

Devotion for December 24, 2024 – Christmas Eve

Luke 2:11 (EHV)

“Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord.”

Theme: Christmas is about

- 1) Our need for a Saviour fulfilled.
- 2) The LORD making his dwelling among us.

What is the true meaning of Christmas?

Some people think they find it by spending time with family and friends. Others seek to discover it through acts of charity, while some believe that the true meaning of the holidays is whatever a person’s heart chooses it to be.

Regardless of what people think, there is only one true meaning of Christmas, and it is summarized in the words the angel spoke to the shepherds: *“Today in the town of David, a Savior was born for you. He is Christ the Lord.”*

With this marvellous, angelic message as our guide, let us learn that Christmas is about the LORD fulfilling our need for a Saviour by making his dwelling among us.

Part One: Christmas is about our need for a Saviour fulfilled.

The night on which Jesus was born probably began like any other. Under Bethlehem’s night sky, shepherds were faithfully watching over their flocks. Then, something utterly unexpected happened: the heavens burst with angelic joy.

An angel of the LORD appeared to tell both the shepherds and us: *Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born for you. He is Christ the Lord.*

The birth of the divine Saviour is what Christmas is all about. But why is this so important? Because we desperately need Him.

It all goes back to the Garden of Eden and our first parents, Adam and Eve. God created them in His likeness: perfect, holy, and without sin. Sadly, instead of being content with the blessings the LORD had given them, Adam and Eve wanted more: they wanted to be their own gods. This is why, at the devil’s prompting, they disobeyed the LORD by eating the fruit from the tree that God had forbidden them to eat. They sinned against God’s explicit command.

Because of this act of rebellion, suffering, pain, death, and the threat of hell entered the world. All people born after Adam would no longer be good and holy. Sinful flesh would give birth to sinful flesh—corrupting all future generations. Wars, crime, hurt, and hunger plague the world – all because greed and selfishness pervert the human heart.

The inherited sin that scourges the world corrupts us as well. We might like to think we are better than those terrible people who assault, abuse, and kill indiscriminately, believing, “They deserve hell, not us.” But here’s the truth: God does not compare us to other people; He compares us to His Holy Law, which states that *whoever keeps the whole law but stumbles in one point has become guilty of breaking all of it.*ⁱ It also says: *There is no difference, because all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.*ⁱⁱ Yes, according to God’s justice, we all deserve hell because none of us have kept his commandments perfectly. We all need a Saviour from sin!

I know that my devotion does not seem all too “Christmasy” yet, but it’s only when we truly understand our need for a Saviour that the true beauty, joy, and wonder of Christmas begins to shine. Listen again to the angels’ announcement to the shepherds: *a Savior was born for you.* There is a God in heaven who loves you so much that He did something beyond all comprehension to save you. *For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*ⁱⁱⁱ

Part Two: Christmas is about the LORD making his dwelling among us.

Yes, Christmas is all about the Saviour being born for you. And who is this Saviour? The angel told us: *He is Christ the Lord.*

The child to whom Mary gave birth is true God and true man. He is the LORD himself, described in the Old Testament as *the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, and overflowing with mercy and truth, maintaining mercy for thousands, forgiving guilt and rebellion and sin.*^{iv} Just think: little baby Jesus is the almighty Creator of all - as the book of Isaiah prophesied: *The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son and name him Immanuel,*^v which means God with us.

Because Jesus was born from a virgin, he didn’t inherit the sinful corruption that had been passed down through generations. Because he is true God and man, he could save us from our sins. How? First, by living the perfect life of love and obedience to God’s law that we all failed to live. By doing this, he would win the righteousness we need to stand before God. Then, having taken all our sins upon himself, he would die on the cross – suffering the very punishment we deserved. This act would satisfy God’s justice. Finally, proving that God’s justice had been met, Jesus would rise from the dead - demonstrating that all humanity has been reconciled with God. Because of Jesus’ work, whoever looks to Him in repentance and faith is forgiven of everything – regardless of how bad or sinful they had been. The person who repents and believes in Jesus is at peace with God and will inherit everlasting life.

What a wonderful gift God offers us on Christmas: the gift of His Son for the forgiveness of all sin, guilt, and shame. And it bears repeating: God offers this gift to you. As you meditate on the Christmas story this evening, joyfully take to heart the angel’s words: *“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.”* Amen.

ⁱ James 2:10 EHV

^{iv} Exodus 34:6-7 EHV

ⁱⁱ Romans 3:22,23 EHV

^v Isaiah 7:14 EHV

ⁱⁱⁱ John 3:16 EHV

