

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
Paul Gunn, Pastor

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: HOPE FULFILLED

Colossians 1:16-17 & various others

December 1, 2019

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INTRODUCTION: The Bible is not just an everyday book. It is so unique there is not another book like it in all the world. It has history, long narratives, short proverbs, poetry, dialogues, asides, biographies, information, knowledge, things to do, things not to do. Simple-minded people can find plenty of things to read and understand in the Bible. Those who prefer more advanced reading can also find plenty of material.

EXPLANATION: There is a lot of misunderstanding about the Bible. Recently I spoke with a young person who found a few random scriptures to justify her position about something. I told her she was taking those scriptures out of context and that I would be glad to discuss those scriptures with her. She was not interested. That's really sad because she's missing the point of the Bible – which is the unveiling of Jesus Christ.

When you look at a list of books, sometimes there will be a description of the book in a couple of sentences. Here's my one sentence summary of the Bible. In fact, you might want to write this in your Bible so that you'll memorize and be ready to say it to someone else: The Bible points to how people cannot meet God's standard, and how God extends grace through Jesus Christ.

There are two commonly misunderstood and overlooked parts of the scripture and here they are. Please listen closely: The Law of Moses and prophecy.

Beginning in the first book of the Bible and going through all 66 books, you'll see people failing over and over. Their humanness is exposed for all to read. At times, their sins and even their inner thoughts are exposed to us.

God set a standard of righteousness. You should thumb through the first five books of the Bible some time and see all the laws. Probably most people would think of the Ten Commandments as being the law, but that was only the start! Many Bible scholars agree that there are 613 Commandments in the Old Testament: 248 positive Commandments and 365 negative Commandments.

The law was very complicated. People could not master it. Every element of life was dictated by the law. If they broke the law, which they did on a regular basis, the penalty had to be paid. God set up a way for people to be forgiven for their sins through animal sacrifices. God was gracious enough not to immediately kill a person because of sin, but an animal could be sacrificed in place of the person. You might say “how cruel,” and yes it does seem that way, but if you look at it, we can also say “how merciful” because a person would not have to die for their sin. The answer to not having to sacrifice an animal was to not break the law.

People’s lack of meeting God’s standard is prevalent throughout scripture. It seemed like a HOPELESS situation. The drudgery of the law, the drudgery of the sacrificial system... after hundreds of years, I believe it became a mundane way of life.

I mentioned the different genres of literature in scripture: history, poetry, adventure. There is another part of scripture that is often overlooked and that is prophecy.

Out of nowhere it seems, came the prophets – they spoke for God. They foretold of good things to come and many times of doom if God’s people disobeyed. They also brought hope by prophesying about the coming of Christ. The first inkling of change in the way of life for the Jews came through the prophets.

Let’s look at just a few scriptures of prophecy and see how these words of hope were fulfilled in the New Testament.

First, we have the prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus born of a woman.

The Old Testament prophecy in Genesis 3:15 tells us Jesus would be born of a woman.

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:15

“And 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.”

And the New Testament fulfillment -

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:20

But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 4:4 -

But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

So we see the prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus born of a woman. It does not say he would be born of a man, because he was not. The Holy Spirit was his father. It is a miracle, and at the same time, it is a mystery.

Next, we have the prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus born of a virgin.

The Old Testament prophecy in

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 7:14 says that:

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

And the New Testament fulfillment is found in

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:22-23

All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

Also we have both the Old and New Testaments' reference to "Immanuel".

And another New Testament fulfillment is found in:

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:26-31

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, ²⁷ to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. ²⁸ The angel went to her and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." ²⁹ Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. ³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus.

Next, we have the prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus born a descendant of Jacob.

The Old Testament prophecy Numbers, chapter 24 – This is an unusual prophecy coming from a sorcerer. The Bible says that when Balaam realized that God was pleased when he blessed Israel, he stopped his sorcery and began prophesying.

SCRIPTURE: Numbers 24:17 Balaam said:

"I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel.

And we have the New Testament fulfillment.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:2

Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,

This is the lineage of Joseph that would have given Jesus his legal status.

And so now we have the prophecy and the fulfillment of Jesus as a descendant of Jacob.

Next, we have the prophecy and fulfillment of Jesus coming from the tribe of Judah.

In the Old Testament,

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 49:10 says,

“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until he to whom it belongs shall come and the obedience of the nations shall be his.”

In the New Testament this is fulfilled in Luke, talking about the lineage of Jesus, as through Joseph his earthly father, who gave him his legal status.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 3:33

...the son of Amminadab, the son of Ram, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah,

And again in Hebrews...

SCRIPTURE: Hebrews 7:14

¹⁴ For it is clear that our Lord descended from Judah,

And so now we have the prophecy and the fulfillment of Jesus coming from the tribe of Judah.

Next is the prophecy preparing the way for Jesus.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 40:3 says

“A voice of one calling: “In the wilderness prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

And the fulfillment of John the Baptist is in Luke.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 3:3-4

He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

And so now we have the prophecy and fulfillment of John the Baptist.

Next is the prophecy and fulfillment that Jesus would be heir to King David’s throne.

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9:7 says

Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.

And the fulfillment is found in Luke.

SCRIPTURE: Luke 1:32

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,

ILLUSTRATION: I’ve told you of a castle that my son and I visited in Germany. It was quite remarkable. I can’t even come close to describing the beauty and magnificence of it. If I showed photos to you, they would only give you a small glimpse of the magnitude of it all.

The most memorable stop along that tour was the throne room. Unfortunately, the king died before the throne itself was finished. Everything else in the large room was finished. Above where the throne would have been placed was a large cupola with life size full-body portraits of earthly kings side by side. Above the six kings was another king. Then the tour guide said something that caught me off guard. She said, “The king wanted portraits of earthly kings and then above them is Jesus Christ, King of all Kings.”

Jesus is King of Kings today, and he is over everything!

SCRIPTURE: Colossians 1:16-17 says,

For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have

been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together.

CONCLUSION: Today I've shared with you just a few of the prophecies about Jesus and their fulfillment. You have every reason to be completely confident that Jesus was indeed a real man, God in human flesh, walking this earth. He died on the cross, he rose again, and he ascended into heaven. And one day... yes one day he'll return, not as a humble, poor baby but as a triumphant king!

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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