

ADVENT

Lesson 2 w/Answers

The Advent of Peace

In this lesson, we continue our four-lesson study of events leading up to the birth of Jesus. Referred to as the season of Advent, we will be using a publication from Rose Publishing entitled *The Christmas Story* by Loren D. Bishop to guide our study. You can also obtain a copy from OliveTree.com.

We are examining the four different aspects of the coming birth: HOPE, PEACE, JOY and LOVE. In this lesson, we explore the Advent of Peace.

Consider the following scriptures, as we learn of the promise of peace accompanying the birth of the Christ-child:

1. Read Malachi 5:2. This passage foretells of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem. What other ruler of Israel was born in Bethlehem? (see 1 Samuel 16:1, 18-19 and 1 Samuel 17:12)
 - a. ANSWER: King David was also born in Bethlehem.
 2. Read Matthew 2:1-2. How many Magi came to visit Jesus?
 - a. ANSWER: In reality, we do not know; we only know that it was more than one. The traditional Christmas nativity uses three wise men based on the three gifts given to Jesus, namely gold, frankincense and myrrh.
 3. When the Magi arrive, where do they find Jesus? Is he in the manger?
 - a. ANSWER: No. According to scripture, by the time the Magi arrive, Jesus is living in a house.
 4. Do the Magi bow down to the baby Jesus?
 - a. ANSWER: No. The scripture says they bowed down to the "child" Jesus. Again, the traditional nativity scene has the Magi visiting the baby Jesus at the manger. In actuality, Jesus was not at the manger and may have been as old as two years old; because shortly after the Magi's visit, Jesus and his parents fled to Egypt. The gospels indicate that he was two years old when they fled.
 5. Read Isaiah 2:1-5. What does Peter tell us regarding the timing of the fulfilling of this prophecy? When will this actually happen? (see 1 Peter 1:10-11)
 - a. ANSWER: Peter confirms what Jesus told the Apostles earlier: no one but God knows the answer. However, it is certain that this prophecy, like all prophecies coming from God, will definitely happen—we simply don't have an exact date.
 6. What does Ezekiel tell us concerning "the temple of the God of Jacob" in those days? (see Ezekiel Chapters 40-43)
 - a. ANSWER: Ezekiel prophesied that for the Millennial Reign, the Temple will be completely rebuilt according to God's own plan, and God will reside there.
 7. Read Matthew 3:1-6 and Isaiah 40:3. What does it mean in Isaiah when it says "make straight in the desert"? Or in Matthew, what does the phrase "make straight paths" refer to?
 - a. ANSWER: The work of a roadman in building a road, or a path, is to level the surface. This means raising the valleys and lowering the mountains. This was the role of John the Baptist in his call for (1) everyone to repent, (2) the prideful to become humble, and (3) the lowly to take heart—as the path is smoothed and leveled for the arrival of the Messiah.
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If you are studying at home without the previously-cited publication from Rose Publishing, then also read the following scriptures, as they point to the Peace of Christ that was fulfilled at his birth in Bethlehem.

- Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." *[NIV]*
- Luke 2:1 In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. *[NIV]*
- Luke 2:3-6 And everyone went to their own town to register. 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. *[NIV]*
- Isaiah 1:3 "The ox knows its master, the donkey its owner's manger, but Israel does not know, my people do not understand." *[NIV]*
- Luke 2:8-9 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. *[NIV]*
- Isaiah 60:1-2 "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you." *[NIV]*
- Luke 2:10-14 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." *[NIV]*
- Isaiah 44:23 Sing for joy, you heavens, for the LORD has done this; shout aloud, you earth beneath. Burst into song, you mountains, you forests and all your trees, for the LORD has redeemed Jacob, he displays his glory in Israel. *[NIV]*
- Luke 2:15-19 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. 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. *[NIV]*

Thanks for studying with us!

In Christ,

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