

**WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, December 10, 2024**  
**Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN**

**“David’s Greater Son”**

**READING:** Luke 1:26-33 – In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, “Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you.” Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus. 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 the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end.”

You folks must know by now that I am a University of Michigan football fan. You may have heard me make mention of that a time or two, especially last year when Michigan went undefeated, posted a 15-0 record, and won the national championship. We were riding high. Add to those facts three seasons in a row where we defeated our arch-rivals, the Buckeyes of “that school down south.” It was a delicious, delirious season that took us to the top of college football world.

Then, 15 of our best players were drafted by the NFL and went pro. Then our coach, Jim Harbaugh, left to coach the Los Angeles Chargers. Our new coach is a rookie who got a late-start in finding some fresh talent, and the quarterbacks he ended up with were not up to the task. This season has been such a come-down! We lost our second game of the season to Texas, and by Thanksgiving weekend we had posted a mediocre 5-5 record. From the heights to the valley floor, our luster had faded to a dim glow. Now we had to face our arch-rivals who were ranked #2 in the nation on their home field. We were as much as 23-point underdogs. We braced ourselves for a thrashing.

And guess what? We beat them! We stunned the whole college football world. We drove the Buckeye faithful to tears and frustrations. Our whole season took on a new shine. What ever else we did or did not do, we beat “that team down south” for the fourth straight year and we have bragging rights for at least another year. Hurrah for us!

David was the greatest king Israel had ever had. Even his son Solomon for all his wealth, wisdom, and splendor could not hold a candle to his father’s record as a military hero, kingdom builder, and a “man after God’s own heart”. David established the kingdom, defeated Israel’s enemies, and gave Solomon an inheritance upon which to build. God’s promise to David was that one of his descendants would sit upon his throne “FOREVER”.

Fast forward to the reign of Caesar Augustus, emperor of Rome. Israel has been subjugated for centuries: by the Syrians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, Medes, Persians, Greeks, and now Rome. Now it is just a backwater province of the Empire, a place in which no self-respecting governor or military man wants to serve. And as for David’s descendants, they’re a dime dozen. None of them royalty anymore. This guy, Joseph, he’s a poor carpenter living in Galilee eking out a living making farm implements and benches. How the mighty had fallen. The luster of David’s line had faded to a weak and feeble glow.

But wait! Who’s that? An angel of God with a message for a simple virgin in Nazareth: you will bear a son, conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, name him Jesus, and he will be great! He will sit on his father David’s throne, reign over the house of Jacob forever, and his Kingdom will never end! Just when it seemed

God's promises to David were just so many words. Just when it seemed that Israel would be absorbed and her Scriptures turn to dust. Just when all her hopes had come under the Roman boot – God steps in with authority. He's about to fulfill ALL his promises: to Abraham, to Isaac, to Jacob, to David, and to Israel. The Son of David comes as the Savior of the world. Unexpected! Amazing! Joyous!

That's what we will celebrate in just two weeks: God keeps his Word! From a tiny corner of David's family tree, out of the stump that Israel had become, a green shoot comes forth. In a miraculous, mysterious, surprising way God puts his plan of salvation into motion. With little fanfare, in a quiet and humble turn of events, God comes to the rescue of his people, all his people. And you and I will watch and listen once again only to marvel at what God has done. David's greater son, Son of God and Mary's son, our brother and Redeemer, Jesus, is coming! Get ready. Prepare a place for him in your heart. He's coming to us again. Amen.

**PRAYER:**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- 1) **ADVENT SERVICES:** Our second of three mid-week Advent services takes place tomorrow, December 11, and the final one on the 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00. A reminder to those affected, Grace on Wednesday will move up supper to 5:15, and classes from 5:45-6:45. Church then follows. Our theme this year is: "Signs of Messiah: Isaiah Speaks". We will look at Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 9, and 11: "A Son", and "A Branch". Plan now to join us as we prepare to celebrate our Savior's birth.
- 2) **GIFTS for KIDS:** we will again be gifting needy families within and outside our congregation with clothes, toys, and other things for Christmas. We can only do this with the money you provide for us. You can mail it to the office or drop it in the offering in an envelope that simply says, "Gifts for Kids". Thank you on behalf of every child we make smile on Christmas morning.
- 3) **GOLDEN SAINTS CHRISTMAS PARTY:** This Thursday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, noonish. Bring a dish to pass. If you want to be involved in a gift exchange, bring a gift valued at \$10-15. There will be door prizes, games, laughs, and singing. Come join the fun.