care for us
12. His name would be Immanuel which means God with us.
13. “visited”- in Greek, aorist tense means it’s as certain as if it’s already happened.
    * + 1. He “accomplished redemption”/“raised up a horn of salvation”.
14. Redemption- lutrosis; freedom from oppression
15. Salvation- soteria; rescue, deliver from danger
16. Aorist tense- as certain as if it already happened.
17. God’s saying through Zacharias that Jesus will bring us freedom/deliverance.
    * + 1. 2 aspects of redemption/freedom and salvation/deliverance
18. Spiritual freedom/deliverance
19. This is needed first in order to secure the physical freedom/deliverance.
20. Jesus accomplished this at His 1st coming to earth when He died on the cross/rose again.
21. Physical freedom/deliverance.
22. This will happen at Jesus’ 2nd coming to earth, which is still future. **I’ll explain this in a bit.**
23. Like Israel waited for the promise of Jesus’ 1st coming we’ve been waiting for this promise for 2000+ years.
24. Spiritual freedom and deliverance from sin/hell.
25. We’ve all sinned and are under sins earthly control/eternal judgment.
26. Jesus, God the Son, came to take our judgment for us.
27. Trusting God on that brings His forgiveness of sin. **Which Z mentions in Luke 1:77**
28. Jesus frees us from sin’s control in our life so we can life His life.
29. Jesus delivers us sin’s consequences- eternity in hell.
30. Physical freedom/deliverance for Israel from their enemies.
31. Israel has never had peace from their enemies, promise will be fulfilled at Jesus’ 2nd coming.
32. Revelation 20- Jesus sets up His earthly kingdom when He returns after the Tribulation and destroys the enemies of Israel- anti-Christ/followers, and binds Satan.
33. Jews/non-Jews who’ve been freed/delivered from their sin through faith in Jesus and made it through the Tribulation will be a part of that earthly kingdom.
34. After 1000 years, Satan will be released, some born during the 1000 years will join Satan and rebel against Jesus.
35. Jesus will destroy them and this earth/universe.
36. Revelation 21- 22 God will bring in a new heavens/earth where all people throughout all time who’ve placed their faith in God’s plan for freedom/deliverance from sin will spend eternity in the eternal kingdom which Gabriel told Mary about.
    * + 1. God has given us a guide to peace with Him.

**YOU TAKEAWAYS**

* + - 1. **Accept God’s offer to free/deliver you from sin/hell.**
         1. Jesus is your Savior from your sin/trust what God says.
         2. Ask God to forgive you of your sins.
         3. Tell Him you are trusting that Jesus took your sin.
         4. **THIS IS IMPORTANT FOR YOU TO UNDERSTAND-** He will become your Lord- the one who provides for you as you live for Him. He will change your life by changing how you think about life as you spend time with Him in the Bible learning about Him, His ways, and as you connect in with His church family.

**If there’s time pray.** Fill out a Connect Card, mark “Trusted Christ”, give contact information and we’ll get you some help stuff to get you growing in your relationship with God.

* + - 1. **Slide 41 Believer, like John, you’ve been commanded to share this message with others.** Easiest way- grab invite cards and invite people to the Christmas services next week.