

ADVENT

Lesson 3 w/Answers

The Advent of Joy

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 Joy.

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

1. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. List below the five things that Isaiah tells us regarding the coming Christ.
 - a. ANSWER 1: He will be born a child.
 - b. ANSWER 2: The government will be on his shoulders.
 - c. ANSWER 3: He will have four titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.
 - d. ANSWER 4: He will be seated on David's throne and rule with peace and justice forever—his kingdom will have no end.
 - e. ANSWER 5: All of this will be accomplished by the "zeal of the LORD Almighty".
2. How did God refer to Christ in 2 Samuel 7:11-17? How does John the Baptizer refer to him in John 1:19-34?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Jesus is described as His Son, the Son of God.
 - b. ANSWER 2: The joy alluded to in John's gospel is that the God, through the Holy Spirit and through John the Baptizer, is telling the world that Jesus is the long awaited Messiah, the "Chosen One" of God.
3. Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-8. How many pairs of activities does Solomon refer to, and what is the purpose of placing this scripture in a study of the Advent of Christ's birth? How does it relate to the joy that comes to us through having Jesus as our personal Savior?
 - a. ANSWER 1: Solomon used fourteen pairs, two sets of sevens, in order to show the completeness of this concept of time—meaning that in all things God is Sovereign. His will is always being accomplished, and no matter how chaotic or depressing things may seem—or how jubilant, for that matter—it all fits within God's eternal plan.
 - b. ANSWER 2: The purpose of including the passage in this study is to demonstrate that Jesus was born at the exact "time" that God had planned, and Jesus also died and rose from the dead also at the exact "time". Knowing this as fact, we are assured that all of the remaining prophecies regarding Christ's return, and the establishment of His eternal kingdom, will also occur at the exact "time" dictated by God's plan. This is a source of joy to us, and causes us to celebrate, as we know that God is still on HIS throne, and that His Son Jesus is seated at His right hand—and WILL return.
4. Read Philippians 2:1-11. What does this passage tell us about our joy? What brings true joy into the life of a Christ-follower?
 - a. ANSWER: If we want our joy to be complete, just as Paul advised the Philippians, then we need to be as much like Christ as we can. It is interesting to consider that Jesus, as God in the flesh, could have come to earth as a Royal King and ruled with a rod of iron over the entire world. He could have had an army of staff follow him everywhere, doing his every bidding—but he didn't. He humbled himself and became our servant and our sacrifice. This is what we must do as well, and when we do, our joy will also be complete.

5. How would you summarize everything we have learned in this lesson about both Jesus and ourselves?
- ANSWER 1: We see that God Himself gave us many signs regarding what to look for pertaining the birth and arrival of the Messiah, or "Chosen One". He personally sent the Holy Spirit to affirm that Jesus was the Messiah. How awesome it is that today we know for a fact the Jesus was born, suffered, died and rose from the grave; and today he is seated on God's right hand, preparing for His return to earth. This should fill our hearts with so much joy that it overflows and reflects light to the lost around us.
 - ANSWER 2: We also learned that Jesus modeled for us how we should live, humbly as servants, seeking the lost and the hurting; and ministering to those whom God puts in our path. Jesus came to save and to serve, and to die for us. We should be willing and ready to do the same for those around us.
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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 Joy of Christ that was fulfilled at his birth in Bethlehem.

- Isaiah 60:3 "Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn." *[NIV]*
- Matthew 2:2 "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." *[NIV]*
- Numbers 24:17 "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab, the skulls of all the people of Sheth." *[NIV]*
- Matthew 2:3-4 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 Messiah was to be born. *[NIV]*
- Psalm 2:2-3 The kings of the earth rise up and the rulers band together against the LORD and against his anointed, saying, "Let us break their chains and throw off their shackles." *[NIV]*
- Matthew 2:8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." *[NIV]*
- Matthew 2:9-11 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose 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 worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. *[NIV]*
- Psalm 72:10-15 May the kings of Tarshish and of distant shores bring tribute to him. May the kings of Sheba and Seba present him gifts. May all kings bow down to him and all nations serve him. For he will deliver the needy who cry out, the afflicted who have no one to help. He will take pity on the weak and the needy and save the needy from death. He will rescue them from oppression and violence, for precious is their blood in his sight. Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long. *[NIV]*
- Isaiah 60:5-6 Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD. *[NIV]*
- Hosea 11:1 "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son." *[NIV]*
- Numbers 24:7-8 "Their king will be greater than Agag; their kingdom will be exalted, God brought them out of Egypt." *[NIV]*

Thanks for studying with us!

In Christ,

Wes