

JESUS REIGNS FOREVER

Luke 1:26-38

Key Verse: 1:33 "...and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever; his kingdom will never end."

Merry Christmas!

There are only two characters in the passage, the angel Gabriel and a virgin Mary. Most of the passage is the angel Gabriel's message about the birth of Mary's son Jesus. But the passage involves the long history of salvation and fulfillment of God's covenant. May God give us joy and peace through the angel's message. Let's dive into Gabriel's message.

I. God fulfilled His covenant

Look at verse 26, 27. "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 phrase "In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy" tells us what happened before God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth.

In the previous passage, the angel of the Lord appeared to Zechariah and said, "Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son and you are to call him John. ... He will bring back many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God." (13,16) After this Elizabeth became pregnant (23).

Her son John the Baptist would proclaim repentance of sin and baptize many people with water (Mt 3:2,6). He would prepare the way for the Messiah. This baby John had been in Elizabeth's womb for six months.

After this, God panned the camera to Nazareth, a little town in Galilee and sent Gabriel there. In Nazareth was a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. Her name was Mary. I believe that there were many virgins in Jerusalem. But God's favor was on a virgin named Mary in Nazareth. And the angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." (28)

Mary never expected the angel's greetings. Joseph and Mary were descendants of David, but they were not rich. They were from a village in a remote area. The country girl Mary was dreaming of a happy family with dear Joseph. So, she wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel Gabriel said to her in verses 30–31: "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." The name Jesus is the Greek form of Joshua, which means the Lord saves (Mt 1:22). In a word, the angel Gabriel foretold about the birth of the Messiah which the whole creation was waiting for in eager expectation (Ro 8:19).

After Adam's Fall, he hid himself from God and blamed his wife Eve. There was no more beauty of love. God banished them from the garden of Eden because God did not want them to live forever in sin. God decided to save them from sin and set out a plan of salvation. God said to the serpent, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel." (Ge 3:15) It means the Messiah would be born of a woman, and he would crush the devil's head.

God chose Abraham and God said to him, "...through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed." (Ge 22:18a) It means the Messiah would come from the line of Abraham.

God chose King David among the heirs of Abraham. He said, "When your days are over and you rest with your ancestors, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, your own flesh and blood, and I will establish his kingdom. He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever." (2Sam 7:12, 13) It means the Messiah would be heir to King David's throne.

God has spoken to his people concerning the Messiah through many prophets -- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Zechariah, Malachi, and so on, for many thousand years since Adam's Fall. But there had been no word of God since the prophet Malachi for 400 years. People wondered, "Is God alive?" "Is God working?" "Where is God?"

Yes, God is alive! Yes, God is faithful! God sent his angel Gabriel to the virgin Mary. And Gabriel proclaimed, "You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus." (31) Praise God who is fulfilling his covenant to save us from our sin. Our God is faithful. Our God is love. Praise be to God!

II. Jesus reigns forever

The angel said more about Mary's baby Jesus. Look at verses 32–33 again. "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." This is the big picture of what God is doing: he is establishing Jesus' kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. And the angel's one word was, "He will be great!" What is so great about King Jesus?

First, Jesus is great because He is the Son of Man. Gabriel said, "You will conceive and give birth to a son" (31) Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph. They had not come together yet. When Mary heard the angel's message, she said, "How will this be, since I am a virgin?" (34) The angel's message did not make sense to her.

The angel understood her. So he explained more. Look at verse 35. "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God" And he gave her a piece of evidence. Look at verse 36. "Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month." And he concluded, "For no word from God will ever fail." (37)

Mary would conceive by the power of God. She would give birth to a son and she was to call him Jesus. Jesus' birth is not of human decision or a husband's will, but God's will. God became flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus had the same flesh as we have. Matthew wrote about this. "All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet. 'The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel' – which means, 'God with us.'" (Mt 1:23, Isa 9:7) Jesus became flesh and made his dwelling among us (Jn 1:14). His name is Immanuel. He is the Son of Man.

Jesus is great because he is a friend of sinners. For example, he called Levi the tax collector to be his disciple, saying to him, "Follow me." Jesus came to call sinners. Jesus came to save the lost. Jesus calls sinners and protects them and saves them. This Jesus is the Son of Man.

Second, Jesus is great because He is the Son of God. Look at verse 32a. “He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.” The Most High is a title frequently used to refer to God. The Son of the Most High means the Son of God.

Once a Roman centurion recognized the authority of Jesus saying, “But just say the word, and my servant will be healed.” He believed Jesus could heal his servant by his word only. He recognized Jesus as God Most High. And his servant was healed by His word.

Another centurion who executed Jesus saw how he died. When he saw Jesus’ death, he felt Jesus’ divinity. And he confessed, “Surely this man was the Son of God!” (Mk 15:39)

Jesus has authority on earth to forgive sins (Mk2:10). Jesus is Lord even of the Sabbath (Mk 2:28). Jesus came to the world to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many rather than to be served (Mk10:45). This Jesus will come in clouds with great power and glory again (Mk 13:26). This Jesus is the Son of God.

Third, Jesus is great because He succeeded David’s throne. Look at verse 32 again. “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,” Why the fascination with David? If Israel longed for wealth and ease, Solomon’s kingdom was far better than others. He received 666 talents¹ of gold (ie. 25 US tons) from all the Arabian kings and the governors for 40 years (1King 10:14,15). It did not include the revenues from merchants and traders. His total wealth was 2.1 trillion USD². He was 10 times richer than Elon Musk (290 B USD). If Israel longed for religious revival, Josiah’s kingdom was far greater. He purified the land and the temple for 8 years and he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord (2Chr 34:2, 8).

But David was a great shepherd. When David was fleeing from Saul and ran away to a cave, his brothers and relatives went to see him there. Many people joined David in the cave. There were men who were in some kind of trouble, men who owed a lot of money, and men who were just not satisfied with life. This motley crew joined David, and he became their leader. He had about 400 men with him (1Sa 22:1-2). He was fleeing from his adversary King Saul. But he accepted whoever came to him and became their shepherd. He shepherded people with integrity of heart and he led people with skillful hands (Ps 78:72). This is why Jesus came in the line of King David.

Jesus cured many who had diseases, sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. Jesus is the good shepherd. Jesus is great because God gave Him the throne of his father David.

Fourth, Jesus is great because Jesus reigns forever. Look at verse 33 again. “And he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever; his kingdom will never end.”

Former President Trump overturned many policies of former President Obama. And President Biden overturned many policies of former President Trump. I think if the next president does not like President Biden’s policies, he will also overturn them. All human kingdoms come to an end, and all human shepherds, no matter how good, or human tyrants, no matter how evil, pass away. Their names will be forgotten. Their policies cannot last as well.

¹ 1 talent equals 75.398lb (34.2kg).

² <https://wealthresult.com/wealth/richest-people-history>

During the pandemic, we saw riots, lootings, severe divisions and even the Capitol attack. The whole world was shocked. How could this happen in the US, the mother country of democracy? The US dollar has been a global currency for the last 100 years. Because everyone has trusted the US will never go bankrupt. But so many economists and people do not trust this anymore. The bankruptcy of the US became a real possibility.

But Jesus' kingdom is different. His kingdom will never end. Then, why have an eternal kingdom? Doesn't God already sit sovereign over all the earth? Absolutely he does. We forget this very easily, and get anxious and worried about this world, as if things are out of control. Is Jesus' eternal kingdom that God is establishing just an extension of this power and authority? If that were true, why send him as a Son of Man in Nazareth, who has no power or authority at all?

No, Jesus' eternal kingdom is not to restore God's throne. God never lost it! But God remains Sovereign, the King of the world. Jesus' eternal kingdom is not for his sake, but absolutely for our sake. His eternal kingdom is for us. He will never cease in his role as the Good Shepherd, Immanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6) from now to eternity! Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. His kingdom will never end. Jesus has reigned after rising from the dead 2000 years ago. And he reigns today. And he will reign tomorrow and for ever and ever. Jesus reigns forever!

John the apostle saw Jesus' eternal kingdom in a vision and wrote, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Messiah, and he will reign for ever and ever." (Rev 11:15)

III. Mary's decision of faith

After hearing the angel's message, what did Mary say? Look at verse 38. "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. 'May your word to me be fulfilled.' Then the angel left her." She was planning a beautiful wedding ceremony and a wonderful banquet. Mary knew the cost she would pay if she conceived God's Son. It meant she had to give up her dreams for marriage. She did not have any words to explain to her fiancé Joseph. Building up a family with dear Joseph was her kingdom. But Mary found herself as the Lord's servant. And she believed the Lord would do what the angel spoke to her. Mary believed the Lord would work it out. So, she said, "I am the Lord's servant." And Mary prayed, "May your word to me be fulfilled." What a beautiful example of faith she is! God's salvation work has been done through Mary's faith and obedience.

Women cherish their romantic dreams. My wife does too. But when they give up their dreams for God, they are so faithful to God, and even more brave than many men. We need faithful women of God like Mary in this generation. May God raise up many Marys among us. There are 6 beautiful and pure HBF teenage girls – Esther Kim, Jane, Hannah, Samantha, Theresa, and Esther Min. May God bless them to be like Mary in this generation. I have 2 beautiful and pure daughters. May God bless them to be like Mary.

Now I'd like to share with you my life testimony.

My family are descendants of King Sejong. My father is the youngest of 5 tribal chiefs in our clan. When I was born, my grandmother said that I was very special and I would become great. But because my father was the least of the tribal chiefs, another cousin was chosen to be the

next leader according to our family tradition. In my heart, I was resentful. I wanted to be a great man in Korea.

Before my freshman year in college, I visited the campus, and was invited to Bible study. I attended Genesis Bible study every day. I went to the UBF summer Bible conference. When I was a child, I heard on TV, "Seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened." At the summer conference, I heard this word again. I decided to follow Jesus and became a student shepherd and fellowship leader. I came to the Bible house every day, wrote daily bread in the morning, attended classes, and came back to the Bible house. I wrote my testimony every week and taught students the Bible. Also I taught computer skills every vacation time at the center.

I got straight As and graduated with the highest gpa at Hongik University. When I was a senior, a professor encouraged me to apply to Stanford University for a PhD program and I was accepted. But P. Abraham Kim encouraged senior students to apply to discipleship training. I prayed for a month because I didn't want to lose both chances. After praying, I decided to give up Stanford University. My professor said, "You are crazy!" But I knew what I was doing. I thought, "I can go to college whenever I want to, but I cannot get discipleship training in the future."

While receiving discipleship training, I typed Abraham Kim's message, read his message while making copies, listened to his message while worshipping God, and read his message again while writing testimony every week. I did this for one year and grew spiritually. Then, I got a good job instead of having to do military service. So, I could serve my fellowship. I got married, and my first daughter was born in 1997. When I saw my first daughter for the first time, I was so happy, but I felt that I had to make more money.

So, I quit UBF and established my own company in 2001. My company was growing 3-4 times every year. I got 7 patents. My company revenue was over \$15M USD. I became a multi-millionaire. I became an idol to young people. I could meet many government officers, military generals, and politicians. Also, I got business offers from foreign countries. So, I travelled to 25 countries. I became very arrogant. I lived extravagantly, spending \$10,000 USD a night in Gangnam bars entertaining government officials. Chefs at the most expensive restaurants followed my direction for the menu. When my car arrived, the bellboy opened my car door and escorted me to my seat. I felt like I was finally a great man in Korea.

Then one day, I discovered that the government was using my patent without my permission. So, I filed a lawsuit. I won the first trial. During the second trial, some government officials set me up for a police sting involving bribing government officials, and several detectives came to my office and arrested me. After a few hours, my lawyer got me out of jail. I was greatly shamed and my reputation ruined, and people distanced themselves from me. I lost the second trial.

At that time, my wife was diagnosed with lung cancer. A doctor told me she could live a maximum of 4 months. So, I found a very high level doctor who studied in Johns Hopkins hospital and she received a surgery that helped prolong her life for a short while more.

Suddenly, my company lost market share and money. I could not continue business with the government. So, I developed a new system. I demonstrated the system to a big company and a military general. Then they stole my system. Meanwhile, some friends and even my business partner betrayed me.

Completely frustrated, I cried myself to sleep one night. In my dream, a person opened a door far in the distance and waved his hand to me. He was P. Abraham Kim. The next day, I shared my dream with my wife. That Sunday, I brought my family to the Wharang chapter worship service. After the sermon, Shepherd Philip Lee announced, "Shaking hands is not enough to welcome them. Let's hug them!" I left the church to chase money. But 12 years later the church was welcoming us, when no one would dare to welcome me. Thank you Jesus for your amazing grace and love.

Right after we returned to UBF, my wife died. Moreover, my enemies told me I would never do business in Korea again. I tried to fight back. At that time, I got a good business chance to restore my company. While driving at night, I cried out to God with tears, "Lord, help me! I will offer You this company as my offering!" But it did not happen. I was under a lot of stress and pressure of huge debts. I lost my house and my brother's house. Debts were growing exponentially. So many people, even my family, blamed me for ruining their lives since they invested their money in my company. No one stood on my side. In the middle of the swirling chaos, there was no place for me to stand. I was afraid of meeting people. So, I climbed up the Han River Bridge in the middle of Seoul – ready to jump down to my death. As I looked down into the swirling water with only one foot on the bridge, at that moment, a voice came out from deep in my heart, "I am the good shepherd. I gave you my life. What more do you need?" I realized that Jesus was my Good Shepherd. I came down from the bridge and repented my sins with tears, accepting Jesus' unconditional love.

After this, God revealed his master plan for me. God introduced S.Yvonne to me. She understood me and loved me. So I proposed to her in a pagoda by a stream under the full moon after a fancy dinner. We prayed for 2 years, and by faith, we got married in 2014, and made an international house church with our 5 sons and 2 daughters. So, I closed my company and applied for bankruptcy and Green card. The judge delayed making a decision for my bankruptcy because they thought I hid huge money even though I reported all my finances. And the U.S. council said to me, "I believe you know the result already. You cannot come to America ever."

But our God is a sovereign God and hears our prayers. Suddenly, God changed the judge to a woman judge who said, "There is nothing more he can do. It is clear! This case should be closed already." My bankruptcy was accepted, and my case was closed. My wife and many missionaries came to Korea for the World Mission Report in 2016. I met many missionaries at the airport with my wife. P.David Kim and other missionaries prayed for my Green card in the airport. On that day, I got a phone call from my immigration lawyer saying, "Your Green card is approved! You got a 10-year Green card immediately!" Thank God!

I came to America in 2017. I stayed home for six months to pray and to study the Bible. I got an engineering job in an American company. God blessed my work and I got a very good evaluation every year and became the chief engineer.

This summer, Francis asked me to take over the leadership of High School Bible Fellowship. While praying, I was convinced by God and humbly accepted it.

While praying, my wife and I found three things necessary for HBF -- 1:1 Bible study, deeper fellowship, and raising leaders. We decided to switch the meeting from online to in person for deeper fellowship. It was challenging because the Chicago area still had COVID issues. For 1:1 Bible study, we reached out to students and parents and started 1:1 Bible study with some

students. For raising leaders, we decided to be prayer supporters and make an environment for students.

Throughout the summer and fall, God blessed HBF and filled our hearts with joy and love. God heard our prayers in many ways. One member returned after one year absence and brought a friend! So many are growing as dedicated, influential leaders and disciples of Jesus, such as through Bible study, praise team, Christmas drama, and other ways. Thank God who is working in HBF! I am so blessed to serve teenagers with the gospel as a shepherd, friend and Bible teacher like Jesus. Thank you Jesus!

Making big money and being rich was my kingdom. I wanted to be a great man in Korea. But such a kingdom won't last. I lost it. In place of it, I found the eternal King, Jesus. His kingdom will never end. Thank God who is saving me from sin and blessing me. Thank you Jesus, our Good Shepherd who reigns forever as our King. May God give all of you his love and peace this Christmas and eternally.