

St. Paul's Dorking Small Groups. Dec. 18th 2005

Preparing the Way

"King David and a peasant girl named Mary "

2 Samuel 7: 1 - 11, 16 & Luke 1: 26 - 38



Word: Key points from Sunday's sermon

2 Samuel 7: here we have some of the most important verses in the books of Samuel and one of the key passages of the OT, because they discuss the future of the line of the Davidic Kingdom. King David is settled in his palace, but he is troubled because he is living in splendour, while the Ark of the Covenant, the symbol of the presence of God with his people, is resting in a tent. David ponders whether he should build a house for the Lord to rest in.

The themes of this prophecy are cleverly linked by the word 'house'. In Hebrew the word for house doesn't only mean an ordinary house, but it also means a temple and lastly it means a dynasty. Just as in English our own Royal family are known as the house of Windsor.

But the word of the Lord to David through Nathan the prophet is that God has never required any of the leaders of His people since the exodus from Egypt to build Him a home to dwell in. The Lord does not desire this of David either. The Lord encamps and dwells where he wills.

Acts 7: 48 - *the Most High does not live in houses made by men. As the prophet says: "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool.*

Through Nathan the Lord makes it clear to David that he will provide a home for his people. The house which the Lord will make is that of David himself, he and his descendants. God's promise to David is '*your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever*'

Luke 1: We find the fulfilment of Nathan's prophecy in Gabriel's announcement to Mary.

Mary wasn't the likeliest of candidates, humanly speaking, because she was neither powerful nor wealthy. She was unknown and from humble origins. The angel's words challenge us because it is God who has chosen her to give birth to the saviour of the world. In his providence God has chosen not to make his dwelling place in a tent or in a temple, but to bring about the meeting of heaven and earth in the womb of a Godly young woman, a new birth and a new beginning for the human race in the person of the Son of God

Isaiah 7: ¹⁴*Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.*

Which means God with us!

John 14: 23 Jesus, Mary's son, is to declare; *"If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him."* How amazing that the King of heaven has promised to come and make his home in each one of us.

The promise made to David 1000 years before was fulfilled in Mary: 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,* ³³*and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."*

In Mary we see the characteristics of purity, obedience, humility, integrity and the ability to question. In Mary we understand that the Lord makes his home in us and not in a grand palace or temple.

The angel describes Jesus to Mary in this way '*So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God*'. Mary's child would be holy. The basic meaning of the word holy is to be separated to God. We too are being called, like the Christ child to be separated to God. In whatever way he calls us we must follow obediently. We need to say to Him today as Mary did 2000 years ago; *"I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said."*



Witness: Questions to discuss

Here are some suggestions:

1. Explore the parallels in **Psalms 132:10 -18** and **Isaiah 9: 2 – 7** with today's readings and discuss your thoughts?
2. A suggestion – take 10 minutes and do a Bible search and see how many other prophecies you can find that tell about the coming of the messiah.
3. How do you interpret **Isaiah 9: 7** and do you think there is any evidence to support this statement?
4. Do you have any ideas what it was that caused God to choose Mary?
5. Are there any other characteristics that Mary exhibits that speak to us of how we are to be?
6. Does it help you to know that God has made his home in you?
7. How do you respond to this promise in your daily life and what is its effect?
8. What does it mean to you to live a holy life?
9. How can we know that we are being obedient to what God says either personally or corporately?
10. What do you think it means for us to prepare the way?