

Christmas Cards from God:
His Kingdom Will Have No End
Luke 1:33

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Text Introduction: The title of this series “Christmas Cards from God,” originates from the idea that each of the messages that we are considering this Christmas season come from angels. Since we understand that angels spoke on behalf of God, the messages that we consider are direct messages from God. Each message, of course, has a specific, historical message to the original recipient, but each message also has a more general message about Christ that certainly applies to us.

Last time we were together, we considered this idea: “Do not be afraid.” That is a message that the angel spoke to four individuals or groups—Zechariah, Joseph, Mary, and the shepherds.

We find our message from God today in the angel’s message to Mary. Now, of course, the angel has much to say to Mary, but I want to isolate just one part. You will see it at the end of our reading, but for a more full reading of the story let’s begin in verse 26.

Text: ²⁶ In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, ²⁷ to a virgin engaged to a man named Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. ²⁸ And the angel came to her and said, “Rejoice, favored woman! The Lord is with you.” ²⁹ But she was deeply troubled by this statement, wondering what kind of greeting this could be. ³⁰ Then the angel told her:

Do not be afraid, Mary,
for you have found favor with God.

³¹ Now listen:

You will conceive and give birth to a son,
and you will call His name Jesus.

³² He will be great
and will be called the Son of the Most High,
and the Lord God will give Him
the throne of His father David.

³³ He will reign over the house of Jacob forever,
and His kingdom will have no end.

Introduction: It is easy to forget how revolutionary these words were when the angel spoke them. Remember this—These words in addition to being spoken by angel were spoken to an unwed teenage girl, completely without warning, in an obscure village in a remote part of the world about an unborn baby. (Idea from a sermon by Ray Pritchard, KeepBelieving.Com.) His kingdom will have no end! What did the angel’s message mean?

Jesus’ birth is the reminder that . . .

God keeps His promises.

A Messiah was promised in the Old Testament. Consider these prophecies:

2 Samuel 7:12-13

¹²When your time comes and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up after you your descendant, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. ¹³He will build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

Micah 5:2

²Bethlehem Ephrathah,
you are small among the clans of Judah;
One will come from you
to be ruler over Israel for Me.
His origin is from antiquity,
from eternity.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶For a child will be born for us,
a son will be given to us,
and the government will be on His shoulders.
He will be named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
⁷The dominion will be vast,
and its prosperity will never end.
He will reign on the throne of David
and over his kingdom,
to establish and sustain it
with justice and righteousness from now on and forever.
The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will accomplish this.

Isaiah 11:1

¹¹Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.

Jeremiah 23:5

⁵“The days are coming”—this is the LORD’s declaration—
“when I will raise up a Righteous Branch of David.
He will reign wisely as king
and administer justice and righteousness in the land.

From Malachi to Jesus, four hundred years had passed. Many a generation had come and gone without seeing the prophecy realized. Maybe some had come to believe that Messiah would not come.

But He did. As Paul said in Galatians 4:4, “But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman.” At the right time, Jesus came.

Sometimes it might not look like God is a keeper of His Word, but when I look at the manger, I am reminded that God always keeps His promises. The shepherds learned this the night of His birth. Luke’s

Gospel tells us that angels appeared to them while they were out in the fields doing what shepherds do. They are told specific details about what they would find and where to find the Messiah. Then Luke adds this summary word: "The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had seen and heard, just as they had been told.

God keeps his promises. You say well that's just one story. No, it's the ongoing story. To Abraham, "I'll make you the father of many nations. To Moses, "I AM will be with you." To Mary and Joseph, To Zacharias and Elizabeth... Then perhaps best of all Jesus prophesying His own death. But better than that, His prophesy of resurrection in three day. See, it's a pattern. And He has promised his return.

What has he promised to you personally?

1. His Presence
2. His Power
3. To answer our prayer
4. Salvation
5. Heaven
6. Return
7. The list is infinite.

And He will keep them all.

We must keep our perspective.

When I consider this phrase, "And His Kingdom will have no end," there is a perspective that I must see there.

- In the kingdom of this world, nothing is forever.

This is obvious to us right? Well, not always. Sometimes we get caught caring more about the things of this world, of the kingdom of this world, then we do God's kingdom. That is why Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you."

Everything in this life is fleeting. There is a legend that suggests that kings of the Roman Empire era returning from victory on the battle field employed a slave to whisper in their ear as they were paraded through the streets in celebration. The slave would whisper in Latin, "*Sic transit Gloria mundi.*" That is, "The glory of the world is fleeting."

- In the kingdom of God, everything is forever.

Here is the glorious contrast. And with that is God's sovereign hand of control over all of the affairs of this world. And, not only does His sovereign hand control but His kingdom cannot be defeated. That is why I tell everyone without hesitation that my favorite verse in the Bible is Revelation 19:6.

"⁶Then I heard something like the voice of a vast multitude, like the sound of cascading waters, and like the rumbling of loud thunder, saying:

Hallelujah, because our Lord God, the Almighty,
has begun to reign!

God's Kingdom calls for a personal response.

Mary responded with a question: "How can this be?" Now, notice that she did not ask about His reign; she asked about His birth. I suspect for us the question is different. We tend not to ask about His birth; we ask about His reign.

Which kingdom are you going to serve? Are you going to serve the kingdom of this world which is passing? Or are we going to serve Christ and the kingdom which cannot pass away?

And He shall reign forever and ever,
King of kings! and Lord of lords!
And He shall reign forever and ever,
King of kings! and Lord of lords!
Hallelulujah!