

BIBLE LIFE MESSAGES

The Joy of Advent

Luke 2:1-20

1 What could joy do?

While stationed in Germany my family and I visited the city of Salzburg in Austria. Noted for its salt mines and the movie “The Sound of Music” it also has another feature. 2 Towering over the city is the Monatsschloos, a palace erected in the seventeenth century.



The story goes that the Count of Hohenems, the ruler of the area between 1612 and 1619, fell in love with the beautiful Barbara Mabon. In a tender moment he

promised to build a palace for her for her birthday. After her departure he promptly forgot the promise.

When her birthday was only a month away, he remembered the promise! He summoned his subjects and eloquently described his predicament. He called on them to help him.

Since he was a popular and well-loved monarch his people immediately took on the challenge. Several thousand masons, bricklayers and carpenters went to work to redeem their prince's word. They labored night and day, in shifts, without much rest and no compensation. It was an all-time speed record. With great joy and celebration, they completed the stronghold just in time for Barbara's birthday! ³

At the Lord's Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem the crowds rejoiced. ¹ ⁴ When the women disciples came

¹ Luke 19:37-44 - ³⁷ When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." As he approached

to the tomb and were told by the angels that the Lord had risen, they rejoiced! ²

During the Lord's advent everyone who came in touch with Him was filled with joy! ⁵

We begin a series of joy episodes in Luke, chapter 2, verses 1 through 20, **In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the**

Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace — but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."

² Matthew 28:1-10 - After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. ³

So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ^{4 6}

While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. ^{5 7}

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring

³ v1-3.

⁴ v4-5.

⁵ v6-7.

you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”⁶₈

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.” When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.” So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.⁷₉

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The

⁶ v 8-12.

⁷ v13-16.

shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. ⁸ ₁₀

This passage describes . . .

I. The Joy of the Shepherds - v1-20

The joy of the shepherds. ¹¹

How did they get their joy? ¹²

Verse 9 says they were visited by the angels. ⁹ ₁₃ It was then that they were given the good news that Lord Jesus had been born. ¹⁰ ₁₄ This was the fulfilled expectation of over 500 years! ₁₅

⁸ v17-20.

⁹ Luke 2:9 - An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

¹⁰ Luke 2:10-12 - But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

How did it affect them? ¹⁶ Verse 17 tells us they were so excited they went out and told everyone they could find. ¹¹ ¹⁷ Then, they glorified and praised God! ¹² ¹⁸

Next, there was . . .

II. The Joy of Simeon - v25-35

The joy of Simeon. ¹⁹

How did he get his joy? ²⁰

According to verse 25 ¹³ he was camping out in the Temple waiting for the consolation ¹⁴ of Israel. The word “consolation” means “a calling to one’s side, encouragement or comfort”. ²¹ He was waiting for God to act on Israel’s behalf during his lifetime. ²² Verse 26

¹¹ Luke 2: 17-18 - When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

¹² Luke 2:20.

¹³ Luke 2:25 - Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

¹⁴ παράκλησις.

says that God gave him a promise that his dreams would come true in this baby! ¹⁵ ₂₃

How did it affect him? ₂₄

Verse 28 tells us Simeon embraced the baby Jesus and praised God! ¹⁶ ₂₅ He blessed the baby and His family, but then also gave them a prophecy. ¹⁷ ₂₆

Then, there was . . .

III. The Joy of Anna - v36-38

The joy of Anna. ₂₇

How did she get her joy? ₂₈

She was an 84-year-old prophetess who lived in the Temple area. ¹⁸ ₂₉ After she was widowed, she

¹⁵ Luke 2:26 - It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

¹⁶ Luke 2:28 - Simeon took him in his arms and praised God.

¹⁷ Luke 2:34-35 - Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

¹⁸ Luke 2:36-37 - There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years

dedicated herself to fasting, praising and glorifying God continually. She may have overheard Simeon's remarks praising the God for the baby. ³⁰

How did it affect her? ³¹

She praised the Lord! ¹⁹ ³² She spoke to everyone in the Temple about Him! ³³

Finally, we have . . .

IV. The Joy of the Magi - Matthew 2:1-12

The joy of the Magi. For this event, we go to Matthew, chapter 2, verses 1 through 12. ³⁴

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has

after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying.

¹⁹ Luke 2:38 - Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”²⁰ ³⁵

When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: ” ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.’”²¹ ³⁶

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”²²

37

²⁰ Matthew 2:1-2.

²¹ Matthew 2:3-6.

²² Matthew 2:7-8.

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

²³ 38

How did they get their joy? ³⁹

They read God's word! They read Numbers, chapter 24, verse 17, . . . **A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel . . .** They searched the sky and found the star. That's reading the word of God and believing what you read! ⁴⁰

They sacrificed to make this journey. They sacrificed time. It may have taken at least two years judging from

²³ Matthew 2:9-11.

the age of the children Herod wanted to kill.²⁴ They went to considerable expense of a long journey and the giving of expensive gifts.⁴¹ They endangered themselves.⁴²

But they were also encouraged by King Herod and his scholars. They told the Magi where to go to find the baby.⁴³ They continued following the star until they found the child.^{25 44}

How did it affect them?⁴⁵

They were overjoyed!⁴⁶ They worshipped the Lord and gave Him their treasure.^{26 47}

So the question becomes, in the light of all this joy experienced by those who encountered the Lord . . .

²⁴ Matthew 2:16 - When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

²⁵ Matthew 2:9 - After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

²⁶ Matthew 2:10-11 - After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

V. Where Do You Get Your Joy?

Where do you get your joy? ⁴⁸

God's will for you is to be joyful and pray. ⁴⁹

Philippians, chapter 4, verse 4, Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵⁰ First Thessalonians, chapter 5, verses 16 through 18, Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. ⁵¹

The Lord provides us with the ultimate joy; Himself and His love. ²⁷ ⁵² Joy is a fruit of His Holy Spirit. ²⁸ ⁵³

You get joy through fellowship with other Christians.

There's a joy with seeing new people join the Christian ranks! For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our

²⁷ John 15:11 - I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

²⁸ Galatians 5:22 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness . . .

Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? Indeed, you are our glory and joy. ²⁹ 54

You get joy when you get answers to your prayers. Lord Jesus said, Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. ³⁰ 55

Yes, you even get joy through your suffering. That's right! First Peter, chapter 4, verses 13 and 14 say, But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you. God reserves a special joy for those who are willing to suffer for Him! ⁵⁶

Do you want joy this Christmas? ⁵⁷ Tell people about the Lord and praise Him like the shepherds did. ⁵⁸

Bless others like Simeon did. ⁵⁹

Be thankful like Anna was. ⁶⁰

²⁹ I Thessalonians 2:19.

³⁰ John 16:24.

**Worship Him and bring Him your treasures like the
Magi did. 61**

Then, experience the joy they had!

<http://biblelifemessages.org/>