

## Devotion for Advent 4

### Psalm 80:1-7

**Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, you who lead Joseph like a flock!**

You who are enthroned between the cherubim, shine forth.

**Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh, stir up your might and come to save us!**

**Restore us, O God; let your face shine, that we may be saved!**

O Lord God of hosts, how long will you be angry with your people's prayers?

**You have fed them with the bread of tears and given them tears to drink in full measure.**

You make us an object of contention for our neighbors, and our enemies laugh among themselves.

**Restore us, O God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved!**

*Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;*

*As it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen*

### Isaiah 9:1-7

*His Name shall be called Prince of Peace*

- 1) How does this passage show that the child will be God's Son?
- 2) How does Jesus remove gloom and take away anguish?
- 3) How does Jesus bring peace and with Whom does He make peace?

### Luke 2:1-21

*The birth of Jesus*

- 1) What does Jesus' birth in Bethlehem say about Him?
- 2) Why was Jesus' birth announced to shepherds and not to kings?
- 3) What is the significance of Jesus' birth in such a lowly place?

**"Fear Not!"**

**Luke 2:10-11**

***"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord."***

One evening long ago while shepherds were watching their sheep, the dark of night was shattered by a blinding light. An angel of the Lord appeared and "*the glory of the Lord shone around them.*" This was no light of natural origin, but a divine light that shines the brightness of God's holiness, more radiant than a thousand suns. God dwells in unapproachable light and now through His holy angel, this light broke through the darkness of a Judean night.

The shepherds feared and trembled, not simply because they had been surprised in the night. They fear and trembled, because their sinfulness had been exposed in the holy light of God. Their reaction to the holy angel was not unique, but common to almost all people in the bible, who came in contact with the glory of the Lord; either directly or through the intermediacy of an angel. The light of the Lord's glory exposes the darkness of human sin and fills the human heart with terror. The first words an angel usually speaks, even to those who are loved by God are: "*Do not be afraid.*"

The angel who appeared to Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist said, "*Do not be afraid.*" The angel who appeared to Mary, the mother of Jesus, said the same word, "*Do not be afraid.*" Zechariah, Mary and the shepherds felt fear at the presence of the holy angel, because their sinfulness was revealed by the light of God's holiness. Zechariah, Mary and the shepherds felt fear, but none had reason to be afraid. The angel appeared, not to judge and condemn their sin, but to speak the good news of the Saviour, who would lift the guilt of sin from the human heart, by bearing its penalty on the cross.

The angel brought good news to them and to us. News of forgiveness from the heart of God. Good news of forgiveness Jesus would earn through the blood of His cross by which He atoned for the sin of the world and took away God's anger at human sin. The good news of Christmas gives us peace and fills our hearts with joy: "*Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord!*" Because of Jesus we have nothing to fear in the presence of God!

**“Angels We Have Heard on High “  
(Public Domain)**

**Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,  
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.**

**Chorus**

**Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.**

**Shepherds why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?  
What the gladsome tidings be, Which inspire your heavenly song?**

**Come to Bethlehem and see, Him whose birth the angels sing;  
Come, adore on bended knee, Christ the Lord, the new born king.**

**Prayer**

**“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation.” Stir up your power, O Lord, and come among us with great might. And because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let your bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us. We ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, Forever and ever. Amen**

**The Creed**

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen**

**Benediction**

**Luke 2:14**

***“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.”***

**Bible Knowledge Quiz**

- 1) What was the name of the village in which Jesus gave His first miraculous sign?
- 2) What village did Jesus' friends Mary, Martha and Lazarus live in?
- 3) Jesus conversed with a Samaritan woman at a well. What was the name of the village in which she lived?

**Answers to last week's Quiz**

- 1) They were of the house of David (Luke 2:4).
- 2) Micah (Micah 5:1-2).
- 3) Philippians (Philippians 2:9).