

DEVOTION for ADVENT 2

Psalm 66:1-12

Make a joyful shout to God, all the earth! Sing out the honor of His Name; Make His praise glorious.

Say to God, "How awesome are your works!

Through the greatness of your power, your enemies shall submit themselves to you.

All the earth shall worship you and sing praises to you; They shall sing praises to your Name."

Come and see the works of God; He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.

He turned the sea into dry land; They went through the river on foot. There we will rejoice in Him.

He rules by His power forever; His eyes observe the nations; Do not let the rebellious exalt themselves.

Oh, bless our God! You peoples! And make the voice of His praise to be heard.

Who keeps our soul among the living, And does not allow our feet to be moved.

For you, O God, have tested us; You have refined us as silver is refined. You brought us into the net; You laid affliction on our backs.

You have caused men to ride over our heads;

We went through fire and through water; But You brought us out to rich fulfillment.

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

Malachi 3:1-4:6

The Messenger of the Covenant

What will the messenger of the covenant do to the people?

What should the people do to prepare for the Lord?

What will the Lord's coming reveal?

Luke 1:1-80

The birth of John the Baptizer

Why did Zechariah doubt the angel's message?

Why should he have believed?

How would John fulfill the prophecy of Malachi?

"NEVER DOUBT an ANGEL WITH GOOD NEWS"

Zechariah and Elizabeth are the parents of John, who came to be known as "The Baptizer." That name came much later, probably long after they had departed this life to rest in the Lord's peace. They simply called him, "John." It's a nice name, but it was an odd name, since there was no one in their family called John; and children were typically named after a relation, often the father. They called him "John" because the angel told them to name him "John." After Zechariah's experience in the temple, they weren't about to second guess the Lord's angel.

When the angel Gabriel told Zechariah the good news that their prayers had been heard and were about to be answered, he said, "*How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.*" The angel was clearly annoyed. Wasn't he proof enough? How many times had Zechariah been greeted by an angel when he was offering incense in the temple? I'll tell you how often: Never! Apparently, seeing isn't believing. However, silence is golden! For a sign, the angel granted Elizabeth nine months of peace and quiet. Zechariah would be unable to speak until the angel's words were fulfilled and he named the child "John!"

Part of the message of John's birth is the power of God's word and the necessity of taking His word to heart and believing it. Zechariah was chastised by the angel, not because the angel took personal offense. Zechariah was chastised, because he did not believe the word the Lord spoke through His angel. When Zechariah believed the word, he saw the power of the Lord; both in the birth of John and in the return of his speech. There is no force more powerful than the word of the Lord. There is nothing that pleases the Lord more than that we take His word to heart and believe it. The most important word He wants us to believe is the gospel of salvation in Jesus. He is the Word of God in the fullest sense! Those who believe in Him have eternal life, in time and for eternity.

“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” vs 1-5

(Public Domain)

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.**

Refrain

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel, shall come to thee, O Israel.

**O come, Thou wisdom from on high, who ord’rest things mightily.
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.**

**O Come, Thou Lord of might, who to Thy tribes on Sinai’s height,
In ancient times didst give the Law in cloud and majesty and awe.**

**O Come, Thou Branch of Jesse’s tree, free them from Satan’s tyranny,
That trust Thy mighty power to save, And give them victory o’er the grave.**

**O Come, Thou Key of David, come. And open wide our heavenly home.
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.**

PRAYER

Holy Spirit open our ears this Advent season to hear your word and listen attentively. Grant that we may take to heart the good news of God’s love in Christ our Saviour. Deepen our faith, increase our understanding and empower us to share the good news of Jesus’ birth, life, death and resurrection with others, in our words and through our actions. In Jesus’ Name. 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 1:45

“And blessed is she who has believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken by the Lord.”

Bible Knowledge Quiz

In the Old Testament Hannah prayed for a son from the Lord. What was his name?

What was the name of Jacob’s wife from whom Jesus is descended?

Ishmael was Abraham’s firstborn. What was his mother’s name?

Answers to Last Week’s Quiz

Genesis 3:15 *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.”*

“The Lord is there” Ezekiel 48:15.

The Lord saves, Matthew 1:21.